

VISION SUNDAY (GREATER INFLUENCE)

15 March 2020

VISION SUNDAY SLIDE

Hello everyone – Happy Vision Sunday!

Everyone turn to the person next to you... and say to them – Happy Vision Sunday!

It is so good to be with all of you... I have been waiting for this Sunday to come for a while! And as I am sure you can tell... I am very, very excited!

Since the beginning of this year... we have been seeking God... for His Vision for King of Kings for the next few years. In January... the Pastors and I... and a few of our ministry directors went away for a week... Then the whole leadership spent a day together... and as you know... as a church... we all spent 21 days in February, in prayer and fasting... we have been very intentional about seeking God's vision for His Church – Not just our Vision!

And today is Vision Sunday – where I have the privilege... to share that vision with you.

Before we get into that though... it may be helpful for me to explain a few different terms. You have probably heard about our church Mission, our Beliefs, our Values... and now... here I am today... talking about Vision! All these different words! What do they all mean!!!! Let me quickly explain...

There are a lot of things... that are really important to us as a church... that don't change – they are simply a part of who we are – like DNA is a part of us - and if we stop doing them... we actually stop being a church.

For example... We have a Mission that is very simple... you can see it in our signage all over the building outside under the name King of Kings... Our mission... is to Love God, Love People, and Make Disciples.

OUR MISSION – LOVE GOD, LOVE PEOPLE, MAKE DISCIPLES

We did not make that up... we got it straight out of the bible... directly from Jesus... in the Great Commandment in Matthew 22 Jesus said; **“Love the Lord your God... with all your heart... and with all your soul... and with all your mind.” (Mat 22:37).**

That's the Love God part. And the Love people part follows, as the second greatest command to; **“Love your neighbour as yourself.” (Mat 22:38)**

Where do we get the make disciples part? Well.. that is from Jesus as well, in the Great Commission in Matthew 28 where he commissioned us to **“go... and make disciples... of all nations.” (Mat 28:19)**

So that is our mission, some churches call it their purpose. Same thing...

And so that is really important to us... if we ever stop helping people to love God... through teaching, prayer and worship... we stop being a church!

If we ever stop loving people... pastorally, in our small groups, in our fellowship, in our ministries, in our counselling ministry... we stop being a church!

And... if we ever stop making disciples... helping people grow deeper in their relationship with Christ... and sharing that faith with others - we stop being a church!

So that's our mission – But we also have **beliefs** – what we believe.

OUR BELIEFS

And these are all on our website... I'm not going to read through them all... but you can go there and check them out whenever you want to. They are crucially important. They include all kinds of things... like what we believe about God, the Trinity, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, Salvation. Very, very important things. Because what you believe... shapes your identity... and your identity shapes your behaviour.

So, we have Mission, Beliefs, and we also have a set of values...

OUR VALUES

What are values? Well... Values are certain distinctives – things that make us particularly unique. You might say, I really value having a clean home! That's a value for you. It may not be a big value for other people.

So while there may be other churches who believe what we believe... not all churches have the same set of values. Let me read through ours for you quickly; this is our shortened version;

We love Jesus above everything!

We esteem the word of God.

We find **Freedom through Spirit-Life.**

Prayer... is seriously important.

As is... **Influencing our community.**

We encourage people to **Grow and serve in our gifting.**

Family is our heart.

Generosity is our norm.

We value **Excellence** it **honours God & inspires** people.

And... We really want to be **Faith filled, big thinking risk takers** for God!

Don't you just love these! They inspire me... and scare me a little bit!

So, that is our **mission**, our **beliefs**, and our **values**... But together with that... we also believe that God has given us a **vision**... a special focus for the next few years – to help us direct the mission that he has already given us. So...

What is vision?

Very simply - Vision is a clear mental picture of what God wants.

Let me explain it like this. We are all on a journey... everyone of us... and every church is on a journey as well. Each person ends up somewhere... and each church ends up somewhere. But only some... end up somewhere on purpose! Those are the ones with vision.

So what is your vision?

If I asked you to describe how you picture your life in five years time, chances are, you could paint a fairly clear picture of what you would want your life to look like. You could describe what you hope to achieve spiritually... you could describe what you hope to achieve relationally... you could describe what you hope to achieve financially.

In other words, you could look beyond what is... and describe what could be, and what God says should be – that's vision. It's a preferred future, a destination.

