

***The Power of
vision
in the life of a leader***

Dr. Victor Nazario © 2006

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INTRODUCTION

By its very definition, a leader's responsibility is to be at the helm or at the head advancing, showing the way, and directing. It is impossible to lead effectively without a clear and articulate vision. By that, I mean that any individual, group or organization is in need of a clear destination. They must have a clear purpose for existing if they are ever going to be effective. Vision does not have to be something way out there like "the burning bush" or "an angelic visitation." It does, however, need to be a challenging and awe inspiring picture of a beneficial future. It has to be something that will grab the heart and mind.

An effective and inspiring vision will most certainly bring you out of your comfort level. It will inevitably push you to go higher or to dig deeper. A Godly vision will compel you to trust more, to persevere, and to break out of your current way of thinking and acting.

According to The Merriam Webster's dictionary, part of the definition of vision includes:

Something seen in a dream. A thought, concept, or object formed by the imagination. A manifestation to the senses of something immaterial. The act or power of imagination.

God created us not only with the ability to see with our natural eyes, but also with the ability to "see the unseen." The Scriptures are full of examples where God challenges us to see beyond our current state. One great example is when He told Abraham to gaze at the stars and at the sand, then shared with him that how large and his descendants would become (Genesis 13:14; 15:4).

In another example, we see that God revealed to Jeremiah that before He had ever formed him in the womb, He had already set him apart and appointed him Prophet to the Nations (Jer. 1:4).

Two very important things come to light as we consider the impact that vision has in our lives, our ministries, and/or organization.

1. Vision flows out of your unique purpose. God told Abraham that he would be the father of nations. He told Jeremiah that he was a Prophet to the nations. This set their course in life.

In Ephesians 2:10, the Apostle Paul taught that God had predestined and prearranged our lives for good works:

Eph 2:10 - For we are God's [own] handiwork (His workmanship), recreated in Christ Jesus, [born anew] that we may do those good works which God predestined (planned beforehand) for us [taking paths which He prepared ahead of time], that we should walk in them [living the good life which He prearranged and made ready for us to live] (AMPLIFIED VERSION).

Note in the above verse how God has a purpose for every person. This purpose gives us uniqueness in life. It sets us apart and makes us special.

Our abilities, tendencies, and proclivities are part of the way God formed us. When we flow in our abilities and gifts, it gives us great joy and satisfaction because it stems from our uniqueness. This very uniqueness is connected to God's purpose for us. Our abilities and gifts allow us to be who God designed us to be. These very abilities also give us the privilege of being a blessing to our families as well as humanity in general.

The Apostle also shared this powerful revelation with the believers at Corinth:

1 Cor 12:4-8

4 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. 7. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:

1 Cor 12:11

But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.
New King James Version

2. God has already ordained us before we were ever born to fulfill a significant ministry service. Jeremiah had been designed by God to be a Prophet. Even when he attempted to stop ministering in the Name of the Lord, he simply couldn't. The burden would be too great and he would feel compelled to resume his ministry:

Jer 20:9: Then I said, "I will not make mention of Him, nor speak anymore in His name." But His word was in my heart like a burning fire Shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, and I could not. NKJV

When you realize that the things you love to do such as singing, teaching, helping others, etc. stem from your unique purpose, you can once again begin to dream of doing great things with these desires and dreams. You also stop trying to be like others, recognizing that your gifts and abilities were given to you by God to fulfill a very significant responsibility and ministry. You are just as important as any other minister even though you are different, and your gifts are different from other ministers. Some will minister their gifts in a church setting. Others will minister their gifts in the Market place. Still others will minister their gifts in a Government setting, etc. Your unique purpose will allow you to "see" yourself serving others in very special and pivotal ways.

Vision also allows us to "see" a more beneficial future. Remember part of the definition of vision is: A thought, concept, or object formed by the imagination. A manifestation to the senses of something immaterial. This principle is very powerful because even though you are experiencing a currently undesirable reality, you can envision a more beneficial future, and this vision can spur you to great and permanent change that will propel you into that more beneficial future!

NOTE:

I share powerful principles in my newly authored book "Prosperous leaders in the new millennium that will explain in detail how to break out of any vision limits and cause you to begin to soar to new heights in life, ministry, and enterprise. In this book, I'll teach you:

- **The 11 critically important reasons why /leaders/people don't prosper in life, ministry, or the marketplace**
- **The scriptural processes that can help you to change any destructive personal habits**
- **How to use your God-given emotions effectively**
- **The processes that EVERY upcoming leader must experience**
- **How vision literally changed my personal life and ministry**
- **How to re-create your personal and ministry environment for success**

For further information on how to obtain this powerful book, [GO TO CALVARYNY.ORG](http://CALVARYNY.ORG)

I can vividly remember how vision got a hold of me in my early days. If it were not for vision, I would probably not be alive today.

