

- Rev. Grant Mangold, www.RiversideChurchIowa.com

INTENTIONAL MISSION VISION

Ever been involved with building something that stalled because the people involved couldn't figure out WHY they were doing what they were doing? Frustrating. And unnecessary.

Because you need both **MISSION** - why you're here doing what you're doing, and **VISION** - where you're going to what your preferred future looks like.

Form follows function. The classic design statement holds true for organizations as well as objects of utility and construction. But remember, a "church" is not a building but rather a unique organization which is actually a living organism - a collection of people becoming one in Christ.

In this series we're looking at God's **blueprint** for His church. It begins with clear mission and compelling vision. Our Creator designed His church with definite purpose as the Body of Christ - a "growing building" of "living stones" - redeemed men and women and children - being fitted together as a holy structure which grows into a dwelling place for God Himself by the Holy Spirit. That's how the Apostles Paul and Peter describe it.

God wrote down His mission and vision for you and every Christian in the church: MAKE DISCIPLES. Along with other passages, He says it clearly in Matthew 28:18-20, "**All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore, as you are going, MAKE DISCIPLES of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.**"

MISSION - The imperative verb in the passage is "**MAKE disciples**" and that's your mission and the purpose of every Christian church. That's why Jesus commissioned you to represent Him, and to grow His Body by helping others be transformed by Him too. This process involves teaching about Christ and baptizing into Christ.

VISION - the picture of the intended result of the mission is "**make DISCIPLES.**" A disciple is a learner, a follower, who intends to become like the master. The vision of the Christian church is a growing group of people who are becoming more and more like Christ.

Growth consultants helpfully describe mission as being like a picture frame, which gives structure to the image inside, which is your vision. Together, it's a picture of where you're going and how you'll get there. For the church, you envision a growing group of disciples becoming more and more like Christ. Your mission is to make those disciples, according to God's plan and by His power.

Teaching involves learning God's Word. The Bible transforms your thinking and your living according to God's truth. This includes both public proclamation and private instruction in the Scriptures. This equips you to build your life on God's unchanging principles of truth and grace, so you become like Christ.

Romans 6 and other passages explain baptizing as personal identification with Christ. It's a picture of new life in Christ. Going under the water in baptism is like being buried with Him as you become spiritually dead to sin. Coming up out of the water is like being raised with Him as you become spiritually alive to God. The water pictures the Holy Spirit, who regenerates you to new life in Christ when you believe in Him and receive Him as Lord and Savior.

All this is echoed in 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 which presents God's mission and vision as **new creations** in Christ who share the good news with everyone around them. Being do-ers of God's Word.

As the famous blind author Helen Keller said, "*the only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision.*" You may figure it's easier to state your mission than it is to project a vision that others will follow. But God has given you both, written down in Scripture - so that you can step out in faith.

God is intentional about building His church. As you trust and obey Him, working out His power within you, He will accomplish both His mission and His vision. That's good news!

So - be INTENTIONAL- and go for it!