

**The Red Door Community Church
3 September 2023 . Fathers Day
Being a Man of Vision**

Habakkuk 2:1-4

I will take my stand at my watchpost
and station myself on the tower,
and look out to see what he will say to me,
and what I will answer concerning my complaint.
And the Lord answered me:
“Write the vision;
make it plain on tablets,
so he may run who reads it.
For still the vision awaits its appointed time;
it hastens to the end—it will not lie.
If it seems slow, wait for it;
it will surely come; it will not delay.
“Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him,
but the righteous shall live by his faith.

Many believe that amongst men in our modern world the root issue is lust, pornification and promiscuity that dominate so much of our culture’s imagination. Others think it's extended adolescence, men failing to reach their potential due to coddling and distraction. Others suggest it's a drive for power, men threatened by losing their privilege resulting in misogyny, toxicity, and abuse. It's true that these are forces at work in the world that result in horrific damage to others, but its his experience there is something deeper below the surface.

Jon Tyson recently surveyed 400 women for an upcoming book on the issues men are wrestling with today, asking women about their experience of men. One category of response stood out above them all. Apathy - connected to a lack of vision.

Men today lack purpose.
Men today lack direction in life.
Men today lack initiative in relationships.
Men today lack a sense of vocational call.
Men lack drive.

Men lack vision.

A shadow of apathy seems to have fallen over a generation of men. There are sociological reasons for so much of the apathy we experience. Changing job markets and loss of traditional gender roles, changes in education, and technological disruption, but there is something deeper at work, something spiritual not just sociological.

Acedia means “a lack of care, negligence,” derived from a Greek word that means “without pain or care.”

Thomas Aquinas described it as “a sort of heavy sadness . . . that presses down on a man’s mind in such a way that no activity pleases him.” It’s a kind of malaise that takes away motivation to do anything. A numbing of the heart that robs a man of his vitality and passion. Aquinas believed acedia wanted to accomplish two things in us: first, sadness about spiritual good, and second, disgust with activity.

In another conversation between monks,

Abba Poemen once told Abba John the Short, another spiritual master, that he had asked God to take away his passions. His prayer had been answered, and his heart had become tranquil. So he said to himself, "I find that I am at rest, with no war of flesh and spirit." But Abba John warned him, "Go, ask the Lord to stir a new war in you. Fighting is good for the soul.

Men need a cause. Men need to give themselves to something. Men are at their best when they are giving their strength sacrificially for the sake of others. If a man isn't in a fight for something that matters, he will either invent an enemy or waste his strength on trivialities. I sometimes wonder if that's why so many men in the modern world get caught up in conspiracy theories. Unsure of what to do with their frustration and strength, they throw it into whatever cause seems to demand the loudest response. Others seem to slowly rot in the soil of amusements. They have lost all motivation to do anything about anything. What should we do?

Ask God to stir a new war in you
Ask God to stir His vision in you

Stories from Kenya

Familiarity breed contempt - Contempt to sell the lie that you can't change anything. Going into a new environment stirs the heart, jar the senses - you are a blessing, just show up.

Jesus when he taught the disciples to pray, He never prayed for you as a man to go to heaven, He prayed for Heaven to come to earth. And He wants to use you to fill the earth with the culture of God.

How's your soul? Maybe you need to get into a fight. **Ask God to stir a new war in you**, and call other men alongside you. Nehemiah called a generation to repair the wall, each man working with a sword in one hand and a trowel in the other. Building and defending, this is men at their best. Ask God to give you something worth dying for and live for it.

Some foundational thoughts:

Gods divine design is the Key when we think about vision. How did God begin?

God firstly made Eden - Eden literally means presence - its an atmosphere. A place where the presence of God is so close and pleasant, like an open door to heaven. It was not a place that Man searched for and found. God placed Him there in Eden, because you were created by God to live in Eden.

Anytime God makes anything, he first makes the environment before that very thing he creates. When God made fish he made the water first. When God made plants, he made the soil, the earth first. When he made stars the firmament first. When he made man, he first made eden. Fish need water, plants needs soil, stars need firmament, and you need eden.