So today... I want to put before you... That which God has been putting on our hearts as a vision... a clear mental picture for our church... a destination... It is good to do this... and it is also very biblical...

Proverbs 29 says; **“Where there is no vision, the people perish.” Proverbs 29:18 (KJV)**

If we don't know where we are going... people get confused. The bible says if there is no vision... no clear mental picture of our destination... people are aimless... and lost.

So because we value unity... we are trusting that God will draw us together with a clear vision.

And so here is what we feel the Lord has been saying;

We believe that God is calling King of Kings to...

GREATER INFLUENCE

I know that we are all called to have a greater influence...

I am not sure what comes to mind for you when you hear those words... but the question we have been asking God is – What are you calling King of Kings to do in our valley Father? If this church suddenly disappeared tomorrow... would we be missed? Are we having an influence?

Jesus said in Mat 5;

¹³“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

¹⁴“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.

¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. (Mathew 5:13-16)

Church... We believe that God is calling us to Greater Influence... We feel that this is best summed up in three statements... which you will see on the signpost coming up on the screen now...

Influencing the community

Building family

Reaching the next generation

As a church... I believe that God has positioned us at the crossroads... I am trusting that as people arrive at the crossroads of King of Kings... that God will give us Greater Influence... in influencing our community for His glory... building family... and reaching the next generation.

I am going to go through each of these one by one... let's dive into the first one!

1. INFLUENCING THE COMMUNITY

As a church we are called to influence the place that God has put us in – obviously that means here in our Valley... but... we also live in a Global village these days. So what happens in our valley... can ripple and have an effect all around the world through missions.

So that means we are called to be God's voice to this Valley, to Cape Town, to South Africa... and to the ends of the earth. You may look at the community and the world around you and be overwhelmed or fearful, but God has placed you here, and He has a purpose for you here in 2020. Amen?!

So what are you going to do with the influence you have?

We know that as Christians we are not just called to be a positive influence, we are called to also share the good news of Jesus Christ. We are called to be missional in everything we do.

I thought it would be great today.. to share with you the story of how one of our people have been doing this – And it is my prayer - that it will inspire you to do the same! So I am going to call Kim Porter to come and join me up here this morning...

Kim is has called King of Kings home for a few years now... along with her family... And I am so glad she agreed to share a bit with us today.

INTERVIEW WITH KIM PORTER

1. Kim, for those that don't know you, please tell us a little bit about yourself and your family.
2. Kim, the reason I asked you to join me up here today, is because you have quite an amazing story about how God led you to start an Alpha Course with a group of your friends. Would you mind sharing the story with us?
3. Kim, what would you say are some of the most valuable lessons you have learnt through your experience?
4. Do you have any advice for those of us who are also wanting to reach our friends?

Thank you so much Kim! You inspire me! Church, let's give her a hand...

Friends, after I heard that story a while ago – I have not been able to shake an idea – what if... rather than just running our usual one Alpha course this year here at King of Kings... imagine... if we could find 10-20 ordinary, but brave people... who would be willing to run an Alpha course themselves this year... and invite their neighbours and their friends... Imagine the impact of 20 Alpha courses run by people in our church all over the valley!

Is this something God is calling you to do? Maybe at your home... at your school... in a coffee shop... at the golf club... While you think about that... watch this clip about Alpha...

ALPHA VIDEO PROMO

Friends... we are called as a church to be having a greater influence in our valley and around the world! But the church is us – it's you! When last did you share Jesus with somebody? Through Alpha, we can make it easy for you! We can give you everything you need to run it... the videos are all there... and we can teach you how to facilitate it?

God is calling us as a church... and you as an individual... to share the good news about Jesus with people. In Mathew 24 Jesus spoke of the signs of the end times. He said there would be a lukewarmness, a falling away... and rampant sin ... Jesus said in Mat 24;

“Sin will be rampant everywhere... and the love of many will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end... will be saved.

And the Good News about the Kingdom... will be preached throughout the whole world... so that all nations will hear it... and then the end will come.”

Matthew 24:12-14 NLT

In Mark 16... Jesus said go share Good News and then signs and wonders will follow...

