

Is Your Vision Large Enough?

by: Rick Warren

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There's a difference between leadership and management. Management consists primarily of three things: analysis, problem solving, and planning. If you go to any management course, you'll find it revolves around those three things. But **leadership consists of communicating your Vision and Values.** If you don't clarify the purposes as the leader, who will?

The problem I see is that most churches are over managed and under led. You need them both, but when the church is over-managed you end up with a paralysis of analysis. It's like "Ready ... Aim ... Aim ... Aim!" And you never fire. You're always analyzing and looking.

So I want to encourage you to cast a large vision within your church, and here are a few guidelines:

- Believe it or not, **the bigger your vision, the easier it is to reach.** People are rarely motivated by small visions. Let me give you an example: When I was a youth director, if I said to the youth, "We're going to have a prayer meeting on Wednesday night at 7:00 p.m.!" We might have five or ten kids show up. But if I said, "We're going to have a prayer meeting at 5:00 a.m. on Saturday morning at the beach. Find your own way to get there." I'd have 50 kids show up.
- **Don't worry about solving the problems before casting the vision.** A good example of visionary leadership would be the United States President, John F. Kennedy. Regardless of what you think about his politics, Kennedy stood up one day in the early 1960's and said, "We'll put a man on the moon by the end of the decade." He was clear; he was precise; and the vision was something people could look to. Now, here's the interesting thing -- when he said it, the technology to put a man on the moon hadn't even been developed. That's visionary leadership!
- **Your God determines how big your goal is.** So, how big do you think God is? The issue is not who do you think you are, but who do you think God is? In your dreams for ministry, don't limit yourself by saying, "What can I do?" Instead ask, "What can God do? What can God do in this place?"
- **Be pragmatic even as you cast a vision.** John Kennedy didn't say we were going to

explore the known solar system. He focused on the moon. I often tell church planters, "Get out a map and draw a circle that includes everything that is approximately a fifteen minutes drive from your church and find out how many people live within that circle. That's your goal." Ultimately, you want to reach everybody, but this is where you're going to start.

- **You have to be committed to the vision.** I asked a church planter once, "How long are you prepared to stay?" He said, "I'm committed to staying six months." I told him, "Don't even bother to go!" We overestimate what we can do in one year, and we underestimate what we can do in ten years or twenty years. That's very common. The trouble with most goal setting is we set our goals too low and try to accomplish them too soon. Instead we need to set big goals -- huge goals -- enormous goals -- but plan plenty of time in reaching those goals. It takes twelve hours to grow a mushroom, but sixty years to grow an oak tree. Which one is going to last?
- Finally, **make a frank appraisal of your own gifts.** The Bible teaches that there are one talent people and five talent people and ten talent people. That means you may be good at several things, but you're not good at everything. If your vision is properly large, you're going to need lots of help, and that means you're going to have to share responsibilities. Maybe you need to step back from counseling or doing all of the marrying and burying. Here at Saddleback, I even share the preaching. Even if you don't have paid staff to help, you could develop lay pastors.

How large is your vision? As a Christian leader, you need to put it before your congregation and then keep it before them