

Why Your Organization's Mission Statement May Not Be as Important as You Think

As president and founder of the National Institute of Christian Leadership, Dr. Mark Rutland has multiple opportunities to pour into leaders across the globe. In his experience in working with organizations, he sees a tension between “vision” and “mission.”

“I do believe in mission; you should have a mission statement,” Rutland says on *The Leader's Notebook* podcast on the Charisma Podcast Network. “I think it's important, but a mission statement can devolve into being nothing but a plaque on the wall or a banner that hangs in the auditorium at a church. It has very little energy; it's not the resource that drives the organization forward.

“In my view, the constant emphasis on ‘mission, mission, mission’ that I hear often causes an organization or leader, leader, particularly, to feel I keep preaching the mission. I keep talking mission, I keep sharing mission, and we're still not going anywhere,” Rutland says. “We're just getting better and better at articulating our mission, but it's not taking us toward anything. That's because that's not the job of mission. That's the job of vision.”

And this is where churches, organizations and businesses get trapped, Rutland says. He uses the Hebrew people during their years of bondage in Egypt as an example. “What is their mission?” he asks. “To know God and love Him. And you can do that; one can do that as a slave in a foreign country. A slave can know God; a slave can love God. So one could get better and better and better at knowing and loving God in bondage, and never escape bondage. Never get out of Egypt.

“So along comes Moses. And what he expresses is not a new mission,” Rutland says. “What he expresses is a fresh vision. ‘Follow me,’ he says, ‘and God will take us to the land that He promised to our fathers, that He swore to give to Abraham.’ And then he describes the vision, graphically, the land that God gave to our fathers that flows with milk and honey. So the energy is in vision; the policy statement is in mission.

For more wisdom from Dr. Mark Rutland on the tension between mission and vision, [click here](#) to listen to the entire podcast.