15 ... he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone.¹⁶ Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who refuses to believe will be condemned. ¹⁷ These miraculous signs will accompany those who believe:

They will cast out demons in my name, and they will speak in new languages. ¹⁸ They will be able to handle snakes with safety, and if they drink anything poisonous, it won't hurt them. They will be able to place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed." Mark 16:15-18 NLT

If we want to influence our community – we need to focus on reaching lost people... and reviving lukewarm people by sharing the good news! And as we do this... watch how God will pour out his spirit and move with miracles!

I just want to take a moment to say this as well... if you are here today, and you know you are lost and far from Jesus, or you know that your love for Jesus has grown cold. Make your life right with him today my friend! Jesus loves you, and died for you. Come back to him.

As well as sharing the gospel... we also want to practically help people in our community – to let our good deeds impact and influence people for Jesus. God calls us to make a wholistic impact – We are called to be salt to our valley - salt is not just for flavour, but also for cleaning and purifying. We are called to be Light – light helps guide people and also chases away darkness.

Are we being salt and light in our Valley?

Have you realized, that as Christians, this horrible novel coronavirus situation... can be turned into an opportunity... to show God's love and care in a practical way to those around us... not just those who come to King of Kings... but our whole community, and our missionaries

What kind of influence is our attitude having on our community?

Are we fear-bringers or hope-spreaders? Psalm 91 is one of my favourite passages of scripture...

Those who live in the shelter of the Most High... will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty. This I declare about the Lord: He alone is my refuge, my place of safety; he is my God, and I trust him. For he will rescue you from every trap and protect you from deadly disease.

He will cover you with his feathers. He will shelter you with his wings. His faithful promises are your armor and protection. Do not be afraid of the terrors of the night, nor the arrow that flies in the day.

Do not dread the disease that stalks in darkness, nor the disaster that strikes at midday. Though a thousand fall at your side, though ten thousand are dying around you, these evils will not touch you." (Psalms

Amen??!

Influencing the community – here is the next important facet of our vision...

2. BUILDING FAMILY

Another specific focus we believe that God has given us is the building up of the church family. We are a family church... always have been... always will be... because we are the family of God.

But we are also surrounded by families all around us who are hurting. Not only in this valley... but even in our church.

So we feel burdened to help support and strengthen marriages.

Paul says in Ephesians 5;

Each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. (Ephesians 5:33)

We are planning on running a big marriage course in the near future... We want to support and strengthen marriages in every way we can.

Marriage is tough... and staying married is really tough. We live in time where our needs and wants are King... and that is not very conducive to a happy marriage. We need to help our married couples stay together... and not just 'stay' together... but to enjoy the wonderful God given gift of marriage.

We also are wanting to continue to grow our network of small groups... and develop our church community as a family. I'm not sure if you realize it, but our small groups have been growing and thriving! And we long to see them grow more and more. It is in small groups... that we are able to really do life with one another. This has been Jesus' vision from the start... In John 13 he said;

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:34)

There are so many people in our church who need practical care. Whether someone has been bereaved, ill, or unemployed. God calls us to lift one another up and to carry one another's burdens.

It is so easy to come on a Sunday to church and not really connect to people. A quick 'how are you, I'm fine' is not really getting to know one another and encouraging each other. That is why small groups are so important... so that you don't get lost or hide in the crowd!

Finally, part of building family also means having people who can come alongside us when we need that. Just as many in our church need practical care... many others need mental and spiritual care. Many people have been hurt and need help to walk through forgiveness... and moving forward. They need a Fresh Start... or learning to become a new creation. Many struggle with addiction, low self-esteem, anxiety etc.

There is a growing realization that mental health is an area that many people struggle in that they church has overlooked. But we are also so blessed to have the Living Well Counselling ministry team at our church... and we are trusting that God will continue to use this in a powerful way to impact peoples lives.

So, influencing the community, building family, the last important focus of the vision is to reach the next generation.

3. REACHING THE NEXT GENERATION

Now... as I mentioned before... sharing the gospel is crucial... but we also believe that God has given us a special focus on the next generation of the church.

Our kids are growing up in a different world than we did... and they desperately need us to intentionally talk about our faith in Jesus with them.

And when I say that we want to focus on this – it is important that if you are older... that you don't feel side-lined. I hope you realize that our new 8am service was a very strategic and intentional move to ensure that we are also reaching everyone!

But for the church to continue to be healthy – it cannot... and must not become a museum to how wonderful the past was... it has to become a movement of something new that the Spirit of God is doing in our day.