If you take a fish out of water it malfunctions and dies - plant out of soil, star out of firmament become a meteor and burns up and dies - if you take a man out of the presence of His creator He malfunctions and dies. That is why the devil hates a worshipping man.

If you want to stir a new fight in you, create a new vision in you, it begins by getting in His presence. Because of the first thing God gave man.

The first place God put man was in His presence - Eden.
The first thing God gave man was work.

God gave man work before He gave him woman. The first thing God gave man was work. Work shows up before the fall, so work is not a curse, its a blessing.

Eden - presence

Work

- Take Care of the garden - Cultivate
- Guard the garden - Protect
- Keep my Commands - Obey - don't touch the tree
- The Day you eat the fruit you will die - Be responsible

The male was first, it does not mean better, it means you are responsible for that which comes after you. First borns

Lets look at work.

Word work is eragon in Hebrew

- Become
- Manifest
- Fulfil
- Reveal

You have been taught that work is something you do. There is a difference between your work and your job. Your work is not your job. Your job is what they pay you to do, your work is what you were born to do.

Your job you can be fired from. Your work they can't touch. You can retire from your job, but you can never retire from your work. So does that mean jobs are irrelevant? No jobs prepare you for your work.

The word become, has more to do with stepping into the purpose you where designed to be, rather than finding your identity in your work. Like a mango seed that is told to work, it grows and bears fruit mangos.

Your work can never tell you who you are, but who you are will inform your work. Become.

That means God has hidden in you the perfect vision of who you where meant to become.

Its important for you therefore, to find your work, because its the first thing God told Adam.

There is a deep satisfaction when you find that sweet spot of the work God has given you to do. Because you are workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus to do good work which God has prepared in advance for you to do. Ephesians 2

God wants to help you manifest who you really are. To become who you really are - when a bird is flying it is working. When you are seeing the Kingdom of God on earth through your gift you are working.

Why is so important? Your work is the source of your vision.

Have you found your work?

Many men have not discovered who they really are. Because you are trapped in a job that is suffocating your work. Because you are going to a place that is not you.

The problem is most of what we as men call our work is only your job. We have looked at our jobs in the wrong light. Now some of you maybe being paid for your work - Praise God. But we must understand the difference between your work and your job.

This can be very dangerous, because in a man work is more important that woman. Don't mishear me, like we are meant to mistreat and neglect our wives. But some men are so dissatisfied with their job add to that they have confused it with their work, they then try and get their value from their wives (because they can't get it from their job) - and trying to get something from their wives that they were never designed to do. Women don't make men feel valuable, their work is meant to satisfy a man and give them the feeling of value and significance.

To be clear: We are talking about the feeling of value, not the legal reality of a mans value in Christ because of the cross.

So when a man looses work, He feels that he has no value - then he looks to the woman who was never designed to give him value, so he beats the woman. Domestic violence is high in our world because men are trying to find value from their wives, something that they were never designed to do.

So before a man needs a woman he needs a vision, He needs the work that God has given him to do.

Don't mishear me today ladies, you ladies are so resourceful, smart, have a plan, wise, intelligent, capable - don't think this means that your only able to be effective when you have a husband. Actually if you have a man with no vision, you are so capable, you'll get your own vision from God - to serve God even when you have an insecure man who has no vision. Yes women are designed by God to be a helper, but if there is nothing going on they are gong to help them selves - and get super effective at it.

The point here is not to compare male and females (which 2023 loves to do), its really to understand that when a man knows his vision, and he connects to a woman with the same vision - both find deep satisfaction and fulfilment.

Please don't use this against me and assume I'm saying you can't be single and have deep satisfaction and fulfilment - Im not saying that.

What I'm trying to stir, what I'm trying to awaken here, and I believe what God wants to awaken in men today is their God given vision for their lives.

So before a man needs a woman he needs a vision, He needs the work that God has given him to do. So MEN - If you are so blessed to find a women, she needs to find you in His presence firstly (Eden) and then working (following the call of God using the gift on your life). Men God wants to give you are helper, but you only need a helper if you are doing something. You don't need no help doing nothing 24/7.