My Personal Experience With the Power of Vision —

At twelve years of age, life and culture taught me that I would never really amount to anything. I was raised in the streets of Harlem, New York during the late 60's and early 70's. We experienced very difficult times living in that community during those years. Gangs and gang violence were rampant during those days. I can still vividly remember several close brushes with death. One time in particular, a Spanish gang accosted my friend, Stanley, and me. First, the gang hit Stanley with a baseball bat in his ear. Then, as the gang member turned to hit me also, one of them recognized me and asked if I spoke Spanish. I of course responded in Spanish and said, "YES!" When they heard that I spoke the same language as they did, the gang members let me go without hurting me.

On another occasion, I went to a building on Amsterdam Avenue in New York City to pick up my basketball. I had previously lent it to a gang member since I really had no choice in the matter. You never said no to gang members! Anyway, when I entered the building, two gang members grabbed me and accused me of illegally entering their "turf." These tough guys handcuffed me and proceeded to take me to the roof to push me off the ledge. They were really angry, because I had violated the boundaries of their "turf."

When we finally reached the last floor, just before the roof level, one of the apartment doors opened up. The leader of the gang whose turf I violated came out. He was the very person I happened to have lent the basketball to! He saw them taking me to the roof and called them. He asked them where were they taking me? The young men responded by telling him I was an intruder. He ordered them to let me go because I was an OK person. I do not need to explain to you how terrified I was. I was scared beyond words! This incident eventually caused me to further develop a hatred for that neighborhood.

Several months later, my mother told me she was moving my younger brother and me to Puerto Rico, the place of her birth. I was excited, because I was born and raised in New York City. I never really experienced Puerto Rico, nor was I ever exposed to my Mom and

Dad's culture. Since I had developed a terrible hatred for my immediate neighborhood, I welcomed the move. Unknowingly, I was about to experience a definite eye-opener.

About two months after moving to Puerto Rico, I quickly came to grips with a sad reality. If a person of Puerto Rican decent was not actually born on the island, you were not considered a "true" Puerto Rican by some of its natives. Needless to say, I was ridiculed and harassed by many kids in school. Now, you need to understand that I was only twelve years old. This was disastrous to my self- image. Think about it a moment, I felt that I was not accepted in my old neighborhood, and now I was not accepted in my parent's birth place, the beautiful island of Puerto Rico.

I was quite miserable. I felt like I did not belong anywhere, so I began to fight with all my might to try to convince my mother to take us back to New York. Eventually, we did return to the Big Apple. It was so ironic that I felt more at home in N.Y.C. than in Puerto Rico. However, this did not change the stigma and perception about the way I saw myself. Once there, I would hear over and over how people from my culture and neighborhood would never amount to anything. We learned to just survive. I saw many Hispanics ultimately succumb to drug addictions or alcohol. But thank God for vision!

At age fifteen, I visited a church where the guest speaker taught about the love of God and how He accepts us as His children. He said that God can actually make us part of His own family. I learned that God actually forgives our trespasses and sins. His sermon had such a profound and eternal impact on how I viewed myself as well as those who had hurt and offended me in times past. I received Jesus as my Lord and Savior on that day. I was so astounded that I now belonged to a Royal family! I was now a son of the King of Kings. I learned that I was special in God's eyes. From that day on, God gave me a renewed inner picture or image of myself. This was pivotal for me. I was still holding on to an unimaginable grudge against the neighborhood that I was raised in as well as Puerto Rico for the way I had been abused and mistreated. Later in my walk with God, I began to experience and see an incredible healing take place in my life. This happened as a result of my living a life of forgiveness that was now empowered by this new relationship with Christ.

God's desire is that you prosper and be in good health (3 John 2). You can make your way prosperous and enjoy good success (Joshua 1: 8,9). You can triumph in all things (2 Cor. 2: 14). These scriptures

helped me to start changing the way I viewed the future as well as my surroundings. With this newfound understanding and vision, I began to think, see, act, and react differently. This would indeed be a watershed moment in my life. I now had a healthy new vision and positive outlook because of my relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Vision also apprehended me when I was eighteen years old. I saw a "vision" of a beautiful young lady by the name of Gwendolyn. We fell in love and wanted to get married. However, when I went to my future Mother-in-law for her hand in marriage, she questioned me as to how would I be able to take care of her daughter, seeing that I had no real career or experience. So, I immediately went out to seek employment. It is amazing how powerful our combined life experiences affect every decision we make.

