

**Understanding and Developing
a Purpose, Vision & Mission Statement
for Ministries and the Church**



Vision Ministry
Uniting with a Vision & Purpose



Purpose, Vision, & Mission Statements

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INTRODUCTION

THE VISION MINISTRY

I realized several years ago that having only a mission statement, or even having all three components (purpose, vision and mission) without having them linked together and dependent on each other is almost useless. Without a unified strategy, they become nothing more than good inspirational reading. You must understand that your objective for creating these statements for your church is, I hope, to obtain results that honor God and fulfill the Great Commission. Try following these guidelines:

- Always create your church purpose statement first. Make certain it clearly defines your biblical purpose for uniting as a church.
- Next, create your church vision statement. It will be in line with your purpose, and it will allow your people to visualize your church's future, progress, and growth.
- Last, each ministry, committee, or group should create their own mission statement. A mission statement outlines their specific need for organizing and assembling and working together. A mission statement should detail the strategies and activities needed by that group or ministry. But more than that, the result of those strategies and activities must be advancement towards the church's vision and is in keeping with the church's purpose for existing. Ultimately, an appropriate mission statement must include a clear understanding of the church's purpose and vision and is written with full intent to link that group's ministry to the church's purpose and vision. **Warning:** If a group is permitted to have a ministry that is not linked to the church's purpose and vision, it will syphon off energy and resources, impede strategic church growth and very likely even harm the church.

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UNDERSTANDING:

Almost every church, business, or organization will create a mission statement to distribute, post on a website, or print in promotional materials. Most mission statements are very well written and thought out to actually describe their desired mission. However, we find that once it has been created it is very rarely mentioned or emphasized. It is not used when organizing task, meetings, or goals. Also, most members, staff or employees will have no idea what the written mission statement conveys and will not be able to recall its wording.

Within this manual we are only dealing with understanding and developing a purpose, vision and mission statement for ministries and the church. So first let's make sure we are on the same page in understanding the definitions used for the words Purpose, Vision, and Mission in our desired task.

Purpose:

1. The reason for which something exists or is done, or made.
2. An intended or desired result; end; or aim.
3. Determination; resoluteness.

Vision:

1. The act or power of sensing with the eyes; sight.
2. The act or power of anticipating that which will or may come to be: prophetic vision; the vision of an entrepreneur.
3. Something seen or otherwise perceived during such an experience: The vision revealed its message.

Mission:

1. The business with which such a group is charged to accomplish.
2. An operational task usually assigned or agreed upon to act on and complete.
3. An operation designed to carry out the goals for a specific purpose.

Now that we are on the same page with the definitions let's try to clear up any misunderstanding regarding why a purpose statement, vision statement, and mission statements are needed. They are needed to develop unity, direction and fulfillment of the church's purpose for existing. With this being understood we develop a need within the church for more than just statements. We create a need for an organized "Vision Ministry".

When you read the mission statements of many churches you will notice their statement is more in line with the definitions we have for a vision or purpose. They really have no defined mission statement. This is a very common issue with churches and is an example of the need for direction and a unified purpose for accomplishing the church's God given commission.

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DEVELOPING:

A purpose statement will answer the question: Why do we exist?

Purpose Statement:

Statement of fact for church existence / identifies the most important values for existing.

A vision statement will answer the question: What will we look like when we are effectively accomplishing our purpose?

Vision Statement:

Statement describing the overall view of the desired future status of your Church.

Your vision statement describes how you desire your church to look in one year, five years, and ten year. Your vision statement should be reviewed and updated annually.

A mission statement will provide direction and an understanding for action that will result in our vision becoming reality.

Mission Statement(s):

Statement of action which includes steps for reaching a desired final result(s).

Every ministry and organized group within the church should develop their own mission statement that supports the church's purpose and vision statements.

*The Just Live by Faith
Habakkuk 2: 2-4*

2 Then the LORD answered me and said:

“Write the vision

And make it plain on tablets,

That he may run who reads it.

3 For the vision is yet for an appointed time;

But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie.

Though it tarries, wait for it;

Because it will surely come,

It will not tarry.

