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Developing the Present with the Future in Mind

Where there is no vision, the people perish. Proverbs 29:18

Understanding that the past needs to be left there and focusing on who we want to be in the future is a healthy way to live, but how do we live in the present in such a way that will get us to our future self?

Core Values

Before we can move toward our future self we must understand who we are in the present in order to find those places for transformation and development. By identifying clear and concise values, we can then develop a vision statement for our lives, which will then require a mission statement in order to chart the course into our future. When asked if something is right or wrong, most people will have an immediate response, which is rooted in their personal value system. However, if directly asked, "What are some of your values?" many will stammer and stumble their way through answering. Though we all have values, many have failed to clearly identify what they hold as the highest truth. By clearly compiling your list of values, you will gain a clearer understanding of what you firmly believe, which will then become a guiding factor in your decision making process. Take your time to identify where you are on each of the listed core values. After you have completed the list, identify your top ten values in the

space provided.

0=not at all, 1=somewhat, 2=important, 3=categorically

Core Values List

Acceptance	Discretion	Honor	Originality	Reverence
Achievement	Dominance	Hope	Passion	Sacrifice
Adaptability	Efficient	Humility	Patience	Security
Affection	Empathy	Impartial	Patriotism	Self-Awareness
Altruism	Empowering	Independence	Peace	Self-Control
Ambition	Encouragement	Individuality	Perception	Selfless
Attentive	Endurance	Innovative	Perfection	Self-Motivation
Belonging	Ethical	Inquisitive	Performance	Self-Reliance
Bravery	Excellence	Integrity	Perseverance	Sensitivity
Candor	Faith	Intelligence	Powerful	Significance
Capable	Faithfulness	Intuitive	Practical	Sincerity
Caring	Freedom	Joy	Pragmatic	Skillfulness
Character	Generosity	Justice	Prepared	Spirituality
Charity	Gentleness	Kindness	Pride	Stability
Commitment	Goodness	Knowledge	Prosperity	Stewardship
Compassion	Goodwill	Leadership	Prudence	Strength
Conformity	Gratitude	Love	Purity	Success
Contribution	Greatness	Loyalty	Reason	Thoughtful
Control	Holiness	Maturity	Reliable	Truth
Courage	Honesty	Meekness	Resilience	Unity
Decency	Devout	Modesty	Resolve	Value
Dedication	Diligence	Obedience	Respect	Virtue
Dependability	Discipline	Order	Responsibility	Wisdom

Out of all the cores values you selected as a three, which are the ten that are most important to you?

Top ten core values: _____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Evaluate your list of core values, those which you place the most importance in, and ask yourself if they line up with God's word and His values. If there are any that God would not agree with, pray about them and ask for a renewing of your heart to be more like His. Rather than asking God to change you, ask to become who you were created to be.

Identifying which mountain/s you are called to based on the vision God has placed in your heart will also help in completing the picture of who and where you are called to be. Once you establish your vision and mission statements, you can then focus on which mountain you are to operate in; bringing back Godly influence. For example, if I choose *I will fund clean water building projects in Africa through Christian Outreach programs who spread the love of Jesus* as my vision statement, I would be called to operate in the business mountain, or *"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute." Proverbs 31:8* I would be called to restoring the family mountain, as well as possibly the education and religion mountains, depending on what actions the Lord has my mission statement reflect. By clearly focusing on our mountain, we further understand the importance of our vision and mission, solidifying and cementing our resolve in executing with excellence; ascending to the place of leadership, influence and dominion to which we have been called.

Before constructing your own vision and mission statements, let us revisit what is special about you, in order to form a more complete picture to aid in your statement creations. (Your answers from pgs. 14, 25, 26 and 76)

Gifts	Talents	Strengths	Passions	Values

After thanking God for creating you so masterfully and beautifully, use the information in the table to create your vision and mission statements.