My Dad and others in my family were Doormen in luxury buildings in the Midtown area of Manhattan. Since this is what I saw them doing to make money, I sought to do the same. What happened next changed the way I pursued a career and how I saw myself.

I was quite fortunate to land a job at a luxury building in the midtown area as (You guessed it!) a Doorman. I was hired as a Doorman, because that's all I knew. I always "saw" myself doing just that, because I was taught by my surroundings to do just that.

Now, the person who hired me, Mr. Alonzo Ramirez, managed the entire luxury building. His nationality was, of all things, Puerto Rican! This realization blew me away! I was taught by my surroundings and my ignorance that Puerto Ricans were not able to achieve that level of success. Every morning I opened the door for Mr. Ramirez's lovely family who lived in this luxury building. This, of course, was part of the benefits package of being the Resident Manager of this luxury building. I observed how his wife and children were treated like royalty. I also noticed Mr. Ramirez being treated with great dignity and respect. I saw his family every day and would say within myself, "One day, I would like to have people treat me, my future wife, and children like that." This really impacted and greatly affected me. It became imperative for me to ask this manager how he, being a Puerto Rican, was able to land a "cushy" job like that. When I did ask him, Mr. Ramirez gently smiled and explained to me in detail how he achieved his goal. I will be forever grateful to Mr. Ramirez for his personal pep talk.

He explained with great detail how to acquire various certificates of fitness, take various building related courses, and generate a certain amount of experience in this field. He encouraged me, and with that encouragement, I said to myself that I can also achieve the same success. As Mr. Ramirez spoke, I started to see myself in his position. In my mind's eye, I began to imagine a future picture of me managing a beautiful building with a Doorman and a Concierge. I vividly pictured my wife and children exiting a building with a distinguished Doorman. In my mind's eye, I would see him saying to my family, "Good morning Mrs. Nazario.... good morning children." Then I pictured the Doorman open the door for them as they exited a luxurious Manhattan building. I continued to envision this picture every day, until it became a burning desire within me. This caused me to relentlessly pursue that marvelous vision.

Empowered by this new vision, I enrolled in a residential building maintenance school and began to acquire the necessary permits and certificates of fitness I needed to become a resident manager. I went to night school for approximately six years until I acquired all the degrees that I needed. I remember the many days my friends would come up to me and say, "Victor, how come you don't come out and play basketball with us anymore?" "Take a break and hang out with us." I simply responded, "I don't have time for that right now. I'm working on something really great for my family and me." "One day, you're going to see me managing luxury buildings in Midtown Manhattan." They laughed at me and call me a party pooper. This did not sway me from making my vision a reality. It was too powerful within me. My course was already set!

The day finally arrived, and I decided to tell my father that I was going to leave my job as a Doorman and pursue a Resident Manager's position. My father's advice to me was to be very careful, because the job I already had was a good one. My father asked what was going to happen to my family or me if it didn't work out. Since I saw the vision so clearly within me, I simply told him, "Just watch me prosper!" My father shrugged his shoulders and wished me well.

Within two short years, I was managing a wonderful Coop building in a very nice place in town. By the way, this building had a Doorman who welcomed my wife and my growing family every day! Needless to say, my father and friends were very proud of my accomplishments. They saw the benefits package that I was receiving at that luxury building. I was also able to help many of my friends get jobs within that industry. At one point, I even helped my father. My mother-in-law

was so proud of her successful son-in-law as well! I attribute all of this mostly to the wonderful ability that God has given us to be able to “see” things before they are ever a reality. The power of vision is vital and necessary if you are ever going to achieve anything significant in life. Every great leader intrinsically knows this and regularly operates in the principles of visionary leadership.

What would you attempt to do
if you knew you would not fail?

— *Robert Schuller* —

The Benefits of Vision in the Life of a Leader —

Most of us have seen the movie *The Ten Commandments* with the actor Charlton Heston playing the role of Moses. I will never forget the part where Moses sees the vision of the burning bush. It was there that God gave Moses instructions that would deliver Israel from over four hundred years of cruel bondage. Before Moses' encounter with this incredible vision there was no earthly answer to Israel's predicament. God had a divine plan that was hidden from all of mankind. God's concealed strategy was revealed to Moses and released thereafter

through this delegated leader. This God-inspired vision changed Moses' life and future forever. A vision equipped this leader to minister to the flock that God had entrusted to Him.

