

Introduction: Vision Conversation

A few years back, while on the golf course, I was having a conversation with one of my uncles. I was reading a book on vision and was excited to share my thoughts. Now, he was a highly successful real-estate agent in the D.C. area and was just starting to enjoy his retirement. Not a Christian, he responded in a way I wasn't expecting:

B.S.! Everyone has vision but only a few pull them off. Why? Because the gap between visions and dreams is strong work habits and most people don't want any of that.

Looking back, I think he was referring to Lao Tzu saying:

Watch your thoughts, they become your words; watch your words, they become your actions; watch your actions, they become your habits; watch your habits, they become your character; watch your character, it becomes your destiny.

Or Mark Batterson, "We are what we repeatedly do, show me your habits I'll show you your future." Or perhaps Stephen Covey's classic, "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People." Regardless, vision (preferred future) functions as the "North Star" for any organization and without it, "people perish" (Proverbs 29:18). Vision is necessary but standing alone it is, as my uncle rightly pointed out, just a dream (and cruel one at that).

Recap

Last week in our "Supernatural Church" series we saw the supernatural salvations of 3000 people when they responded to Peter's preaching of repentance and baptism (Acts 2:40). That morning the church swelled from 120 to 3000, a staggering increase of 2400%. The early church's vision has been that of every church since, i.e., to be a place where the "Lord adds to their numbers daily those who were being saved" (2:47). What did the early church do that enabled it to grow and keep growing? Let's turn to Acts 2:42-47 to see the "5W-Habits" that turned their Kingdom of God dreams into earthly reality:

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. 46 Every day they continued meeting together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.

“W” Habit #1: Word

The 1st “W” Habit of the newly formed church was Word. “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching” (v42). Why the apostle’s teaching? Because the apostles spent every day with Jesus for over three years and they knew his teachings “possessed the words of eternal life” (John 6:68). Because there is no spiritual life without the “Word” the apostles knew “Job #1” was to transmit what Jesus had taught them. The newly saved 3000 instinctively knew they needed to stop devoting themselves to the rabbinic and pharisaical teaching of their day and start devoting themselves to God’s Word. Likewise, we need to stop devoting ourselves to You-Tube or TV teachers and start devoting ourselves to God’s Word. Those folks are not your “Word” shepherd (I Peter 5:2), I am, and as such, I promise you two things: 1) to always love you and, 2) to accurately teach you God’s Word as well as I can.

“W” Habit #2: Weld

The 2nd “W” Habit of the baby church was “weld,” as in bonding together in fellowship. Listen to v42 & v46

They devoted themselves to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts.

Like nothing else, fellowship welds us together as the community of Christ. In the baby church this welding habit was done day-to-day primarily in homes. They welded over two indispensable components: “food and prayer.” Why did they fuse together so often over food? Because 76x in the Gospels Jesus did, mostly with his disciples. Another reason was they needed each other because they were a minority community in a majority world that opposed them. Furthermore, they knew they couldn’t love Christ without loving his people and they wanted to obey as many of the “one another” commands as they possibly could...

Love one another with deep affection, serve one another, honor one another, pray for one another, encourage one another, respect one another,” etc., ...

Notice they welded together with “glad and sincere hearts” i.e., they genuinely liked hanging out together. This is the type of welding we are doing on our HUB nights. Be there or be far less than circular!

“W” Habit #3: Work

The 3rd “W” Habit the newly minted church engaged in was “work,” as in works of ministry. Acts 2:44-45 tells us

**All the believers were together and had everything in common.
They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.**

Ministry is the habitual sharing of our time, talent, and treasure to those in need. It is rooted in Ephesians 2:10

**We are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works,
which God prepared in advance for us to do.**

When we do the works of ministry, we are created, saved, and gifted to do, we glorify God, edify others, and satisfy ourselves. We are loving one another with works, not just words. We are fulfilling Jesus’ core requirement for discipleship, “Deny ourselves, lay down our lives, pick up our crosses, and die daily” (Luke 9:32). When it comes to ministry my immediate thought is, “I need you/You need me/We need us.”

“W” Habit #4: Worship

The 4th “W” Habit the Acts 2 church continually engaged was worship. Vs 46 & 47 tell us

**Every day they continued meeting together in the temple courts ...praising
God.**

Imagine having public worship every day. In my dreams! Worship is the deliberate act of ascribing worth, value, and magnification to one thing above another. It is [

**Both a command and loving response to God for who he is,
what he has done, is doing, and will do for us.**

Five quick thoughts about worship:

- (1) God created us to love and worship Him.
- (2) Worship is the strongest impulse of the human heart.
- (3) Worship is a personal and public priority for Christ followers (Hebrews 10:25).
- (4) Worship is to be done “in spirit and in truth” (John 4:21) i.e., passionately from the heart while guided by the Word of God.

(5) Worship has always been, is always, and always will be ABOUT God and for God.

“W” Habit #5: Woo

Woo was the 5th “W” Habit of the infant church (to entice or attract e.g., dating). The church saw itself as a super spreader of the Good News as to what God did in Jesus Christ to redeem the world and “reconcile it to himself” (2 Corinthians 5:19). It knew, “God is willing that none should perish but all should come to eternal life” (2 Peter 3:9). This was a church without walls and one that existed for the people not yet in it! Through the spirit of woo, this church built an invitational culture in which every member felt compelled, and comfortable, inviting their F.R.A.N. (friends, relatives, acquaintances, neighbors). How many do you that woo is the primary reason the Lord added to their numbers daily?”

Conclusion

Rick Warren is fond of saying every church needs to grow:

**Warmer through fellowship. Deeper through discipleship.
Stronger through worship. Broader through ministry. And larger through
evangelism.**

I agree, and if we want to move our 5/25 vision (500 disciples by 2025) from lucid dream to lived reality we desperately need, “The Lord to keep adding to our numbers daily those who are being saved.” And he will, if we habitually do the 5 “Ws.”

Who is with me?