

A man in a dark suit is seen from behind, standing on a stage and gesturing with his right hand towards a large, seated audience. The audience members are dressed in business attire and are seated in rows of red chairs. The setting appears to be a conference or seminar. Above the man's head is a large white thought bubble containing the text 'Communicating Vision'. Below this bubble are two smaller, empty thought bubbles, one above the other, connected by a thin line.

Communicating
Vision

Church Renewal Resource
Evangelism Ministries USA/Canada Region
Church of the Nazarene

Acknowledgments

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Evangelism Ministries

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Preparation Checklist

The following information will help you prepare to instruct this module.

- Review the material and make notes of specific areas for special emphasis.
- Check to ensure the following materials are available:
 - PowerPoint presentations
 - Participant booklet (copy as needed)
- Gather the following materials:
 - Pens and/or pencils
 - Other material you want to use
- Check the classroom for:
 - Projector
 - Sufficient number of tables and chairs for the participants
- Arrange the room so each church team sits around an individual table and you have ample room to move among the teams.

Communicating Vision

Module at a Glance

The table below identifies each module section, the time allotted for each section, and a brief description of the section's objective. When you are familiar with this module, you may want to teach from this page rather than the detailed information.

SECTION	TIME	PAGE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
I. Introduction	5 mins.	p. 5	Introduce module, purpose, and objectives.
II. Lecture– Part I	15 mins.	p. 6	The facilitator presents information to help participants identify Christ's vision while on earth and motivate them to begin evaluating where their church is in the process of identifying and communicating its vision.
III. Small Group Activity	15 mins.	p. 8	Participants work in teams to reflect on the information presented in the lecture and begin applying the concepts.
IV. Lecture-Part II	15 mins.	p. 10	The facilitator continues the lecture with information about "Vision Killers" and the myths and realities about vision.
V. Action Planning/ Reporting	15 mins.	p. 13	Participants begin preparing for their homework assignment: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Complete questions about context, vision, and method.2. As a group, discuss their findings. Participants will report the result of the activities at the next workshop.
VI. Module Wrap-Up	5 mins.	p. 15	Close the module with your final comments regarding the topic.
Total Module Time: 70 mins.			

I. Module Introduction

(5 minutes)

Notes

Let the participants know the material is theirs to keep and encourage them to take notes.

- Purpose
- Objectives
- “Fill-in-the-blanks” for the lecture
- Application exercises

The purpose of this module is:

To inspire pastor and people to see God’s design for the local church.

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The objectives for this module are:

- Discuss Christ’s vision for His world.
- Identify myths and realities about vision.
- Evaluate the local church’s accomplishments and plans.

II. Lecture

(15 Minutes)

(The UNDERLINED text represents the blanks in the participant booklet.)

Are you willing under the leadership of the Holy Spirit to let your imagination run wild? Are you committed in enjoying all the Lord envisions for you, your church and your community?

Most of us know what we should do, but sometimes fail to act. What is missing? Why do we busy ourselves with things of lesser significance? Students of human behavior tell us the difference is VISION! Vision helps us create energy and momentum. Joel prophesied, "Your old men will dream dreams and your young men will see visions!"

But could it be the Lord knew the dreams of older generations would ally them with younger energetic men and women who would cast the vision before His disciples today?

The vision part of our lives distinguishes the achievers from those who do not achieve. If you decide to unleash the power of vision in your congregation, that vision may create emotional, physical, financial, and spiritual abundance. You will have the resources to reach those who are lost. And to see them transformed. Life in Christ is intended to change us.

I believe Jesus intended everyone experience His gracious provision for a holy life.

If that is Christ's vision for His world, then what should be our VISION?

A LARGE VISION PRODUCES A LARGE MOTIVATION

We are mindful a shortage of workers prevents things from getting done. Volunteers may be few and over-worked. Some accuse others of being lazy. But it is not a matter of laziness. The problem is Christians have not seen the VISION.

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Communicating Vision

For more information go to :

www.usacanadaregion.org/training-modules

II. Lecture (cont.)

In short, we may be caught up in the trap of living as a Christian rather than **KNOWING** and following God's design for our lives. We may not partner with Him in the designing process. This is true particularly when we begin to set spiritual and behavior goals which are impossible in our own strength. Yet these dreams fill us with **EXCITEMENT** as we think about the possibility of achieving what God plans for us—individually and as a church.

OUR VISION TAKES US TO A WORLD OF UNLIMITED POWER . . . THE POWER OF THE ALMIGHTY GOD!

How may we turn the invisible into the visible? Why doesn't every Christian have this kind of transforming vision? What is holding us back?