Vision never depends on current limitations or circumstances. When did Moses "SEE" the burning bush? Was it when Israel was in the apex of their success as a nation? Or was it when Israel was in great trouble and turmoil, oppressed and with their backs against the wall? God heard the prayers of a nation of people crying out to Him to deliver them from cruel bondage and oppression. As a result, God sent a leader who He personally formed throughout the process of many years in the backside of the desert.

God raised up a man in the midst of Israel's turmoil, and the first thing God gave Moses was "a vision." Consider what happened to Moses immediately after he saw the vision and acted on the corresponding instructions. His life changed forever! Moses went from a virtually forgotten person to an incredibly significant hero and legend because of a vision that he received at eighty years of age. An entire nation was miraculously delivered during his "visionary leadership." Israel's condition and God's vision for their future were completely incompatible. That's the beauty of leadership and vision. Current circumstances are not the determining factor. A leader's obedience to God and his corresponding leadership can and will determine the final outcome. This will help create a better and more desirable future for many.

Vision Thrusts You Out of Your Comfort Level —

Moses was evidently not prepared for this type of responsibility. He had absolutely no idea what he was about to do, nor did he understand the enormity of the task! When challenged with this vision Moses had the same fears and concerns as anyone else would have.

ÿ "God instructed Moses by saying, 'so now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.' But Moses responded, 'Who am I, that I

should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt? ” — Ex 3:10-11

Moses most probably thought, “Who am I?” “I’m not sufficient!” “I’m not worthy to take on such an incredibly important responsibility!” “Surely there are others who are more qualified to do this!” “I’ve been in this desert tending sheep quietly for many years. How can I go now and accomplish this gargantuan, seemingly impossible task in my condition and at my age?” I am convinced that these and many other fears and concerns welled up within him.

In addition, Moses was not clear on how to explain the vision to others, nor did he know how to go about it. Yet, God not only gave him a vision, but He gave him clear instructions.

A clear vision is vital in order to be able to begin to write down an essential plan to accomplish the challenge. As one person put, “How will you know how to get there if you don’t have the directions?” A clear, compelling vision causes many essential things to be set in motion, which I will discuss a little further down the road.

Moses also had self-esteem issues and was not certain that he was qualified to handle and accomplish this enormous task. This is not out of the ordinary. Every person who desires to do something great that will benefit others will have to deal with how they see themselves. Much of the limitations in your life are self-imposed. There are many that would like to do more, but they do not think they are worthy. Some individuals think their time is over and their opportunities are lost. Still others think that they are not smart enough. There are many other variables but the bottom line is that you are not the only one who has internal barriers to success and effective leadership.

This challenge can be rather difficult to deal with, yet every leader and visionary has to overcome it and rise to the occasion. In Exodus chapter 3, verse 18, God clearly states that the elders of Israel would listen to Moses. Yet, Moses asks God “*What if they do not believe me or listen to me...?*” Moses needed to get to the place of belief and obedience above the opinions, comments, or beliefs of the masses. I have learned that people may have good ideas as to how I should serve God, raise my kids, plan for the future, or handle my money; however, no one can really give us a perfect solution as to how to handle our future. Opinions and good intentions of others will not be enough. This is the time to dig deep and seek God. It is there that we realize that

God was always the best source of vision and purpose. After all, God is our creator, and knows what we are best suited to do.

Moses was understandably concerned, because he knew the nature of the people. He figured that they would not react positively to an eighty-year-old man speaking to bushes. Moses had to determine within himself that no matter what the people thought, he was going to believe and act on what God had shown him. Most times, your God-inspired vision will seem crazy to those around you. Moreover, God will not show it to everyone. He will reveal it to a man or woman who will allow Him to work through them from generation to generation.

Israel was in a state of bondage for hundreds of years, so it was a multi-generational bondage that existed among them. When a leader speaks of vision among people that have been in bondage, their perspective in life many times will actually hinder them from clearly seeing a Godly vision or listening to Godly leaders. In fact, when you speak vision to people who are bound with mind-sets of poverty, oppression, depression, defeat, fear, and doubt, they might react angrily. They may even get offended! Some will question you and say, "Who do you think you are?" Others will see, understand, and embrace what you are saying, and it will forever change their lives and their futures. You must never allow those who would say, "We can't!" "We will not!" and "Who do you think you are?," to influence you to the point that it paralyzes you. We must gently "lead" them out of this life-long trap of excuses, complaining, and bickering, into the green pastures of vision and purpose, that they too would be able to have life and life in abundance!

