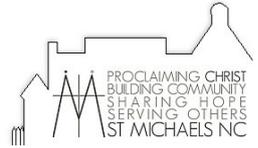




LIVING ON PURPOSE



Drafting a Mission Statement

Now you have the wonderful opportunity to take the hard work of the past few weeks, particularly your creativity and work on a Biblical mini-mission statement that reflects your best sense of God's direction for the plans you might make with others to act out your love for your neighbours. Let's actually put pen to paper and draft a mission statement.

1. First, write down those Scripture passages that most directly connect your life to the shalom purposes of God. Ask God's guidance as you begin this process. If you are drafting a group mission statement, it is important to involve others in the process.

2. Working from the Off Ramp #6, particularly your picture, try in a sentence or two to draft a beginning mission statement that summarizes your best sense of God's call. Remember that biblically based mission statements differ from usual mission statements in that they focus outwardly on God's purposes to make a difference in our world instead of inwardly on satisfying our own needs. Try to incorporate Scripture so that your statement clearly reflects something of God's loving purposes for the larger world.

3. Remember mission statements are meant to be inspirational and fill us with enthusiasm. Jan Johnson explains, "So often we find ourselves asking, What is wrong? There more important question is How does God want to make this right and what can I do to be part of God's solution to this problem? Find thing the positive spin on a negative situation is the redemptive edge of purpose in life."
4. One of the mistakes many of us make when we put together our mission statements is that we want to include too much. Too often we try to incorporate our goals, strategies and "to-do lists" into the statement as well as our overall sense of purpose.
5. Just like any road map, a mission statement needs to be clear, concise and easy to follow. Ideally, according to Laurie Beth Jones, there are three elements to a good mission statement. It "should be no more than a sentence long, should be easily understood by a twelve year old, and should be able to be recited by memory."
6. While it should be short and concise, it also needs to be broad enough to influence every single area of our lives. Johnson explains, "I prefer a general mission statements that don't name specific tasks. Broad wording that assumes the purposes will permeate every role in life...Your purposes are more that what you do, they encompass who God has called you to be." We all need a 24/7 mission statement, not just for our spiritual life or ministry. We need a statement that helps us refocus our lives in terms of our relationships with friends, family and the folk we go to church with. We even need a statement that can help us with important life choices regarding how we steward our time and money and the choices we make as consumers.
7. As we move toward our calling we will begin to experience that more fulfilling way of life God intends for us. For some, this calling will be expressed in our workplaces, for other in our homes and neighbourhoods. Some may be called to relocate. Wherever God calls us to advance the purpose of the kingdom, our mission statement should wake us up every morning and send us charging into the day with a fresh sense of excitement.
8. Book a time to discuss and pray about your group mission statement with one of the ministers at church to seek wisdom and encouragement.