

PART ONE, 4/19/2010

God's infinite creativity – "God doesn't mass produce anything"

1. Vision is the most overused and least understood term in the leaders' vocabulary
2. Most churches are over-programmed and under-disciplined
3. Ironically, church plants can be the worst at copycatting one another
4. God wants to do something cosmically significant yet locally specific in your church
5. If your vision is not stunningly unique, you probably don't have one

Are you in a visionary church? What would you look for to know? - discussion

- Passion
- Clear expectations
- Communication
- Focus & determination
- Picture of where you're going and pathway of how to get there

Counterfeit Clarity (these might be helpful steps, but not vision in themselves):

1. Photocopied vision: you can see within 5-minutes what the last conference the staff has attended (e.g., "fully devoted follower," "environments")
2. Lofty One-Liner: not necessarily vision
3. Compelling page dump: that by itself is not visionary leadership
4. Strategic planning notebook: don't need a huge planning notebook
5. ADD Pastor: unbounded creativity does not necessarily equal visionary leadership

Four-fold Movement – process for gaining vision

1. Rethink Vision – repenting of how we've thought of vision previously
2. Uncover – discover your kingdom concept
3. Talk Up – Before you frame a statement, you've got to state your vision framework (common definitions)
4. Live Out – tools to help us integrate vision with life; how well is everything in your church configured around whatever the big idea of your church is?

1. Rethink – recast your vision

We're much more about jar-swapping than we are about DNA discovery

Most of us need to spend a day a month on building clarity as a leader; build that into the organization

If you don't provide compelling meaning at a vision level, your members will attach meaning to at a lower level → malnourished identity

If we don't provide the handles for people to develop clarity, then we are delegating our responsibility

Sources of Malnourished Identity:

1. Place – people connect more to a location of the church than vision or mission of the church
2. Personality – staff, pastors, and church connect more to a personality than to the purpose of the church
3. Programs – overly connected to programs over the vision of the church; the programs aren't necessarily good or bad in themselves, but can make us lose sight of the purpose of the church
4. People – may seem strange but consider whether we are more connected to people or relationships than to the purpose of the church; community without cause

If you don't take time to think about identity – mission & focus – now, then you are setting yourself up for a long-term problem of malnourishment; “missional drift sets in very, very quickly”

Example: Kodak attached to idea of film capture photography but fading into history with the advent of the digital camera; the ‘how’ trumped the deeper ‘why’ behind what was going on

Example: Church within inner city San Antonio – used to celebrate the four P's in their membership class, but now celebrate the vision of “city transformation” in that membership class

“Vision is only at best a solution to a prior problem; people do not care about your vision until they are emotionally connected to the problem that your vision solves.” – Will Mancini

“Vision is an internal, leadership mechanism for shaping culture and motivating the internal leadership of the church.” – Will Mancini

Metaphors for Ministry – out of print book on leadership; Jesus' metaphors for ministry were everyday terms built around community (e.g., brother/sister, family) and penetrating influence (e.g., salt & light)

2. Uncover – discover your kingdom concept

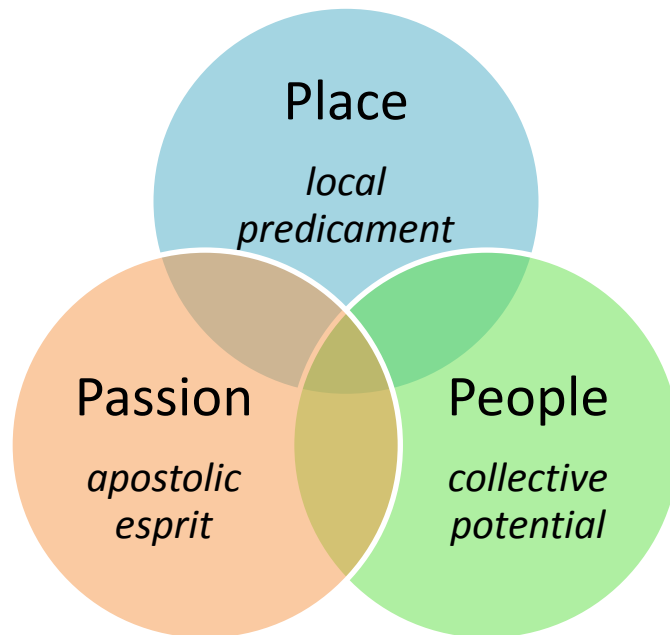
We've often missed our unique thumbprint.

