

Vision 2.0
Why Am I Here!
Ephesians 2:19-21
September 10, 2017

Jonathan Swift once stated that: "*vision is the art of seeing things invisible.*" A vision is the ability to see what is possible. How do I know that? Because I believe we are all created in the image of a God who sees what we cannot see and who gives us glimpses of what is possible. Our God can see the future as clearly as you can see me right now. And God gives us pictures in our minds that help us to see what God wants to become a reality. Those pictures may include what God wants your family to look like, what God wants your career to look like, and what God wants your whole life to look like. So, God is active in giving us pictures of the future He has in store for us...and those pictures are what make up our vision for the future.

Here's one of the awesome things about those pictures. God not only does give a vision to us as individuals but also paints a vision picture for whole groups of people. There are times when God gave word pictures to the ancient Israelites of what the promised land would look like. God told them of a place that was beautiful, that was "*flowing with milk and honey,*" the signs of prosperity and plenty. That word picture gave way to the pictures in the minds of the people of what the land would look like. There were word pictures that led to images of freedom, of journeys, of buildings and the Temple, and families and kingdoms. And let me just say this, God is still giving word pictures to people. God is still speaking so that people can picture in their minds what God wants to become a reality.

So, today we are going to look at the word picture that God has given us at CrossPoint Church. This is vision of the future that God has given us. Our job is to dream along with God, to join with God, so that the vision God has for the us, in this generation, becomes a reality, not just for us but for generations to come.

But, in case visions scare you a bit let me remind you about the nature of God, that **what God originates, God orchestrates**. Let me say that another way...what God starts, God finishes – what God begins, God completes. Do you believe that? I believe that with all my heart. I have watched God start things I thought were impossible and then make them happen from what looked like thin air. I have seen people who gave their lives to God and God brought about something amazing and a bit unbelievable. And I believe that God is starting something new among us that is as big as our God and that what God is starting – God is going to make happen.

I've read in this book (hold up the Bible) one story after another about how God started something and then brought it to completion. God promised Joseph that one day he would be a ruler. God promised Abraham that he would be a father. God promised Hezekiah that he would have extra years onto his life. God promised Moses that the people would be set free and that he would lead them to the promised land. God promised Mary she would have a baby. God promised...come on! Does anyone know about the promises of God?

So, what about the promises God has given to us...to CrossPoint Church. (Review the history of each campus.) Over 93 years ago God gave a group of people in a church in Harrisburg a vision to start a church out in the country. The Colonial Park area of Harrisburg was mostly farmland and this group wanted to reach those who were living out in this rural area. In 1924 a church plant got started that would pave the way for what we're doing today as CrossPoint Church.

The same kind of story surrounds our Rutherford campus. In 1966 that church began a ministry to a community with a purpose. The plan was to minister to a new community that was being built on Rutherford Heights. In 2007 that campus became a part of who we are as CrossPoint Church. (Jen and Ryan, feel free to add more from your personal interactions)

2007 was the same year we launched the South Hanover campus. It was birthed from a vision God gave us in 2005 to start something new back when we were just one campus. We followed up on a vision that stopped

us in our tracks one day, while driving on route 39. We pulled into the parking lot of what is now the King Kone ice cream shop one day as God was clearly telling us that there needed to be a church in this area that would reach the hundreds of families that were going to be moving into the route 39 corridor.

Last year we took our multisite vision to another part of the Harrisburg area when we started the Midtown campus. This campus was the dream of some people who are members of CrossPoint and who took seriously our vision to reach communities with the message of Jesus Christ. I was introduced to the dream while looking out the fourth story window of the Commonwealth Cyber Academy building on the corner of 3rd and Reily Streets in Midtown. That dream includes campus pastor Joshua Robinson and over 40 people who attend that campus on a regular basis each week. The campus is doing worship each Sunday, weekly Bible studies, and is involved in local mission adventures in the midtown area.

If I can be honest with you for a moment, there was a time when all of this scared me a bit. Managing staff, a multimillion-dollar budget, making decisions that affect hundreds of people, growing campuses to a place where they can be self-sustaining, helping our denomination understand what multi-site is all about, and being the pastor over the most successful daycare and nursery schools in the greater Harrisburg area is a little intimidating to a guy with a Christian Education degree from Messiah college and theological master's degree from Eastern Seminary. They don't teach this stuff in either of those two disciplines.

