A Biblical Case for Vision and Planning

Selected Scriptures

Nehemiah 1:1-2:8

We are submitting to you that the vision of Hephzibah Baptist Church be encapsulated in the following statement:

“Growing together to become more like Jesus for the glory of God.”

BIG IDEA: If we are going to BE the church that God intends, we must have a vision and a plan.

1. What is a vision?
   1. Wikipedia – an organization’s objectives that are intended to help guide internal decision making processes.
   2. A vision statement is a concise and clear statement detailing our mission/purpose and objectives and is used to guide us to accomplishing said mission/purpose.
2. Why do we need a vision?
   1. Proverbs 29:18
   2. To maintain order and restraint; to guide our actions and decision to fulfill the reason for our existence.
   3. With no unified goal, objective, or vision, EVERY MAN DOES WHAT IS RIGHT IN HIS OWN EYES.
   4. Proverbs 12:15
   5. Judges 17:6
   6. With no vision, we fall into chaos and disorder; it becomes an aimless existence. It becomes about what is pleasurable at the moment.
   7. If we do not know why we exist, if we don’t have a purpose, how are we supposed to carry it out?
   8. 1 Corinthians 15:12-34
   9. If Christ has not raised, if the teachings of scripture are not true, then life has no purpose beyond the momentary pleasure.
   10. Why do we exist? It is not to become a social club, offering endless hours of entertainment and empty socializing (which we have begun calling fellowship but we really don’t have a clue what the depth of that word means.)
   11. We MUST capture a vision for Hephzibah that becomes the DNA of every person; that every person embraces, supports, and works to bring the vision to reality, for the glory of God and the building of His kingdom, and the benefit of the the body of Christ and the lost souls all around us.
   12. We must capture the vision that we are “Growing together to become more like Jesus for the Glory of God.”
   13. Then we understand why we gather, why we serve, why we give our money, why we do the ministries that we do…the vision tells where we are going and help us make decisions to get there.
   14. It must become more to us than words on paper. It must become personal before it will become corporate.
   15. When we have a vision, then we need a plan to help see that vision become a reality.

Because - BIG IDEA: If we are going to BE the church that God intends, we must have a vision and a plan.

1. What is a strategic Plan?
   1. **Wikipedia -- Strategic planning** is an [organization](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organization)'s [process](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Business_process) of defining its [strategy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategy), or direction, and making [decisions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decision_making) on allocating its resources to pursue this strategy. Strategy has many definitions, but generally involves setting goals, determining actions to achieve the goals, and mobilizing resources to execute the actions. A strategy describes how the ends (goals) will be achieved by the means (resources).
   2. In short, a strategic plan is the process by which our vision (goals) becomes reality.
   3. Vision tells us where we are going…strategic plans tells us how we will accomplish that vision.
2. Is Strategic Planning Biblical?
   1. Jesus words...Luke 14:25-33
   2. Psalm 33:11; Jer 29:11
   3. James 4:13-17
   4. Prov 16:9; 19:21; 20:18; 21:5
3. Nehemiah’s Example
   1. Need – 1:1-3
      1. Survivors, non exiles are in great trouble and shame
      2. Wall of Jerusalem is broken down, gates are destroyed
   2. Preparation – 1:4-11
      1. Mourning in fasting and prayer – vs. 4
      2. Pleading for God’s attention n- Vs. 5-6
      3. Confession of sin – Vs. 6-7
      4. Claiming God’s Promises – Vs. 8-9
      5. Appealing to God’s affections – Vs. 10
      6. Imploring God’s Favor – Vs. 11
   3. Opportunity – 2:1-2
      1. Rightly placed – 1:11b – King’s cupbearer
      2. Patiently waiting for right time – Chiselv (Nov-Dec) to Nisan (Mar-Apr) is four months
   4. Action – 2:3-8
      1. Presentation of need/problem – Vs. 3
      2. Opportunity presents itself – Vs. 4a
      3. Prayer – Vs. 4b
      4. Request – Vs. 5
      5. Vision and Planning – Vs. 6-8
   5. Vision Becomes Reality – Chapters 2:9ff

## Proposed Vision

# **Hephzibah Baptist Church Vision Statement**

Growing together to become more like Jesus for the glory of God.   
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Hephzibah Baptist Church exists for the purpose of becoming, and helping others become, more like Jesus. We commit ourselves to this pursuit through God’s grace, and hope to bear fruit for His glory in four key areas including, Worship, Relationship, Service, and Proclamation.

## ***Worship***

Worship is the awe-inspired, passionate reverence and love for the God who created us! It is a natural consequence of the committed believer, and demands our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength. As we grow together to become more like Jesus, we believe in developing a lifestyle of worship that places God at the center of our lives.

## ***Relationships***

The relationships we have with one another say a lot about our relationship with Almighty God! We believe by encouraging, supporting, and being the expression of grace to those around us, we can demonstrate the unmistakable characteristics of a follower of Jesus!

## ***Service***

Jesus Christ was the ultimate servant! His timeless example compels us to use the spiritual gifts God has given us in the service of others. We believe this is a vital testimony in our walk with Jesus.

## ***Proclamation***

When Jesus hung on Calvary’s cross, His outstretched arms were not only bearing the weight of man’s sin, they were also embracing a fallen humanity. Central to becoming like Jesus is to trust alone in His provision for forgiveness and repent of our sin. We believe it is our duty to proclaim this truth in both word and deed.