

Do You Have a Vision for Your Future?

The older we get, the faster time seems to pass. Before we know it, the ambitions, hopes and dreams of our youth become absorbed and forgotten in the background of life, until one day we reflect back and wonder, *"Should I have done things differently? Did I choose the right path? Is it too late to be what I wanted to be?"*

I want to encourage you that, no matter how old you are or what you've been through, God has a good plan for your life.

He wants to fill your heart with a sense of destiny and purpose that will satisfy your soul. Jeremiah 29:11 tells us that God knows the thoughts and plans He has for us; plans for welfare and peace and not for evil, to give us hope in our final outcome.

So what is *your* vision? If you don't have a vision, it's time for you to get one!

A vision doesn't have to be complicated. It can be just about anything. Maybe your vision is to remodel a home, to lose weight, to get out of debt, to achieve a career goal ... or work in full-time ministry. Whatever your vision, it's important to keep moving toward it! God is always on the move, and we need to continually move forward with Him. God did not create us to be passive individuals who live every day with a "wait-and-see" attitude. He has chosen to partner with us. God has a part and we have a part in everything we do. He does His part by guiding, helping and protecting us daily and we are responsible for doing our part.

The journey toward our plans, goals and visions is just as important as the destination itself. The journey is what builds our patience, faith, endurance and self-discipline. God

has equipped you and me with gifts and talents to achieve our visions and He wants to prepare us by building our character so we are able to handle future challenges. To put it plainly, if you don't have strong character, you will set yourself up for failure and will not be able to sustain your vision once it comes to pass.

So how do you make progress toward your vision?

I'd like to share two points of wisdom with you that helped me achieve my goals, plans and visions over the last 36 years. The first one is to embrace the process and maintain a healthy perspective, especially during times when you feel discouraged.

Stick to the Process

For every vision we set, we must go through a process to get there. I encourage you to be determined—no matter what happens—to stick to that process. It can be challenging to maintain a good attitude during what I call the “silent” seasons—when God is quiet. When we don't understand and cannot see what God is doing.

During such seasons, your faith will be tested and stretched to your limits. You may be tempted to question your ability to succeed, the decisions you made and your reasons for pursuing your vision. These are the times when your perspectives matter most. Your thoughts and how you speak are powerful, because they can either breathe life and hope into your vision or condemn and terminate it altogether. So in order to continue moving forward, you need to maintain a good attitude so that your faith remains strong, and you are able to see things God's way instead of your own.

The second point of wisdom I'd like to share with you is to record your vision and journal your progress.

Write It All Down

Habakkuk 2:2-3 says: "And the Lord answered me and said, Write the vision and engrave it so plainly upon tablets that everyone who passes may [be able to] read [it easily and quickly] as he hastens by. For the vision is yet for an appointed time and it hastens to the end [fulfillment]; it will not deceive or disappoint. Though it tarry, wait [earnestly] for it, because it will surely come; it will not be behind hand on its appointed day."

The Bible tells us to write down our vision so we can see it plainly. I would also encourage you to record your victories, challenges and thoughts along the journey toward your vision. The reason is, when you go through difficult seasons, you will be encouraged when you see how God has helped, guided and strengthened you along the way. It's wonderful to have a record of what God has brought you through. Sometimes I dig up my old journals to see how God brought me through times when I didn't think I could make it. Those journals not only encourage me, they are a testimony of my progress.

Focus yourself on where you want to go and what you want to do. Be patient with yourself, and remember that your vision will come to pass as long as you are committed to the process. Do what you can do, and trust God to do what only He can do. And as always, be sure to enjoy your journey on the way to where you are going every day.

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