God continued to instruct Moses concerning the enormous task that he was about to embark. God answered Moses' questions one by one and eased his concerns. This is why leaders must pray and meditate on God's Word on a daily basis. It will clarify their vision, strengthen their "feeble knees," and allow them to focus enough to crystallize their goals. Then they will be able to "write down the vision and make it plain."

The higher you want to climb, the more you need leadership. The greater the impact you want to make, the greater your influence needs to be.

— Robert Schuller —

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The Multi-faceted Benefits of a God-Inspired Vision —

ÿ “Where there is no vision [no redemptive revelation of God], the people perish; but he who keeps the law [of God, which includes that of man]--blessed (happy, fortunate, and enviable) is he.” — Prov 29:18 (Amp)

- A) Vision is Given by God. When God calls you, the first thing He will give you is a “Vision,” a burning desire and passion to do something redemptive or beneficial for a people, a region, or a nation. A vision within you is a confirmation that God has marked you to do something significant in your life that you, your family, and “your people” need. Remember, God seeks someone who will stand in the gap. When God finds that person, He will co-labor with him or her. God will then begin to reveal His purpose and plan through them. When Israel cried to God in Egypt, He identified and sent Moses. God empowered Moses to be a change agent. He is still doing this very same thing today!
- B) Vision Will Clarify Your Task. A vision will greatly clarify the things that you will need to do. It will help you to chart your course and map out your life journey. Habakkuk 2:2 says

ÿ *“Write the vision down and make it plain that he may run who reads it”* — Hab 2:2

A vision outlines the road you are to travel, as well as the one you are NOT to travel. Vision helps you to focus on the things that are relevant to your journey and calling in life. All the “other” things seem insignificant in relation to your purpose. This helps you to maximize your days, weeks, and months. No day is unimportant or insignificant. Everything you do now takes on urgency and relevance. Vision crystallizes your view of things.

- C) Vision Will Take You Out of Your Comfort Level. When God called Moses, Joshua, Joseph, David, Elisha, Daniel, Paul, and others like them, they were all taken out of their normal life and family settings. They were all taken into a series of life challenges which always kept them seeking God for wisdom and strategies. These Godly men continued to press through, because they realized that what they were doing was greater than them. They also realized that without the help of God, it would be impossible to accomplish it.

- D) Vision Infuses You with Energy and Faith. A clear compelling vision infuses your life with new, passionate faith, increased energy, and vitality. It is so amazing how quickly one can shift from a dull, boring, routine existence to an incredibly exhilarating adventure. It is dependent on what you “see.” Some do not think that life is worth living due to their surroundings and experiences, yet, right in their own town or city, there are those who are excited to be alive. These optimists look forward to every single day with a positive expectancy and outlook. The determining factor is what they believe is going to happen in and around their lives.

A good example of how quickly a person’s energy level and outlook in life can suddenly and radically change is how they respond when they win a lottery. You can actually see the metamorphosis right before your eyes. Seconds before knowing they were the winners of a substantial lottery jackpot, most were in debt, distressed, and discontented with their lives. They were probably tired and frustrated with their dreary life and negative circumstances. They were simply ready to give up. Suddenly, when they realize that they have just won the lottery, they instantly exude new strength and vitality. They jump up and down like children. They laugh and call all their friends and family members. Now, they have the energy and strength to travel the world. They start dreaming again.

Where did all that new energy come from? It came from a fresh new outlook due to the news of a better future. The money is still in the bank, but they are already acting like they have it. Although this example is not a good or effective way to fix your future, it is only one of many on how a clear, compelling vision of a grand future will do for you. If life is dull and boring and you have no desire in life, there is a strong probability that you need a new vision in your life. You need something that will challenge you to come out of your routine. You need a vision that comes alongside your life’s destiny.

- E) Vision allows the Leader to see how to work out his Destiny and Purpose. Vision shows you the things that you must focus on, as well as the things you must let go of.

Jesus did not have time to waste because His vision compelled Him to “*be about His Father's business.*” Everything Jesus did reflected His passion and desire to accomplish the burning vision within.

In his Epistle to the Philippians, the Apostle Paul shared his own focus on the future vision that was shown to him:

ÿ “*Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*” — Phil 3:12-14

Paul was never going to allow anything in the past nor present deter him from accomplishing what he believed God had instructed him to do. If you look at his life history, you will see that he indeed accomplished what he set out to do. His focus on the clear future panorama in his mind and heart gave him the edge that he needed.