Goal setting is part of the American scene. Motivational speakers have kept the concept before us for several decades, but many of us have set goals only to see them fade without being achieved. They are little more than New Year's resolutions. And we have wondered why the things they talked about never happened for us. Many have quit setting goals because the failure is too painful. They don't want their expectations to be dashed. Others have set goals and then abused themselves in the process of achieving them. As they analyzed the process, they decided life was too valuable to be wasted in such abuse—especially if they worked so hard and still failed.

Capturing the vision of our Lord works a lot like our eyesight. The **CLOSER** we get to Him, the clearer the image becomes. Who knows, He may have things in mind that go beyond your fondest desires for your church. It is His purpose that none would perish, but that all would come to the knowledge of His saving grace.

To get us started, let's do a short exercise.

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III. Small Group Exercise

(15 Minutes)

The small group exercise portion of the module provides an opportunity for the teams to discuss the information presented and how it applies to their church.

Turn to the Small Group Exercise portion of your participant booklet. Work with the team members from your church to complete the questions. You will have 20 minutes to complete the questions.

Remain available during the exercise time to answer questions. Announce to the group when five minutes remain. Again announce to the group when two minutes remain.

Work with your church team to complete the following evaluation.

TODAY

Give yourself a score from 0 to 10 in each of these categories. 0 means you and your church had nothing going in this area, and 10 means you were absolutely living to the highest desire of Christ in this area.

EXAMPLE:

Physical Plant 4

We're building, but some classes have to move every week. They don't have a sense of belonging.

FOREVER (Five Years from Now)

Give yourself a score from 0 to 10 in each of these categories. 0 means you and your church had nothing going in this area, and 10 means you were absolutely living to the highest desire of Christ in this area.

	RATING
Physical Plant	_____
Location	_____
Acceptance in Your Community	_____
Congregational Size	_____
Professional Staff	_____
Volunteer Workers	_____
Financial Resources	_____
Spiritual Vitality	_____
Spiritual Maturity	_____
Awareness of Needs	_____

IV. Lecture-Part II

(15 Minutes)

Let's consider vision-killers.

One of the most devastating barriers to true vision is the notion God would never ask us to change what has worked before. **TRADITION** KILLS VISION. "We have never done it that way before!" are the last seven words of a dying church! Tradition reflects on the glories of the past, not a following of Christ into His glorious future.

Grasping and implementing God's vision can be frightening. Vision requires change and that means risk. **FEAR** KILLS VISION. Few Christians possess the spiritual maturity to release control of their lives and allow God to rule daily.

What style of music is most popular with the people God wants to reach? Is that your style of church music? What is the role of women in your community? Do they have similar roles in your church? **PREFERENCES** KILL VISION.

Passion about the Kingdom of God can dissipate. **COMPLACENCY** KILLS VISION. Jesus was passionate about those who did not know God's grace. Let's identify people whose hearts are alive to serve and invite them to communicate the vision.

Ministry is hard work. Even the strongest spiritual workers need rest and renewal. Jesus took time for solitude. If you have difficulty getting excited about Christ's vision for your church, check your fuel supply—you may be running on empty. But remember, a few days rest restores. Withdrawal from involvement for six months or even a year is usually spiritually destructive. **FATIGUE** KILLS VISION. So get the rest you need on a regular basis.

Our society finds it increasingly difficult to make long term commitments. We have moved to cashing in on short term benefits. But tragically that leaves us with nothing in place for the long run. (Example: Finances are spent and

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retirement will take care of itself) SHORT-TERM **THINKING** KILLS VISION. God's timing is different from ours. He is not pressured by time, but His timing is perfect.

DREAM BIG WITH GOD

****Since you will probably not have time to read both the myths and realities, read only the realities.****

MYTHS ABOUT VISION

Taken from "The Power of Vision" by George Barna, Regal Books, 1992.

1. Vision should be the result of a consensus among the church's key leaders regarding future activity by the church.
REALITY: Vision is not the result of consensus; it should RESULT in consensus.
2. Vision and mission are synonymous.
REALITY: While vision relates to specific ACTIONS, mission relates to general approaches to action.
3. Some leaders are visionaries, some aren't.
REALITY: By definition, all leaders are visionaries. A godly leader is one who OPERATES from a base of God's vision for his or her ministry.
4. The purpose of vision is to estimate future realities, then to operate effectively within those parameters.
REALITY: The purpose of vision is to CREATE the future. God has chosen you to exert control for Him over your environment!
5. The goal of vision for church ministry is numerical growth.
REALITY: The absolute goal of vision for ministry is to GLORIFY God and bring all people everywhere to glorify God.
6. As long as the senior pastor has a sense of vision, it doesn't matter whether the people really know or understand it. They will be swept along by the force of the vision, regardless.
REALITY: Vision has no force, power, or impact unless it SPREADS from the visionary to the visionless.

