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Values, Vision and Style for Your Church

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Values, Vision and Style for Your Church

A. Values are statements of your assumptions and priorities about how to conduct ministry. They focus on the issues in ministry that are most important to you and your church.

Your values are the things that you believe are important in the way you live and work. They (should) determine your priorities, and they are probably the measures you use to tell if your life and church plant is reaching the level of success you desire.

When you and the church behave in a manner that matches your values, you typically are satisfied. But when these do not align with your personal values, that is when things feel wrong and can quickly be a source of frustration and unhappiness.

1. Pray for the Lord to reveal to you the issues that are closest to His heart for your church. (Psalm 127:1)
2. The Lord often will reveal His vision for your church based on the values you already have. Consider some of these values and determine which are most important.

- ___ Evangelism: relational, preaching, acts-of-compassion,
- ___ Expository teaching
- ___ Multi-ethnic ministry
- ___ Creativity
- ___ The arts
- ___ Worship
- ___ One to one Discipleship
- ___ Small group ministry
- ___ Social involvement
- ___ Quality children's ministry
- ___ Members involved in ministry
- ___ Daughter church planting
- ___ Foreign missions
- ___ Cooperation with other Christian organizations

- ____ Culturally relevant music
- ____ Team ministry (multiple staff, or volunteer staff)
- ____ Loving relationships
- ____ Cultural relevance
- ____ Community involvement
- ____ Holy Spirit empowerment
- ____ Member care
- ____ Prayer centered ministry
- ____ Contemporary style
- ____ Other _____

Based on what you have selected above, or written in lieu of these options, you will begin to understand what values and priorities will define your church and ministry. The values are often a representation of your present heart, or future hope and aspiration as a leader.

3. Your values should fuel your vision. If you value evangelism, you will have a vision of reaching a community for Christ. If you value daughter church planting, you will develop a vision of a family of churches. If you value prayer, you will develop a vision for a prayer-driven ministry. If you value small group ministry, you will develop a vision for a church that multiplies group ministry.

B. What is a vision statement?

1. It is a succinct statement of your preferred future for your church plant.
2. It is a statement of what you want your church to do and to become.
3. It is a faith statement about God's church.
4. It is pleasing to the Lord. (Hebrews 11:1,2 and Hebrews 11:6)

C. Writing your vision statement

1. What are you trusting God to do in your church plant?
2. How do you trust Him to accomplish it?
3. Remember your vision statement should reflect the heart of your values.
4. Your vision statement should be brief and concise.
5. Your vision statement should be written in 2-3 sentences.

D. Determining the style of ministry for your church

1. What is important for the culture and target demographic?
2. What are the needs of the community? First, consider an internal evaluation of what you, as a church planter, have to offer. Consider your gifting, skills, and experience.

Internal evaluation requires you to ask questions such as:

- What are the realistic conditions of your spiritual life?
- How are things REALLY going?
- What are you going through and struggling with?
- What are your barriers or limitations?
- What critical issues are you facing today?
- Where are you finding success and victory?
- What is the health of my marriage and family?

These questions can help you understand how you are doing in life and your present ministry. An internal evaluation will assist you in reinforcing or correcting any areas that need Holy Spirit help. Without addressing personal (internal) issues before planting a church, you will likely fail or plant a church that is dysfunctional from the beginning.

Secondly consider an external evaluation to determine the state of affairs for the target community of the church plant. If there are specific issues, problems and needs that are predominant, then consider what style or method would be best suited to connect and alleviate these issues.

External evaluation requires you to ask questions such as:

- What are the realistic conditions of your culture?
- What is happening in your community that is affecting your church?
- What is happening in your church that is affecting your culture?
- What problems are the people dealing with?
- What trends are going on?
- What would it look like if Heaven invaded your community through your church?

These questions can help you understand how your community is doing, and what needs are predominant. It will assist you in creating the proper outreach and relational bridge to meet the needs of the people.

Build a relational bridge from you and the church plant to the community. (1 Corinthians 9:19-23)

A relational bridge is your connection to the hearts and minds of your target community. It is your common ground that will allow you to connect, communicate, and minister to them.

Take the next 20-30 minutes to allow students to write their vision statement. Allow several students to publicly share their vision statements.

This is a good time to offer coaching and direction if students have misunderstood the assignment.

Conclude the session with the final notes below. (est. teaching time 15 minutes)

E. Share, review, and refine with others for accountability and support

1. As a leader, it is important to share the values, vision, and style of ministry to other leaders or potential leaders.
2. Together you can review each element and consider their purpose and pray for continued clarity and revelation on their role in the process.
3. Refine your values, vision and style after receiving feedback from trusted counsel.
 - Insight from other experienced leaders might help you save time, energy and resources.
 - Discussion with other leaders might prove to be helpful in understanding your target demographic and community.
 - Godly counsel will help you focus on the things that matter most, and defer those things that are peripheral.
 - If changes are necessary, amend your values, vision and style that will be used in your church plant.

This article was provided by Joshua Nations (JoshuaNations.org).