



Cast a Vision for Your Life

If you don't know where you're going....
any path will do.

You're going to end up somewhere. But will it be what you had hoped and what God had designed for your life? Step out of the "let's see where this goes" mode and create a clear statement of purpose for your life.

Inside you will find tools to help light your path to clarity and definition. Define your purpose now.

Habakkuk 2:2 – "And the Lord answered me, and said, "Write the vision, and make it plain upon the tablets, that he may run that reads it."

VISION, MISSION AND VALUES - WHICH COMES FIRST?

Business writer, Ryan Rieches, helps clarify this with a simple statement:

“Here is an easy way to remember – just put “ARY” at the end of each. For example, a visionARY is one who looks into the future and can visualize a clear destination. A missionARY is one whose mission is to take actions needed to realize that vision.” In other words:

A vision statement answers - WHAT do I aim to achieve?

A mission statement answers – HOW do I plan to achieve this vision?

And values help us identify the paths, boundaries, and signposts that we want to honor as we make the journey.

WHY CREATE THIS PLAN? HOW WILL IT HELP ME?

If you don't know where you're going, any path will do. You will end up SOMEWHERE. But will that be where you wanted to go? More importantly, is it the race God had for you to run? So here are a few things to think about . . .

- A goal without a deadline is just a dream. If you want to live your dream, you must choose to do so. Achieving your dream requires work, but is far less difficult when you are focused.
- Clarity, momentum and purpose support achievement and success. Without them, accomplishing your goals is challenging at best and impossible at worst. Defining your desired life outcomes and identifying the steps required to get there helps ensure you move deliberately toward those goals.
- Once you've given thought to what you want to do and how you want to do it, you will find that your choices are more directed and your decisions are made with greater confidence.
- Lastly, writing it down makes it real. It gives you a tool to measure your progress. And life with a plan in hand is better than hoping for the best by making it up as you go along!

STEP 1: Creating a Personal Vision and Values Statement

- Start by identifying the values you wish to honor and demonstrate in your life. Make a list of as many as come to your mind as important values. Once you have completed it, identify the 10 that are closest to your heart. Review and then rank order them from one to 10, with one being the most important in your life. Finally, select the top 5 as those you will include in your statement. Define what these values mean to you.

MY CORE VALUES:

These values are not negotiable in my life; they serve to guide my choices, my behavior, and my decisions. I will strive to live them consistently every day.

- You are now ready to draft your vision statement. Approach writing your vision statement with a prayerful heart. Ask God to guide your thoughts and reveal His will as you meditate about the direction of your life.
- Use the questions on the next page to help focus your vision statement. Answer each question as completely and honestly as possible. Add other questions and answers if they come to mind. Remember to check responses to align with the values you have identified.

PERSONAL VISION STATEMENT TEMPLATE

You will start by answering questions that will build a vision statement – a brief expression of what it is you want to become and fulfill what God desires for your life. Think of it as the “big picture.” Use the questions below to identify the components that will comprise your vision statement. Be honest with yourself, think through each one carefully and record your responses.

Who am I? What are the things I believe and actively seek to demonstrate in my home, my family relationships, in my community and on the job? What role does faith play in my life?

What purpose(s) do I believe God has called me to fulfill?

What am I passionate about? What are the things that bring me joy?

How would I live my life if time and resources were not an issue?

What are my greatest strengths? What are my gifts, abilities and talents?

What are the habits I need to form in order to be successful personally, professionally and spiritually?

What are the patterns that hold me back? What habits do I need to break?

Other areas I want to include in my vision:

Next Steps:

- Use the responses from the template to create a vision statement. Write about the core values and recurring themes your answers reveal in the following areas:
 - spiritual growth and development, including ministry
 - family relationships
 - friends
 - financial health
 - professional aspirations

- physical health
- personal growth and development

If some of your answers fall outside of these categories, create your own.

Keep it brief – 3-5 sentences maximum. Include statements that address:

- What’s your ultimate desire for your life?
- What do you desire to accomplish?
- What’s God’s direction and calling on your life?
- What is the legacy you hope to achieve?

Think about how you can use information from your past to shape the future. Distill the information in each life category into one or two actionable statements. Write using first person perspective and present tense. For example, under the spiritual category, you could write, "I **am** deepening my **relationship** with Christ through scripture study and prayer" or "I **am** experiencing the joy of drawing others to Christ through love," rather than "I **will**." Write concrete statements that are based on your core values.

MY PERSONAL VISION STATEMENT:

Read your personal vision statement often – perhaps as often as once each week. Review it on Sunday evening to gauge your success in “walking your talk” in the past week and to help set your focus for the coming week. Use it to guide your daily actions and decisions. Over time, you may want to make changes as your circumstances and abilities change. Once your vision statement is complete and your values are identified, turn your attention to creating a **mission statement** – a plan that will help you accomplish the vision on a day-to-day basis. Use the steps on the next page to guide you.

Step 2: Writing a Personal Mission Statement

A **personal mission statement** is a brief description of what you want to focus on in order to accomplish your vision. Goals can then be identified for a period of the next one to three years and should be expressed in your mission statement. It is a way to focus your energy, actions, behaviors and decisions towards the things that are most important to you. Think of this as the detailed day-to-day roadmap.

The first step is creating an outcome for each area of your vision statement. This exercise requires some reflective thinking, so it is best to set some quiet time aside without distractions or interruptions. What steps will you need to take in life to accomplish your vision? What goals will you need to set and pursue actively? Think of your mission as that which powers your vision or makes the vision a reality.

MISSION TEMPLATE: For each of the areas you have identified in your vision (spiritual, personal, professional, etc) record specific goals that will move you toward achievement of the desired end result. Use the template on the next page for this purpose.

MISSION TEMPLATE

CATEGORY: area of your vision - personal, professional, spiritual, etc.	SPECIFIC GOAL: Specific steps, action plan items, etc	TO BE COMPLETED BY:

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Step 3: Live Your Vision! Walk it Out!

Congratulations! If you have completed all three steps, you are well on your way to accomplishing your vision. Keep your plan where you can be reminded that this will require a consistent commitment and daily effort. But it is worth it!

I encourage you to share your plan with a few others who are significant in your life and will help to hold you accountable and encourage you when you are tempted to throw in the towel. We all get discouraged at times. Remember you don't drown by falling into the water. You drown by staying there! Seek help and seek God when you need to a lifeline to get back on track.

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