If is a man is threatened by a strong woman, it actually just means you have got no vision and work to call her into. That is why the first thing a man is a vision and work.

Vision is Gods deposit of purpose in your heart that creates passion.

Sight is the enemy of vision. Sight is a function of the eyes, vision is a function of the heart.

But the point here is that I believe that deposit of God has already been done, but maybe you have not yet seen it.

Who is going to help you see it?

Joel 2:28-29

And afterward,

I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy,

your old men will dream dreams,

your young men will see visions.

Even on my servants, both men and women,

I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

The purpose of the spirit here is to restore man back to Gods dreams and visions

See how its young men connected visions, because young men need visions early to do what God has for them to do in their life time.

A dream is a vision that can not come to pass in your lifetime. Old men need to dream to remember to not forget to encourage the sons and daughters in the family of God.

But there are some things that get in the way of the spirit restoring you vision.

Remove the obstacles

1. Work to resolve old wounds

It's difficult to embrace a new vision for your life while being hampered by old wounds that haven't been tended to. Spend some time in introspection. Are you harboring resentment? Do you need to forgive someone? Are you hanging on to hurt that needs healing? Be honest about those feelings, seek out wise counsel, and start the TV restoration process so you can move on.

Unforgiveness keeps you in a prison of the past.

How do you do that? Look carefully at Jesus on the cross. Look at His wounds, look at the one who was crushed for you in order that you would be forgiven.

Peter saw who Jesus was, and Jesus showed Peter who He is. Rock

2. Do what you can move away from a survival lifestyle to a purpose lifestyle

Compassion International - I dream statements

3. Understand it's not about you

If you are like me you think highly of yourself and your importance. However, we are not the center of the universe. Seek out a vision for your life that makes the world better for others.

4. Explore your passion and talents

Scottish Olympic runner Eric Liddell famously said, "God made me fast and when I run I feel His pleasure." We were all made with God-given talents. What passions and talent do you have that will make you feel like Liddell when you use it? The time has come for you to give that gift to the world.

If you have a tough time articulating your gifting, you will have a tough time cultivating your customised vision for your life. You were born to take dominion of the world (not of people) of the world with the gift God has given you. Your domain is the area of gifting that you use to see the Kingdom of God manifest on the earth. It's right there that you become a person of purpose.

Vision is a preview of your purpose.

5. Spend time with people you admire

Seek out people whose lives you admire. Ask them how they got where they are and why they do what they do. Perhaps even see if they would be willing to meet regularly.

6. Envision what you want your life to look like

Think about an end goal. What do you want your life to look like? What type of man do you want to be? What do you want your family to look like? What would you like your career to be? Picture it and see it in vivid detail.

What are you setting before you?

Hebrews 12

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Remove the distractions, because you are setting before you other people's visions

What is coming out of your mouth?

On your mind and in your mouth.

Truths > feelings > decisions > habits > trajectory of your life

7. Don't limit yourself

Dream big. Don't allow fear or a lack of confidence shortchange your vision. If your vision doesn't make you at least a little uncomfortable, then you probably aren't dreaming big enough. It should be scary but also exciting.

If you see **money** as your limiter then you will not be a person of vision. Money is not your solution, Jesus is your solution.

8. Get feedback and buy-in from trusted sources

Ask the people closest to you if your vision is on point, particularly your family. Make changes based on their feedback and make sure you get buy-in.

Vision does develop and form over time.

9. Write a mission statement and list action steps

Think of a one sentence statement that encapsulates your vision. Write it down and put it somewhere you can see it. Then write down three-to-five action steps that you will focus on the next couple of months that will bring you closer to reaching your vision. When you have accomplished those action steps, come up with new ones.

10. Find accountability

Seek out people that will encourage you and hold you accountable to stay on course. Ask them to press you on it.

Fine line between encouragement, and condemnation.

11. Be flexible

Be open to the fact that your vision may need to be changed or tweaked as time goes on and circumstances become different. Think of your vision as a living thing.

12. Ask God who made you and knows you best

You are made on purpose for a purpose.

Jesus goal was to do the work, not job, that the Father had for him to do? When did that really begin? When he received the Holy Spirit at His baptism.