But, through the great people around us here at CrossPoint, God has done some amazing things. I believe God has given us all these things to care for because **God knows what we're capable of doing** if we work together as a church body. You see, a God given vision is possible because God believes it can be accomplished through the people God gives it to. That's us. God has handed us a vision and wants to work in and through us to make it a reality. Look at Ephesians 2:19-21 again with me. ¹⁹ *So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. **You are members of God's family.*** ²⁰ *Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself.* ²¹ *We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord.*

God is saying to us that we are a part of the Kingdom sized plans God has and that together, we can be a part of seeing God build on a strong foundation that was laid down long ago. If we join ourselves together as a family, with a unified plan, we can make a difference in our communities, in our families, in the places where we do mission work, and just maybe - around the world.

God is building something amazing and wants to use us here at CrossPoint Church to make it happen. What that means is that **it will take a kingdom size faith to do what God wants to accomplish.** This must be all and only about what God wants. God has something in mind...and God believes in us, that we can make it happen, and so the question is, do we have the belief in God that it will take to make this vision happen? We've seen what God has done in the past and because of who God is and what God has done, are you willing to believe that God can take CrossPoint to this new place? God believes in us, do we believe in God?

So, what's the vision? I think first we need to establish why we need a vision. The reason God sends a vision to people like us is because God is at work bringing the world in line with what God wants. To achieve that alignment – God gives specific direction to groups of people who can affect the culture around us in ways that help people see God. God is on the move and has an end in mind. Look at what it says in Habakkuk 2:2-3 NLT

² *Then the LORD said to me, "Write my answer plainly on tablets, so that a runner can carry the correct message to others."* ³ *This vision is for a future time. It describes the end, and it will be fulfilled. If it seems slow in coming, wait patiently, for it will surely take place. It will not be delayed.*

A vision is God's way of telling us what the future can look like. Often, the present is messed up in some way and God is trying to bring a corrective. So, what are some of the things God wants to care for today? Well, we believe that CrossPoint is here to be a part of the solution to some of the issues that are around us today. One of them are the multitude of issues that exist in the family today. While there have been family dynamics

issues since the beginning of time (if you read the Bible you will discover that), we believe that the family today is fractured and in need of Jesus. The divorce rate is still crazy and there is a generation who is asking why bother getting married. The issues around our children's safety control how we live our lives every day. Fenced in yards and cameras monitoring our every move are now the norm. As a church, we are called to partner with families in ways that will make the family structure stronger in faith and connected in love.

Secondly, the communities we live in are places of trouble, hurt and turmoil. The church needs to get out beyond its walls and bring the only thing that will offer healing to a broken world, Jesus. The concerns about race, economics, health, safety, family, and comfort are just a few of the things that occupy the minds of all of us. Our communities need to know that someone is working at bringing hope to those who may never step foot inside our church walls. It's time for the church to take what it believes and move out into our communities in ways that will bring about life change.

Lastly, there is a deep spiritual and emotional need for answers to life's hardest questions. And people are looking for the answers in things other than Jesus. Gambling is all about finding a financial breakthrough. Drugs and alcohol are about feeling good and escaping. Jumping from one job to another without a plan or direction. Feeling scared or overwhelmed by a flood of tensions that never seem to get resolved. These are just some of the things that keep people up at night. The work of the church in the world today is to bring comfort to troubled minds, hearts and souls. Not just next door but to all God calls us to.

This is why we need a vision for our lives together...Ephesians passage. Look at Ephesians 2:19-21 one more time with me. ¹⁹ *So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. **You are members of God's family.*** ²⁰ *Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself.* ²¹ *We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord.*

So, what is the vision for CrossPoint Church? (Go to video or in person run down of the vision)

Family First

Community Centered

Mission Minded

So, this vision is about what we are going to become, what CrossPoint is going to be known for in each one of our communities where our campuses are located. This vision is about who God wants us to be and how we can change our families, our communities and our world – for the better. God wants to transform lives and bring people into the Kingdom...and this vision allows us to be a part of God's plan to Kingdom to earth, as it is in heaven.

Amen!