

GOD HAS A VISION FOR YOU
INTRODUCTION: NEHEMIAH 1

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Definition of Vision

A vision is a mental picture God gives that grips the heart and is radically different from present reality. Nehemiah wept because he remembered or envisioned a city and its gates that were radically different from their present condition.

A vision is a mental picture that you can see. When you look around, do you see anything beyond what presently surrounds you?

Abraham the visionary, Hebrews 11:8-10.

A vision is a mental picture God gives... God gives visions because only God knows how the present reality should be transformed or changed. Therefore visions are about God's will and not about us. If we are to receive a new vision for our life we must turn our vision from self to God. Mark 8:34-35

A vision is a mental picture God gives which grips the heart... A number of persons saw the deplorable conditions of Jerusalem and its torn down walls. However, Nehemiah's heart was so moved that he sought to do something to remedy the situation.

A vision is a mental picture God gives that is radically different from present reality. Since vision is different than present reality, the nature of vision is its future oriented. Those who worship at the altars of nostalgia cannot see visions.

A visionary is well grounded because he or she is acutely aware of the challenges of the present. Yet they dare to see something that is radically different. Ezekiel 3:12-15

What Vision is not.....

Vision is not mission

Mission is general: vision is graphic

Mission is more philosophical: vision is more pointed

Mission is far-reaching: vision is far-reaching and factual

Mission is scope: vision is specific

Mission: Matthew 28: 19-20; Vision: Acts 16: 6-10

Even though a vision is not a mission statement vision is consistent with and grounded in one's organization or life mission. Paul's vision of the man in Macedonia was consistent with his life mission of spreading the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Visions are not necessarily dreams

Although visions may come to us in dreams the two are not necessarily synonymous.

Dreams may come from Satan, only God births visions. Satan does not necessarily know God's plans. Jeremiah 29:11

Dreams may come from our psychological or physical state. Dreams are spiritual in nature. John 3: 6-8

Visions are not necessarily ideas

Ideas are the tools of visions. Ideas are the strategies for implementing visions. They are not visions themselves.

We may be the source of ideas and thus our ideas may be more of a reflection of us than they are of God. Galatians 6:3

Visions from God transform our thinking. Romans 12:2

Characteristics of Vision

Visions are Borne of Prayer

Nehemiah prayed, wept and fasted regarding the vision he saw that was radically different from the present reality.

Visions come as we seek God's face. We do not necessarily seek God's face for visions but they come before us as possibilities and as future realities as we abide in the presence of God.

Visions are Consistent with the word of God

The gates and the city that Nehemiah saw were consistent with God's word. Psalm 48

Visions are Blessings to others

The people of God would be blessed with the restoration of Jerusalem. Abraham's vision was not for Abraham alone but for all the families of the earth. Genesis 12: 1-3

Visions have Potential to outlive visionaries

Walls would stand for generations

Visions have Financial implications

Artaxerxes provided financial resources.

Visions from God are so Big that only God can bring them to pass

Nehemiah prayed so earnestly because he had no idea of how he was going to accomplish or bring into reality that which he saw.

Godly visions can be frightening because they are so great. However, they become reality as we move from fright to faithfulness. Nehemiah moved beyond his tears to action.

Godly visions consume and transform us because of their immensity. We cannot do great things in our spare time. We cannot do great things and remain small. We grow as we attempt great things for God. Nehemiah was totally consumed by what he had seen. Movie: Close Encounters of the Third Kind; Paul after Damascus Road experience.

God gives great visions that only God can accomplish so when they become reality God must receive the glory. Judges 7:1-7