- What can your church do better than ten thousand others? (not a statement of competition or arrogance, but speaks to our unique contribution)
- Your “great permission” within the Great Commission – ‘how does your church glorify God and make disciples?’ (is it easier to list five things you're good at or one thing you're great at?)
- Don't think of your kingdom concept as a vision, but as a statement of identity before you articulate your vision

- Think like an engineer not a marketer; that is, aim for the code, not the user interface; this is accuracy of the concept, not specific wording that will be heard by people

Reference to Jim Collins' *Good to Great*

"Genius is the ability to scrutinize the obvious." - ?



Kingdom Concept components

- Local predicament – Place [or predicament]
 - *What are the unique needs and opportunities where God has placed us?*
 - are you thinking differently about community than you have ever thought before?
 - What you can do to think differently:
 - interview local leaders
 - what is the history of the city you are in?
 - where is your city furthest from utopia?
 - is your church located next to something specific like a high school, business, etc?
 - what is the idol in your community?
 - what are built-in metaphors in your community?)
- Collective potential – People
 - *What are unique resources and capabilities that God brings together in us?*
 - Group grace – group capability that is given by God
 - Look for the spiritual gifts, APEPT (Hirsch)
- Apostolic Esprit – Passion
 - *What particular focus most energizes and animates our leadership?*

- What is the holy discontent in you as a leader?
- What is the thing inside you where God has just messed you up for His kingdom?
- Esprit:
 - *Pneuma* – God gives the breath into us as a leader
 - *Passion* – *esprit de corps*
- This involves Holy Spirit gifted leadership, but is not necessarily positional leadership
- This is part spiritual development/formation in the life of the leader

Process:

- Have 30 or so bullet points for each element
- 12-15 people
- Sometimes wait 2-3 weeks later to do next step
- Begin to look at the overlap in three elements and zero in on the idea of kingdom concept

Kingdom concept template:

- Our church exists to glorify God and make disciples by...

Examples:

- Gloria Dei: “Glorifying God and making disciples by building extended family bridges in every neighborhood.” (Place: deterioration of family & disconnection within neighborhoods; People: love for family & education; Passion: for recovering families and relationship) → vision frame: helping one another live life with Jesus every day (igniting, strengthening, neighborly)
- Northside Christian: “Glorifying God and making disciples by leaving the light on.”
- Chapelwood: “Glorifying God and making disciples by highlighting God’s grace in a world that does everything to suppress it.” (Place: emphasis upon image and success but normal to have an addiction; People: gracious, radical acceptance within this community; Passion: breaking down the walls and being authentic). → Vision: “embody God’s grace as we receive it to those who need it.”
- Christ Bridge: “Glorifying God and making disciples by being a catalyst for bringing unity to the community of Christ”
- Covenant Presbyterian: “Glorifying God and making disciples by being a center for art and ideas from a Christian perspective” (near Purdue University)
- Grace Crossing: “Glorifying God and making disciples by being ambassadors of grace to those damaged by legalism.”

Two things:

- When you begin to see this specificity, you may feel limited; but here is the truth: “Focus Expands” (e.g., magnifying glass with sunlight; radio station finds niche market) – when you choose and focus on one thing you can begin to really speak to people

- Kingdom Concept is the lens through which you look at everything you do, rather than only doing one thing
-

3. Talk Up – Develop Your Vision Frame

We've muffled our visionary voice.

"Vision is not transferred through paper but through people." – Will Mancini

Vision frame – you are not clear as a leader unless you can answer the following five questions:

- What are we doing?
- Why are you doing it?
- How are you doing it?
- When are we successful?
- Where is **God** taking us?

If you can't answer the first four questions in the first 6-9 months of your journey, then you are doing pastoral malpractice.

"Fixed edges, fluid future."

'MISSION as missional mandate' answers the question "what are we doing?"

"Mission is a compass, and vision is a travel brochure." – Will Mancini

- A compass is an emotional reassurance that we are headed in the right direction; it's only a part, but it's not super exciting
- A travel brochure offers the picture or experience of what lies ahead; a picture of what the future is going to look like

The art of visionary leadership is painting a picture of a vision with words. Create the living language of vision.

"Vision is the living language that illustrates and anticipates God's better future." – Will Mancini

'VALUES as missional motives' answers the question "why are we doing it?"

Values are not what we do, but what characterizes what we do.

Deeply held convictions; what matters most.

Too often, we simply regurgitate generic from other churches.

Values help create energy and momentum; you put banks on the river to create movement and focus.

You can have dramatically competing values in a church if you only have mission and values.

‘STRATEGY as a missional map’ answers the question “how are we doing it?”

What is the picture or process to describe the how of where we are going.

Without a strategy, every church is a silo factory; it becomes about butts in seats in my ministry area.

Strategy is as much about how we structure of staff, as it is about clear involvement and pathway for people who come to church for the first time.

