

Where the Rubber Hits the Road – Pre-Seminar Reflection Exercise

This seminar aims to be intensely practical in helping us develop and enrich habits of living out a Kingdom vision at ground level in our daily life. Living a visionary life can seem like an unreachable goal, especially if we have an idealistic view of what life will look like when we are really in flow, we feel trapped by toddlers, our job, a besting habit, or all of the above. Our only real danger is if we throw up our hands in despair and quit when this “gang of ugly facts” knocks us around yet again.

We can take good heart that we are God's project from the Apostle Paul:

“For we are God's masterpiece, created in Christ Jesus for beautiful works, good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

– Ephesians 2:10

Just being a Christian is a visionary life. Merely being open to God's leading is a good start to the destination. Coming to a seminar prepared to enter in is taking a big step.

At the seminar we will begin working with mission for each of our life roles. It is critical that you spend 30 min. to 1 hour prayerfully clarifying your current roles in life in order to be prepared for our lab time together.

Exercise:

Life demands from us a variety of roles, each of which should find its purpose in God's call in our lives. (see examples below)

1. List your roles (including ones that seem distasteful, e.g. daughter to difficult parents, as well as ones you have neglected, e.g. witness or inner life).
2. Then, once you have a set of no more than 7 roles¹, write a definition/mission for each of them. Your statements don't need to be profound or final, just clear. But, if you can, try to write a mission/definition that inspires you. The work is for your clarity and inspiration.
3. If you have done work on your values and purpose, try to combine them all.

Example

My purpose is to live with integrity and to make a difference in the lives of others.

These roles take priority in achieving my mission:

Child of God – I am growing in dependence on the love of God so I can love God with my heart, mind, soul, and strength. I steward my body's health to do this for the long haul.

¹ Stephen Covey, who has worked with 1000's of people from every area of life has found that even the most gifted people cannot keep faithful to more than 7 life roles. Some can be combined like “friend”, “brother”, and “son” can be combined under the role names like “family/friend” or “rock for others”.

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- Wife – John is the most important person in my life. I lay my life down for him, seeking the mind of Christ. (Phil. 2:1-9) Together we contribute the fruits of harmony, mission, charity, and stewardship.
- Mother – I recognize I stand in the place of God in my kid's lives. Therefore, I seek to model the love of Christ with them and receive God's mercy daily for my shortcomings. I help them progressively experience greater independence and joy in their lives.
- Family Administrator – I steward our family's resources, environment, calendar, etc., maintaining a climate of God's Shalom in our family in the midst of a culture that attacks us with pace, multi-tasking, and too many good opportunities. I do this role with a smile and accept myself, even when I become resentful and feel stuck.
- Daughter/Sister – I am "there" for support and love, partnering with Susan in caring for mom and dad.
- Witness – The love of Christ is visible through my actions and my words in my neighborhood, in play groups, and at school. John and I witness to the justice of Jesus' Kingdom in neighboring with Agape school in Kenya.
- Tax Accountant – I faithfully serve my clients. I keep up to date on tax law changes and I deliver their taxes on time.

These values guide my life:

- Charity: I seek out and love the one -- each one -- regardless of his situation.
- Sacrifice: I devote my time, talents, and resources to my mission. "Greater love has no one than this, that she lay down her life for her friends." John 15
- Inspiration: I teach by example that we are all children of a loving Heavenly Father and that every Goliath can be overcome by prayer, faith, and patience.
- Joy/Gratitude: Joy in God and gratitude to God are the goal of life and the fuel that empowers life. I will seek to live in daily joy and gratitude for all God's blessings and discipline as well.

Note:

1. If you cannot carve out time to make yours very developed, just try to get the basic set of roles out. Everyone will have a child of God or individual role. Everyone will have roles as a friend and family member. Everyone will have roles for work (paid or unpaid), some with 2 or 3 work roles.
2. If you would like a helpful exercise in clarifying or narrowing your life or family values, try the "your values" or "family" exercises at:
<http://www.franklincovey.com/msb/>

Contact Mark Phifer-Houseman if you have a question – markph@the-river.org
(Put vision seminar in the subject line.) See you 4/24 or 5/1!