- F) Vision Causes You to Expect Success. When we receive a Godly vision, we are encouraged and expect success because His Word clearly states it. Then again, a lack of vision destroys futures, dreams, and hopes:

ÿ “*Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.*” — Proverbs 29:18

- G) Vision Produces Confidence and Stability. A Godly vision produces personal confidence and stability. You become confident that God is leading you and in control of your life, your circumstances, and situations. You are certain that God will somehow order your steps, and whatever may be happening around you cannot ultimately deter you from receiving what you have already seen within. You realize that God has released a supernatural grace, wisdom and strategy on your behalf.

You are convinced that there is going to be an absolute breakthrough, because you know that God is not limited to our earthly circumstances. Although the vision you see is larger than you, you know that you are not alone. God and you are a majority!

- H) Vision Has the Ability to attract Resources. Vision will draw people's talents and valuable resources to you. It causes people from different backgrounds, ethnicities, and languages to come together and be united to a common purpose. Genesis Chapter 11 shows the power that vision has to unify. Vision can work for good as well as for evil.

ÿ *“Now the whole earth had one language and one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there. Then they said to one another, ‘Come, let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly.’ They had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar. And they said, ‘Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.’ But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. **And the LORD said, ‘Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them.’”***

— Gen 11:1-6

In Psalm 133 (NKJV), King David spoke on the power and beauty of unity:

ÿ *“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity*

King David saw how the unity among the brethren created an atmosphere of eternal life, health, and good will among all. In those days, Kings and Priests were anointed with oil as a symbol of consecration to their office. The oil was poured on the tops of their heads,

and it would flow all the way to their feet. Everyone knew when a person was consecrated. The smell of anointing oil was all over them. A person with a strong vision is the same. You can “smell” something different in a visionary. Their speech, outlook, and behavior attract and welcome you to join in on this grand, compelling vision. They are able to create and foster an atmosphere that shouts to everyone, “Look at this vision and its ability to produce life and benefits for generations to come!”

- I. Vision Establishes Parameters. Vision helps you to establish parameters in your life, thus allowing you to focus your time, talent, and treasure on your purpose.

Vision is a very important gift and tool that God has provided, so we won't have to go through life without purpose, wasting our talents and abilities on insignificant things. The prosperous leader knows this, so he will learn all he can about vision and imagination. After all, does Mickey Mouse really exist? He does in the minds of millions of kids (and many who are not kids any more!). If a man could use his imagination to bring Mickey Mouse to life, what can the prosperous leader do for his family, community, and nation? It is time to start seeing the unseen. The world needs more visionaries.

Your vision will show you the type of education you need to effectively function in your “future success picture” —

It is a fact that success takes hard work. Part of that hard work is ongoing education and study in your given field of enterprise or service. However, many people have simply given up or don't have any energy to back to school, yet this is vital for you to become a vital resource. A clear, well articulated vision will help to foster the energy and enthusiasm you need to get started in your scholastic journey.

This is vital to understand because the fact is that you must continuously educate and prepare yourself if you're going to be effective in today's world. Most of what we learned in school years ago is irrelevant in today's marketplace. The good thing is there are many opportunities available for continuing your education. With the advent of the Internet, you can now tap into an almost unlimited supply of information and continuing education at any given time.

Most people know that doctors must update their knowledge continuously. Lawyers continue to go to seminars and conferences to stay on the cutting edge of the advances in law. Fortune 500 companies continuously bring in top-notch instructors to instruct and motivate their employees. They realize that their success depends upon the expertise, readiness and updated skills of their employees. We must do no less in our own personal development.

Most people spend their lives making excuses about why they can never “get a break”. They are always blaming others or pointing to situations that have prevented them to grow on a personal level. They blame their past, their parents, their friends, their supervisors and their culture instead of looking in the mirror. All of this is mostly a smoke screen to hide the real truth. They simply refuse to take responsibility for their growth.

“We have the innate desire to endlessly learn, grow, and develop. We want to become more than we already are. Once we yield to this inclination for continuous and never ending improvement, we lead a life of endless accomplishments and satisfaction.”

— *Chuck Gallozzi* —

The truth of the matter is that we will not change until:

- We see ourselves in a better, brighter future, equipped with new talents, abilities and skill sets
- We decide the future is more desirable than the present
- We embrace change as an ally
- We activate the season of change by researching and learning how to function like the future picture

You must make a clear, determined decision that you are not going to allow excuses, situations or current circumstances mar your legacy. You are ultimately responsible for your future.

About eight years ago, I began telling those close to me that I would one day attain a Doctorate in Theology. This has become one of my life's goals. The challenge was that I only had a Bachelor's degree in Theology. I had to first get the Master's degree.

