

LEADER CONVERSATION GUIDE

You Don't Need A Vision Statement - Episode 267

Four things churches don't need, and what they really need instead (Part 3)

In the first two parts of this series, we outlined how it's possible to have clarity and alignment around your mission statement and core values and *still* be doing the wrong things to get the results you want.

In this episode, Tony and Amy will explain something more important than a vision statement if your goal is to get unstuck and move your mission forward.

Why You Don't Need A Vision Statement

Clarifying direction for the future is absolutely critical to the health of your church, but traditional vision statements are not always helpful—especially in this particular season. Most churches are already bogged down by enough “organizational statement clutter,” and yet, are still not producing the results they want.

Most vision statements tend to fall short because...

1. **They become another version of the mission statement.** Many vision statements answer the question, “Why do we exist?” rather than “Where are we going?”
2. **They are not concrete enough.** Many vision statements tend to be nebulous and flowery about what the church wants to be at *some point* in the future—but they are so vague that no one knows exactly *how* the vision will be accomplished.
3. **They are not future focused.** Many vision statements reflect more of what the church is about today rather than driving future focus and direction.
4. **They are too broad and all-encompassing.** Many vision statements try to be fair to all the ministries of the church and make sure every voice is represented... But when there are too many components to the vision, it doesn't provide any real direction or focus.

When the vision for the future is too long-term, there's also a tendency for leaders to think, “*That's our vision for the future—but I have higher priorities to focus on today. We'll get to the future vision at some point in the future when things slow down.*” That's why, in this season, we are far more interested in **helping churches figure out their priorities for the next 12 months.**

What You Need Instead

You can be a healthy church without a great vision statement for the future, but you can't be a healthy church without having an action plan around what's important right now.

- What will help us move our mission forward—right now?
- What do we need to be focused on—right now?
- What do we need to be investing leadership, time and money into—right now?
- What do we need to rally the troops around—right now?

In other words, it doesn't do any good to have a well-crafted vision statement for what you want your church to look like 10 years from now if your team has no idea what you're trying to accomplish in the next 12 months.

To clarify priorities and build action plans around what's most important right now, we need to agree first on the primary problem we're trying to solve. What's the big challenge you're trying to overcome? This is vital because if we don't know the problem we're trying to address...

- It's impossible to know what strategies we should be engaging.
- We don't know what the win looks like.
- We don't know what we need to prioritize today. (*What needs to be changed? What needs to be improved? What needs to be added?*)

If we don't have clarity around the problem we are trying to solve, it's possible to stay busy doing church things and not be doing anything to accomplish the Great Commission.

Next Steps

Healthy, thriving churches are crystal clear about the primary problem their ministry is trying to tackle—meaning:

- Everyone knows the problem *and* is focused on tackling that problem.
- If you were to look at where these churches are investing their leadership, time, money, and prayers, you would see that it's almost entirely focused on overcoming that problem.
- If you looked at their ministry priorities for the next 12 months, they would all clearly address the problem they are hoping to solve.

If your church is stuck, come to agreement on the primary problem you are trying to solve before you invest any time in shaping a vision for the future.

Listen to the full episode on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or at theunstuckgroup.com/episode267.

Register for “Finding Momentum” on October 20, 2022

In this season, many pastors feel like they’re just surviving Sunday to Sunday with no real plan for the future. At this **free one-hour event**, Tony Morgan and Amy Anderson will teach you how to kickstart momentum and healthy growth in your church in 2023. [Register now!](#)

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