

L MESSAGE

Final Destination

Vision leaks. Every 21 days the vision needs to be recast in order for it to remain a priority in people's minds. – Thought adapted from Bill Hybels.

REFLECTION

There are so many things to say about vision! So for the sake of time and space I'll give you what I feel are the absolute necessities! I feel that a true God honouring vision is embraced when we realise, articulate and own God's picture of a desired future for us! Vision is the picture that God wants to place before every leader, of what the future could look like if we combine our love for people and God and leadership gifting and abilities.

I strongly believe that God has a vision for each and every ministry we establish, whether it be a Church, a Children's ministry, a prayer group, a Church Council or a gardening team! The Bible speaks of vision being an absolute necessity, the classic verse that springs to mind is Prov 29:18, without vision we are going to be in deep trouble quite soon! Without a clear understanding of where God is wanting us to head, we are fulfilling the old saying "A man who does not know where he is going, will surely get there!"

Realising God's picture takes time, it takes steadfast prayer, consultation with those we are leading and leading with, disciplined study of the Scriptures, observance of the reality of the current situation and an appreciation for timing! When the vision is realised it needs to be embraced. We need to sit with it, weigh up the cost of achieving it and among other things begin to think in terms of what changes this will mean. Once the vision is ours, when we think on it daily, pray for it feverently, are kept awake at night by the possibilities it offers us, then it is time to articulate and cast the vision.

Vision needs to be communicated as simply and straightforwardly as possible. If it's too complicated people won't understand it; if it's too lengthy people won't remember it; if it's too vague people won't sign up to it; if it's too broad people won't be gripped by it. A vision once written out should be able to fit on a T-Shirt (*or a pen!*), and convey the essence of the picture that God has placed before you! It's time we each committed to harnessing the power and energy of vision to inspire God's people, focus our energy and further God's kingdom.

CHALLENGE

What is your vision? Could you fit it onto a SMALL T-Shirt, and still be able to read it at a distance? Is it concise? Is it relevant? Is it God's? And if you want a vision do you know why?

Ownership of vision is perhaps the toughest part! How do you make people own a vision? Vision leaks! I learnt this the hard way. In the Youth Ministry I was involved in, in Melton, I gave them the vision "To lead young People into a Relationship with Jesus"! IT was a brilliant vision, except it was mine! I never understood that this vision for it to be successful needed to be owned by all those whom were working toward it! So whilst it drove me, it took a long time to grip and drive those others that I was leading with. Why? Because I forced it upon them! In Seymour UC we did things differently, and it took a lot longer, but we all had an equal share in developing the vision, and this allowed God's spirit to speak to the community, not just to one leader. The up side is we have a functional vision which was given to us by God and is being fulfilled before our very eyes.

There are too many visions stuck on Church walls, or hidden in Minutes of meetings, that although sound very lovely, have nothing to do with directing the Church in line with God's desire.