So, I set out to achieve that sub-goal. I stopped focusing on the Doctorate degree and focused on the Master's program. I finally achieved that goal in 2002. It was a great day for my family and for me. We enjoyed that accomplishment together. However, in the back of my mind, I knew that this was a step closer to the larger goal. During the writing of this book, I am finishing up my Doctoral studies, which will allow me to receive the degree I need to increase my ability to serve as an effective educator. What continues to motivate and encourage me is that I have already seen the internal picture of a more beneficial future for myself, for my family, and for those I serve. I clearly see the benefits and advantages. Therefore I don't mind sacrificing now for tomorrow's benefit, rather than relaxing now to tomorrow's detriment.

"What we do or don't do is the
seed of tomorrow's reality."


Victor Nazario

The writer of the Book of Proverbs wrote that without a vision, the people perish. Determine today within yourself to break out of any rut and mental paralysis by taking daily steps to educate yourself in the area of your talents and abilities. The world needs you to operate at that optimized level.

"What do you do when you realize you have a gift
or talent? Maximize that gift by studying and
learning all about it" Victor Nazario

In his e-book, *The 77 Mental Toughness Secrets of the World Class*, Steve Siebold shares this thought on education:

“Champions are committed to never-ending personal growth. Average performers believe learning and growing begins and ends in school. The World Class ranks realize graduation is the beginning of the road, not the end. Professional performers attempt so many things over the course of their lifetimes that the mental growth rate is staggering compared to the masses. While amateurs avoid risk at any cost, the great ones are always looking for opportunities. They are willing to fail their way to success. The belief of the champion according to author Larry Wilson is “I cannot fail...I can only learn and grow”. This belief makes pros very dangerous performers. While average people attempt to win while simultaneously trying to avoid pain, champions give it the full-court press with little or no concern about failing”.

 *“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”* — 2 Timothy 2:15a (KJV)

Vision helps you to create clear, written down, easy to understand goals that thrust you toward your “future picture”——

Obstacles are those frightful things you see
when you take your eyes off your goal.

— *Henry Ford* —

Every time I read a self-help book, listen to a motivational speaker, or go to a time management seminar the topic of goal-setting always surfaces. Effectively accomplishing your ministry, business, and life goals can only occur if you continuously write them down, review and adjust them as time goes along.


The power of well-defined, clearly articulated goals is quite phenomenal. Goals are similar to the road map you use when you are driving to a place where you have never been before. The bottom line is that you will never get there unless you have the destination's address and clear directions.

It is amazing to see how many people plan for such simple tasks as going to the movies, going to a ball game or planning a party, yet they fail to plan for their ministries, businesses and lives. I am thoroughly convinced that most people do not plan because they simply do not know the power and significance of goals. Goals motivate you to action. They move you away from the "dreaming" and "hoping" stage to the "activation" and "manifestation" stage.

In the 1950s, a study was conducted with a group of recent Yale graduates. Each was asked whether or not they had goals for their futures and if they had written them down. Only three percent said that they had specific, written goals. Years later, when a follow-up was done, the researchers found that the three percent who had written their goals down not only achieved much of what they originally wanted, but their net worth was as much as the other ninety seven percent of their classmates combined.

As we view creation we see an obvious, incredible and profound pattern of organization. All of nature is set in a symbiotic relationship that benefits all of life here on planet Earth. Without organization, life on Earth would simply cease to exist. In a similar fashion, without organized thoughts and goals, your hopes and dreams will never come to life.

Scripture says this about writing things down:

 *“Then the LORD answered me and said: ‘Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who*

reads it. 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. —
Habakkuk 2:2-3 (NKJV)

Those who write down their goals, dreams, and visions are guaranteed to accomplish far more than those who do not. In his book, *Eat that Frog*, Brian Tracy shares seven steps for setting and achieving your goals. I think his blueprint is easy to understand and implement:

1. Decide exactly what you want.
2. Write it down.
3. Set deadlines on your goal.
4. Make a list of everything that you can think of that you are going to have to do to achieve your goal.
5. Organize your list into a plan.
6. Take action on your plan immediately.
7. Resolve to do something every single day that moves you toward your major goal.

(Eat that Frog, Barrett & Koehler Publishers, Inc. 2001)

Mr. Tracy ends that chapter with this important statement: Think about your goals and review them daily.

As I consider my own life, I recognize that I have experienced the most success when I have implemented these steps. Although my implementation may not have been in a particular order, I have succeeded in applying most or all of these steps. I even use these principles for something as simple as saving money for a project or a vacation.

In planning for vacation, I estimate how much money I will need. I subdivide that amount into weeks. Afterwards, I save the corresponding amount each week that will net me the full amount I would need by vacation time. On a larger scale, as you consider your life assignment, you really can break down the many tasks you need to accomplish into manageable, smaller goals that will get you on the road of effective accomplishments and success. These written sub-goals will greatly help you to focus on what you need to do; thus allowing you the opportunity to achieve your life goals.