And so we do feel a urgency to speak on behalf of the children and the young people... the next generation. The children in our church families, and our community, and the ones not yet born. They can't speak for themselves, and so God has spoken for them. The prophet Joel said;

Hear this, you elders; listen, all who live in the land. Has anything like this ever happened in your days or in the days of your ancestors? ³ Tell it to your children, and let your children tell it to their children, and their children to the next generation. (Joel 1:2)

We have to invest deeply in children's ministry as a direction from the Lord. This will involve different ministries and projects. And perhaps even more adoption and fostering in our church!

So... how is God calling you to have a greater influence? How is he calling you to influence the community?... Are you going to be one of those 20 courageous men & women that commit to leading an Alpha?... How is he calling you to build family?... Is it time to start a new small group? And do life with some people! ... How is he calling you to reach the next generation? I have got to tell you everyone – I don't know why we don't have more people lining up to serve in Children's Church. It should be a honour and a privilege to work with the next generation of believers.

So let me end with a couple of vision projects...

VISION PROJECTS

Here are some of the things we would love to see happen in the next 2-3 years... maybe way sooner if God allows!

We would love a dedicated Kids Church themed venue.

It is a dream to turn the minor halls into a dedicated themed kids church area... to be used for their worship times – and double up for kids parties – that kind of thing.

Mothers room upgrade

Our mothers nursing room could do with a makeover. We want our moms to feel valued and at home in a nice space.

Then another thing that we feel is important, particularly in the light of times in which we live...

A clear view fence & gate

We see the need to secure our perimeter for the general safety of our people. We have a lot of kids...and a lot of evening activities as well with ladies heading out to their cars. We need to look after our community. Also...

Chairs and carpeting in auditorium and main hall

We are still wanting to replace our ageing plastic chairs as well as new carpeting for the auditorium and main hall. This was the aim during the upgrade but we did not have enough to do this at the time.

We want to make better use of our exterior signage opportunities

We would love to put up signage outside that is big and bold. This is one of our vision goals of influencing the community.

There are some other places also that need some work...

Exterior signage...

And the front doors...

Also really something we would love to do is to fix up our bathrooms...

They are exactly the same as 25 years ago...

And our Main Hall could be turned into an amazing fellowship hall... For mens breakfasts... ladies breakfasts... community events... etc.

So... Lots of exciting things to look forward to!

So church – the bible says in Habakkuk 2;

“Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it.”

Habakkuk 2:2 (ESV)

We have tried our best to do that... Here is what we are trusting God for...

GREATER INFLUENCE

Influencing our community, building family, and reaching the next generation!

May God do what He wants to do – and receive all the glory. Amen.

Please would you stand with me church, and let's pray together.

Father... We worship you... and we magnify you today... We thank you that this is your church, and we are your people. We know that we are called to love you, and to love people, and to make disciples.

Church – I encourage you to reach out your hands to the Lord...

Father we pray that you would give us greater influence to reach this valley for you. Starting with our friends and family. Father, we ask for greater influence in our community. Father, thank you for the glorious hope we have in you... help us to have confident expectation, and to speak freely and fearlessly about your work in our lives.

Father, we ask that families would be strengthened and built... father, we ask that as a church family you would grow us. Your word says that you place the lonely into families. Make this a family Lord – where the lonely feel loved and accepted.

Father, we ask for the next generation. Help us to mentor and to grow them, and to pass on our faith. In Jesus mighty name!

And so Lord we pray in faith... We trusting you for so much...

Father... We see a church that has a strong influence in the community.

We see a vibrant family church with a strong children's and youth ministry!

We see a church that is relevant, and speaking into the real issues of the world around it.

We see a church that is maximizing its position to connect with the community.

We see a church that keeps pushing into spirit-life.

We see a missional, diverse church that is multi-cultural.

We see worship that inspires radical faith and declaration of who God is!

We see a church that is welcoming toward children and just makes them feel at home, safe, and free to learn about you Jesus – and free to worship you how you made them too!

We see a strong serving culture where volunteers are honoured and loved as we honour and love you together by serving one another.

Father – Have your way with us – use us for your glory! In Greater influence...

Amen!

Church... thank you for joining us today!

If you are interested in running an Alpha course... go and place your name down at the connect counter! Members, our AGM starts in 15min. Go grab a coffee. It is not going to be a long meeting today. I am aiming for 20min max! God bless you all!

AGM IN 15min