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IV. Lecture-Part II (cont.)

7. Because of the breadth and challenge that is reflected by God's vision for ministry, vision is likely to make the laity fearful, skeptical, and anxious.

REALITY: Vision, when properly ARTICULATED, does not make people afraid nor doubtful.

8. If it is truly God's vision for ministry, capturing that vision will be a simple, quick process.

REALITY: God's vision is not CONSTRAINED by time.

9. To develop vision, a pastor could identify several visionary business leaders and follow the same steps they have taken.

REALITY: Church leaders cannot blindly follow the path CHARTED by people who operate on the basis of a different world view.

10. Because vision is imparted by God to the pastor, other people have no role in the development of vision, only in its implementation.

REALITY: Other godly individuals are needed as a sounding board to EVALUATE the vision at various points in its development.

11. Sometimes God's vision for the future of a struggling congregation simply calls for the church to stabilize by maintaining its current position rather than to pursue growth aggressively.

REALITY: Encouraging people to pledge themselves to SURVIVAL is an admission of defeat.

12. A church's vision needs to be re-created every couple of years.

REALITY: Vision usually OUTLASTS the visionary.

13. If a pastor simply loves the Lord and does the things described in the Bible as the qualities of a good leader—teaching, preaching, praying, modeling forgiveness and love, and so forth—the church will grow, vision or no vision.

REALITY: Effective leaders must be VISIONARIES.

This information transitions participants into the homework assignment.

Whenever one of these elements changes, the other two MUST ALSO CHANGE! Ministry in some churches has changed little in the past 10 years. What can we do to assure our vision and methods are directed by God to fit the context in which we serve?

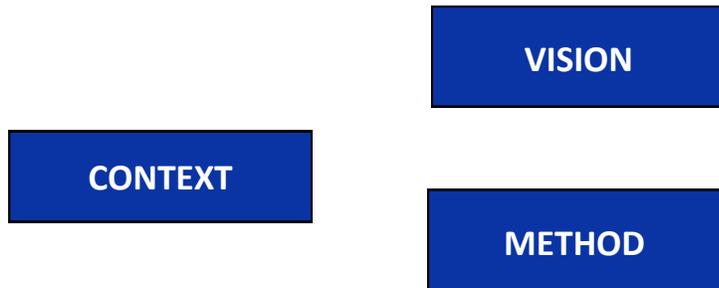
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IV. Lecture-Part II (cont.)

If our vision is for transformed people in the community of believers, then both our method and our context are **MEANS** not **ENDS** in themselves. It is not enough to be aware of the needs of our community. We must become the physical and spiritual presence of our Lord in our city or town.



V. Action Planning/Reporting

(15 Minutes)

This section gives the participants an opportunity to discuss their plans for using this information, as well as how they will share the information with others.

The homework assignment for this module (below) is:

- Complete the following questions about context, vision, and method.
- As a group, discuss your findings.

Let's take about 15 minutes to discuss how you will use begin identifying your vision and communicating it within your church. In your material you have an Action Planning/Reporting page with your homework assignment. In your teams discuss and document how you will complete this assignment.

Move among the groups to answer specific questions. Listen for discussions not focused on developing a plan and guide them into developing a plan. Let the groups know when there are five minutes remaining and ask them to begin to conclude their discussions.

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Context – WHERE ARE WE? (This is the information identified during the small group exercise.)

- ✓ What are the needs, the problems, the opportunities we face?
- ✓ Who are our students, our teachers, our professional staff, and what are their spiritual gifts and natural abilities?
- ✓ What resources of time, money, building, and location has God enabled us to have?

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Vision – WHERE ARE WE GOING?

- ✓ If God blesses this church and we do the very things Christ came to do when He came to earth, how will we see our congregation, community, our ministry, and our world?
- ✓ If Jesus came to OUR TOWN, what would he be doing?
- ✓ Could His vision become our vision?

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Method – HOW DO WE GET THERE?

- ✓ What should I teach?
- ✓ How should I teach?
- ✓ What can I do to bring salvation to people I know?
- ✓ How would Christ seek and save my lost husband or child?
- ✓ To whom will I report progress, frustration and failure?
- ✓ How can our church become the real BODY OF CHRIST in our Community?

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VI. Module Wrap-Up

(5 Minutes)

This section provides an opportunity to close the module.

- Ask participants to share their thoughts about the module.
- Remind the participants to record their results and be prepared to share the progress.
- Answer any questions and provide encouragement.