For example, let's say that your goal is to open your own bookstore. The first step is to visit other bookstores. This will help you to formulate what your bookstore will look like.

The second step is to mentally visit *your* bookstore. Imagine yourself walking down every aisle. Visualize yourself touching the books and seeing the different sections and varieties of books that you will have in your bookstore. As you do this, start writing down everything you see in as clear a fashion as you can.

Once you have done this, start your research. Look for courses on how to open and run a bookstore, and actively go to bookstore owners and ask them how they succeeded. Identify book distributors with whom you will be doing business with.

It sounds like a lot, but remember, but you will be breaking down each project into manageable time frames. Now list all of these projects in order of importance. Immediately begin doing something that will advance you toward the ultimate goal of the opening day of your bookstore. I know I have greatly simplified it, but if you use this pattern and process, you will accomplish your goals.

One word of warning: many people start the process, but stop in the middle due to any number of circumstances. As I read Mr. Tracy's book and saw how he counseled his readers to think about their goals and review them daily, I realized that the only way to stay continuously motivated in achieving any major goal is to think about the goal and its corresponding benefits every day. You have to see the finished product as clearly as possible. You have to "feel" the joyful emotion of people coming to you and saying, "Thank you for this bookstore. My life has been changed by the books that I've purchased in your lovely bookstore." These emotions and thoughts will continue to encourage and fuel your daily efforts. Also, as you review your accomplishments, visualize what is left to be done, as well as changes that need to be made mid-stream. Without constant, strong, exciting emotions, it can become very hard to accomplish complex goals.

Once you see it, write it down, set deadlines, make lists in order of priorities, and establish a working plan. Do something every day that gets you closer to your goal and review your process daily. Remember the three percent of the students who wrote down their goals and accomplished them and the ninety seven percent did not. Become part of the "three percent club" and become the prosperous leader you were called to be.

Activating the power of vision in your life can skyrocket your output and service to God, family, community and career. The world needs men and women of vision. Vision created the bridges we cross, the

buildings we live in, the technology we utilize to make our lives more efficient.

At the end of this book, there are several questions that you need to ask yourself at this point. These questions are geared to get you thinking about what you're called to do as well as some things you need to initiate in your life at this time to point you toward the arena of your "vision."

Principles of Vision

1. A leader's responsibility is to be at the helm or at the head advancing, showing the way, and directing.
2. It is impossible to lead effectively without a clear and articulate vision.
3. God created us not only with the ability to see with our natural eyes, but also with the ability to "see the unseen."
4. Vision flows out of your unique purpose.
5. God has a purpose for every person. This purpose gives us uniqueness in life. It sets us apart and makes us special.

6. God has already ordained us before we were ever born to fulfill a significant ministry service.
7. Vision also allows us to “see” a more beneficial future.
8. Vision thrust you out of your comfort level.
9. Vision allows one to see how to work out his purpose on Earth.
10. Vision has the power to attract the resources you need to accomplish your purpose.
11. Vision establishes beneficial parameter and limits that will help you to maximize your time and resources.
12. Vision is affected and impacted by the company you keep.
13. Vision will give you the renewed energy and drive you need to study and prepare yourself in your given field of service.
14. Goals work hand in hand with your vision to help make it a reality. Goals can be a powerful road map when your vision is clear.

“Imagination is everything. It is the preview of life’s coming attractions.” — *Albert Einstein*

Questions to ask yourself:

- * What are my current difficulties or limitations?
- * What do I need to do to correct these issues?
- * If I had a benefactor who were to give me \$1,000,000, but you had to do something that would benefit humanity, what would it be? How would it Glorify God? How would it benefit humanity?
- * What would I do for free? What would I do in ministry and service to mankind that gives me great joy and that I am passionate about?
- * Important point: Your true potential can only be achieved as you serve in the areas that are deeply important and relevant to you.

* Who do I have to become in order to fulfill the future picture of my successful self? Have I begun the process of becoming that very person?

Am I meditating or focusing on that "future picture" every day?

Josh 1:8

8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

Prov 23:7

7 For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.

NOTE: You tend to become what you meditate or think about most of the time.

* What is currently in the way?

NOTE: Your true potential can only be achieved as you serve in the areas that are deeply important and relevant to you.

"When you know and understand what you were born to accomplish, that is purpose. When you can see it in your mind by faith, that is vision"

-Dr. Myles Munroe-