

## Session 3

# My Church Planting Master Plan: Discerning God's Vision

### How to Create a Vision Statement

A vision statement is a clear and simple \_\_\_\_\_ of what you believe \_\_\_\_\_ wants your congregation to be. It should communicate an overall \_\_\_\_\_ of your congregation in its ideal state, but be specific enough to focus people on definite action. Also, it should describe a state of being that you must work \_\_\_\_\_, not one that already is accomplished.

In order to be relevant to your target area, your Vision Statement should reflect what you have learned in your research.

### Four Examples of Vision Statements

- I. "We will be a church full of the Holy Spirit, growing in the likeness of Christ."
- II. "We will be the light of Christ in the darkness of our community."
- III. "We will be a community of faith that shines with the righteousness and hope of Christ in our congregation, city, and other parts of the world."
- IV. "We will be a righteous and faithful congregation, serving the lost as well as fellow believers in our community, region, and around the world."

Note that each vision statement reflects what God has taught us in His Word about what His Church should be like. However, the statements are not equal in effectiveness as vision statements.



I. THE FIRST STATEMENT describes a state of being that could be partially true now, with improvement expected over time. It does not contain specific characteristics of the congregation or ministry action towards which to work.

II. THE SECOND STATEMENT is more vague and could be true at any time in various ways. Again, there is no mention of the characteristics of the congregation or of any level of ministry action.

III. THE THIRD STATEMENT is fairly complete, as it describes the characteristics of the congregation (righteous and hopeful in Christ) and where they will minister (congregation, city, and other parts of the world). Both the characteristics and the reach of the ministry are elements towards which to work.

IV. THE FOURTH STATEMENT is the most complete. It communicates characteristics of the congregation, the intended recipients of the ministry, and the physical reach of the ministry. These ideals are clearly stated and the content is biblical.



## ACTIVITIES

1. In small groups or in pairs, list several single words that describe your new congregation as if it were just right according to biblical principles—the way you believe God wants it to be! Some words might be: righteous, faithful, loving, joyful, compassionate, generous, etc. These words describe the congregation's character. List these descriptive words by using each one to complete the sentence:

God wants us to be...

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2. Next, list to whom you believe you are to minister by completing this sentence:

God wants us to serve...(whom?)

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3. Finally, list several actions that your new congregation will be doing when it is in its ideal state. These may be phrases. Some examples are:

- Taking the gospel to the world
- Ministering to all ages in our community
- Engaging all members in spiritual discipleship
- Growing regularly in financial strength

You can list these actions by completing this sentence:

4. We will express our character through...

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5. Now, discuss with your partner or small group the words you chose to describe the congregation's ideal character, the people the church will serve, and the phrases indicating your congregation's ideal actions. Choose the most important three on each list and write them down.

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6. Finally, write a vision statement that uses the most important descriptive words, ministry recipients, and action phrases. (You may use the third or fourth sample vision statement above as a model.)

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Share with the large group the vision statement that you have written. Work together with the large group to make sure that your wording is clear and communicates your thoughts exactly.

7. Take note of comments shared, and write the final vision statement here.

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8. What are the biblical texts that support this vision?

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9. Fine-tune the vision statement so that it is clear and simple. How can you communicate this vision to the launch team and invite it to adopt the vision as its own? What will the congregation need to understand and believe in order to support this vision? How can you help the congregation do this?

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***Lunch (60 min.)***