4 “Behold the proud,

His soul is not upright in him;

But the just shall live by his faith.

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(Purpose and Vision Statement Examples)

OUR CHURCH'S PURPOSE: (Example)

The purpose of Community Church is to bring together and unite Christian believers by ministering and shepherding individuals and families with the love, care, and compassion of Jesus Christ for the ultimate purpose of fulfilling the Great Commission.

OUR CHURCH'S VISION: (Example)

We envision Community Church as: A united body of XXXX believers organized and biblically structured in leadership. A mission minded church with a commitment to evangelism throughout our community and through the world that has planted XXX churches. A Christ serving church committed to reaching the lost and un-churched people for His Kingdom and His glory. A church recognized for its friendly, loving, and passionate concern for people with a commitment to teaching the gospel through worship and ministry opportunities. A church fervently working to develop lifestyles devoted to Kingdom living and Christian servanthood that has produce XXX servants called to the ministry or mission field from our membership, and is now sponsoring XXX missionaries in the US and other countries.

What is Kingdom Living?

Kingdom living is easier to picture than to describe. Look at the early church as depicted in Acts 2: 42-47. The early Christians devoted themselves to doctrinal teaching, to fellowship, worship, and prayer. They willingly shared their property and possessions with those who had need. They spent time together with great joy. Kingdom living is about the building of healthy interpersonal relationships in the church and then extending that in ministry to the community by fulfillment of the Great Commission.

What is Christian Servanthood?

Christian servanthood is given to us by example throughout the entire Bible revealing a wonderful lifestyle filled with blessings and opportunities to see lives changed as never seen before. Living out our perception of how Christ lived, as a servant to others, is the ultimate example after which we ought to fashion our lives. When we figure out what it means to lead by serving, this is when we truly understand what servanthood was meant to be.

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GOALS:

We are often told that we have overlooked goal-setting or the importance of setting goals with our information provided on purpose, vision and mission statements. Well, let me explain that we view goals in the same way we do a target you desire hit, or a level of achievement you desire to reach or obtain. We believe you cannot establish effective goal-setting without first knowing your purpose, and without having a clear vision for the results in reaching or hitting your goals. We strongly believe in goal-setting and believe goals are set based on the mission statement and mission activities of each ministry or group. Goals should be set and update regularly. You should set short term goals, long term goals, event goals, numerical goals, and overall ministry goals. Not setting goals is like trying to hit a target while wearing a blind fold. It is almost impossible to accomplish anything without goal setting.

COMMUNICATE:

We have mentioned several times the importance of communicating your purpose and vision statement. Your leadership and staff should understand that everything organized, planned or scheduled should be reviewed by asking two questions.

- 1. Does what we are planning, organizing, or scheduling fit within the purpose of the church?**
- 2. Does what we are planning, organizing, or scheduling advance us toward our vision for our church?**

If you cannot answer both of these questions with a YES you need to correct the problem or not proceed.

Every staff person, committee chairman, or leadership person of any position within the church should always have a copy of the church's purpose and vision statement available and with them at every meeting they attend. The Pastor should communicate to all leadership and church staff the importance of unity and direction within the church, and there is no better way to accomplish this than to have a clearly defined and communicated purpose and vision statement. When all organizations and ministries within a church agree that they exist for the same purpose and vision you have unity.

CONCLUSION:

Every day I strap on my wrist watch for the purpose of being able to know the time of day when needed. I do this without even considering why I am doing it. Within the church every activity and planned event should ultimately be focused on the purpose and vision statements of the church. This should be happening without even knowing you are doing it. Focusing on the church's single purpose and vision should be as simple for everyone to understand as me strapping on my wrist watch every day. This will result in a church unified and growing.

Sadly, we see churches that are always busy with activities, ministry meetings, events providing members with entertaining programs, and fellowship... but they are not growing or reaching the lost. It is our conclusion that this is the result of churches not having a clearly defined and communicated purpose and vision statement. A clearly defined and communicated purpose statement and vision statement unifies the membership, ministries, and leadership of a church.

“The vision of what God can do is a powerful motivator”