Strategy reveals how focus expands.

“Programs live usually without a strategic value or direction.” – Will Mancini

Usually, there is no vertical relationship between programs and mission, nor horizontal relationship amongst programs.

“People don’t want more options, but more meaning through a better option.” – Will Mancini

Draw a picture for people about the ‘how’; the way that they enter the process at the church

This is the “Simple Church” contribution. Simple internal communication.

Church is known for confusing our strategy for success. Ex: “Our strategy is attendance, buildings, and cash.”

‘MISSION MEASURES as missional lifemarks’ answers the question “when are we successful?”

Keeps you from defining your strategy as success.

Marks of what sort of disciple your church is focused on producing.

It is so rare to find a church with an empowered definition of a win.

‘Quality control’ to the strategy’s ‘assembly line’

Are we giving people tools for defining ‘this is the sort of disciple we are trying to produce’; are we helping people aim at the right bulls-eye?

PART TWO – 4/20/2010

Strategy resources: *Made to Stick* by Chip Heath & Dan Heath (www.openforum.com/idea-hub/topics/managing/video/made-to-stick-creating-a-simple-strategy-fast-company)

“Programs do not attract people. People attract people.” - Will Mancini

The two reasons people don't take the next step:

1. People don't know **how** to take the next step
2. No one has invited them – “By having a simple strategy, you create a culture of contagious invitation.”

Alignment Ring

In a church plant, you only have one initiative taking energy.

After time, you add new initiatives that become competing in different directions, that potentially can dilute your clarity.

“Success assaults clarity.” – Will Mancini

Alignment/attunement grid

	Clarity – YES	Clarity - NO
Contribution – YES	CREW <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ready to go• High energy• involved	PIRATE <ul style="list-style-type: none">• competing vision• ready to hijack vision
Contribution – NO	PASSENGER <ul style="list-style-type: none">• tracking• yet not involved	STOWAWAY <ul style="list-style-type: none">• not clear on where we're going• just along for the ride

You need a pattern for how things work – if we can show people how things connect for strategy (grid) then we can move things forward

Make an inventory of weekly adult opportunities

If you had three time-slots that you had to invite people to, what would you do?

Two myths that lead to complexity:

1. Member: to validate their passion, we have to create a new structure (e.g., new counseling ministry, Celebrate Recovery)
2. Staff person: for me to be successful as a staff member means butts in seats in my ministry area

Instead, how do we take what makes every specific ministry great and distribute that into the simple strategy of your church

Clarity on what the 'when' is – what are the, for example, seven practices of a healthy disciple (or whatever it might be)

Mission: 1 clear statement

Strategy: 3-5 points/phrases

Values: 4-6 points/phrases

Mission Measures: 4-6 points/phrases

“Why are programs so powerful? Because they are pre-packaged clarity.” – Will Mancini

Sometimes, we unwittingly move our strategy up to our mission measures and then we lose our strategy and become a program machine

Take one day a month to clarify vision.

Q: Where is this flexible for response to the Holy Spirit, like Paul responding to Macedonian call?

Luke 8:1 (teaching); Luke 9:1 (sends 12); Luke 10:1 (sends 72)

6-9 months with 9-12 people as a core group

Rolling out changes through levels of leadership from top to larger congregation

You need to create environments of dialog, where people converse with growing understanding

4. Live Out – Deliver Your Vision Daily

You must integrate all of this:

- Developing leadership
- Intentional communication
- Duplicate-able process
- Compelling environments
- Conscious Culture

Vision Casting Spider Diagram – what are the essential elements when you want to articulate this vision?

Think of this as the six colors, if you’re going to paint a compelling picture

The most commonly missing elements are “Burning Platform” and “Mind Stretch”

“If the idea at first is not absurd, there is not hope for it.” – Einstein

Listen to MLK's "I Have a Dream" speech:

Common denominator: shared history of black slavery; shared history of Constitution "all men are created equal"; justice for "all of God's children"; common destiny of black & white – "we cannot walk alone"

Burning platform: the 'promissory note' has not been cashed yet, but it is ready;

Golden tomorrow: "until the bright day of justice emerges"; "I have a dream that one day..."

Wake-up call: "the fierce urgency of now"; "now is the time"; not gradualism; "we cannot be satisfied as long..."; "if America is going to be a great nation, this must be true [let freedom ring]"

Mind stretch: dignity & discipline – no physical violence; "meeting physical force with soul force"

God smile: justice for "all of God's children"; "Free at last, free at last..."; Isaiah imagery

Justice is a bank vault, an oasis...vivid imagery

This is something that we do every time we have conversations with people, even the three-minute recruiting conversation in the hall