Vision Statement (Life Purpose)

Now that you have identified what is most important to you, all future decisions must align with these values. For example, if integrity is one of your top ten values and you knowingly keep the extra change the cashier mistakenly gave you, then there is a disconnect with what you value and the actions of your daily life. Your actions must line up with your core values in order for you to move into that future self. The Holy Spirit is a great rectifier of anything within us that is not honoring God, in opposition of who Christ sees us as, or character issues unbecoming *to the life to which you have been called* (Ephesians 4:1). In his book, *Christian Coaching: Helping Others Turn Potential into Reality*, Dr. Gary Collins tells us in regards to the importance of values based living, "But decisions that ignore values often are regretted later. No person will be fulfilled, satisfied, or at peace if he or she neglects the things that matter most. In contrast, when people live and act in accordance with their values, they experience an ongoing sense of fulfillment and inner joy." When we walk in God's truth, guided by Him, and all decisions, thoughts and desires are in alignment with His word, we will begin to walk in the promises He has for us. Ultimately, as believers in Christ, we should desire the fruits of the Spirit as some of our most coveted core values.

> *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Galatians 5:22-23*

Just as a map is needed to venture to an unknown destination, vision is required to navigate to the successful future you.

> *"For the vision is yet for the appointed time; It hastens toward the goal and it will not fail. Though it tarries, wait for it; for it will certainly come, it will not delay." Habakkuk 2:3*

By having a vision statement, interchangeable with life purpose, which clearly defines what you look like in the future, you will be able to keep to a clear path rather than wandering aimlessly when blown off course. Attaching a purpose connection to your vision will give you the state of being necessary to arrive at the place God has destined for you, while dealing with your current reality as a means to that future self. Again, we must be a citizen of the future while living in the present. Your vision statement will help you to quickly regain forward progress when the storms of life come against you. Notice that I said *when*, not *if*. It is unrealistic to think that you will not encounter difficulties, sidetracks and backward failings on your journey. Instead, understand that it will be challenging at times, but if you are in constant contact with your vision statement, coupled with a clear and concise mission statement, you will be able to successfully reach your end goal. This is why self-awareness is a critical skill to hone and refine. By keeping in a continual state of self-awareness, you will be quick to recognize when you are out of alignment with your vision statement, not living out the present with the future in sight.

"A vision is not a dream, but a reality that has yet to come into existence."

-Neil Snyder, James J. Dowd, Jr., and Dianne Morse Houghton, coauthors of Vision, Values and Courage

A vision statement is clear, to the point and comprised of two key elements: what/where your future self will be and why. All vision statements should be born out of prayer and guidance from the Holy Spirit. If you can carry out your vision without the help of the Lord, then your vision is too small. Ultimately, it is pointless to have vision not given and guided by the Lord. If you find yourself struggling to form a vision statement, here are some questions to help you through the process:

What stirs your heart?

_____

What moves you to tears?

_____

What brings joy into your life?

_____

What incites enthusiasm?

_____

This process is not to be rushed or attempted half-heartedly if you expect to have success in the future. Take your time to develop what is deep within your heart. You may have to revise your vision statement several times before coming up with the one that truly empowers you to move forward and will keep you moving through the rough times. Also, keep in mind that your vision statement should be rooted in the Word of God and His truth. It does not have to quote a scripture, though it certainly can, but it must be part of your vision foundation. For example, if the Lord has put it in your heart to become a musician, your vision statement should include how you see God using your gift as a musician to impact others and why He has called you there; your life's purpose.

I will be in a band that brings God honoring music to the youth.

I will be a member of the Phoenix symphony as a pillar of Godly virtue and excellence.

Your vision statement can also be a direct scripture, such as:

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners." Isaiah 61:1

"Learn to do good; Seek justice, Reprove the ruthless, Defend the orphan, Plead for the widow." Isaiah 1:17

"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute." Proverbs 31:8

Other examples of vision statements include:

I will create a center for inner-city kids, free from drugs and violence, teaching Godly values.

I will fund clean water building projects in Africa through Christian Outreach programs who spread the love of Jesus.

I will create a center which teaches individuals of the love and purpose they have in Jesus.

I will become a television journalist who honors God with integrity and truth.

We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity. The Constitution for the United States of America.

When creating your vision statement keep this in mind:

"Don't ask yourself what the world needs; ask yourself what makes you come alive. Then go do that because the world needs people who come alive." Harold Whitman

My vision statement (life purpose):

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