



Christ Centered Vision & Mission Statements give shape and direction to a Christian marriage. Again as shared in the last session, Proverbs 16 helps us understand, our plans are different than God's plans.

The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord. All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the spirit. Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.

Proverbs 16:1-3 ESV

As it is with Christ Centered Goals, Christ Centered Vision and Mission Statements take shape as we seek the Lord in prayer for the vision and “how to get there” that the Lord has always seen for our relationship.

So to the document that has your Christ Centered Goals on it, you will add your Christ Centered Vision and Mission Statements. As a reminder a Christ Centered Vision Statement is the picture God wants to create from your relationship. Likewise, a Christ Centered Mission Statement is that daily action toward aligning your marriage and family with the picture (vision) God sees.

Write the Vision: *And the Lord answered me: “Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end—it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay.* **Habakkuk 2:2-3**

(Elevate Your Marriage - book excerpt)

Finding God's Vision for Your Marriage

So then, the crafting of our vision does not just include or consider God casually, but focuses on the bigger picture that God may have for our marriage. It can be challenging to know exactly what God is doing in a marriage, but we must seek for consistent “threads.” Just as we expect that a sweater or garment that we wear would have threads running all the way through it and not stopping and starting intermittently, in the same way we should expect that, typically, the vision of God will tie into common threads of our dating years, our relationship history, and our common strengths and weaknesses. We may have never thought about nor realized these *threads* before, but they are there. And because it may take some work and prayer to *see* them, here are a few starting questions for couples to think through to help locate their common threads:



1. Big Questions:

- How did God bring us together? Why do you think He did it that way?
- From your (individual) perspective, how do we complement each other?
- What three qualities do you treasure most in having a balanced relationship?
- What consistently brings you joy in your life?
- What makes you feel uncomfortable in our relationship?
- When are you closest to God?
- Where do you see God's presence the *most* in our marriage?
- What legacy do you want to leave to our children/others?
- What spiritual testimony is it important for our marriage to leave?
- How do you connect best with God?
- What Scriptures speak to you about our marriage?
- Is the Bible essential or a guiding structure for decision making and direction?
- Do you have a sense of what your spiritual value or purpose is?
- What are three core values when it comes to marriage?
- At the end of our marriage, what one positive statement do you want to be able to make?
- At the end of our marriage, what one negative thing do you not want to be able to say?
- At the end of our marriage, what do you want God to be able to say about your marriage?

2. Finding Common Threads:

Of course, these are just a few of the possible questions that a couple could ask. But they are the beginning of pushing the big boulder up the hill, as God pulls us toward a clearer, elevated view of our marriage. The point is that the answers to these questions, and any that you can add, provide powerful insights—and that's what you're going for: the insights. And get this because it's huge: *there is no right or wrong, just glimpses into what you both value—and that's going to be different at times, possibly even in conflict.* As you discuss your insights, some commonalities and differences will begin to emerge. **Embrace both, and begin to write out what core values, principles, and recurring themes seem to be woven throughout your individual thoughts. That becomes your vision statement, but you are not quite finished yet.**

The statements of values, principles, and commonalities are the framework for what you now begin to pray about. Remember that Prayer Menu from the last chapter? Have an intimate conversation with God about the vision for your marriage as you go on a nature walk or fast or pray silently together, etc. Include reading the Bible together at least once a week and typically what will happen is that your reading and praying will confirm and further support the vision. As you both become comfortable that you have arrived at God's vision for your marriage, use it to

guide how you will interact and come to decisions in your marriage. It is a “dot” that you can keep connecting your marriage around as often as needed.

Creating a Christ Centered Mission Statement

(Elevate Your Marriage - book excerpt)

Five Points of a Christ Centered Mission Statement (The Action Plan)

A Marriage Mission Statement is similar to, yet distinct from, a Marriage Vision Statement. The major difference between the two is that a vision statement focuses on what is valued and where we *see* God taking our marriage in the future. The mission statement, then, focuses more on *how* we are going to move from where we are today to where God is taking us tomorrow. So in many ways, the vision and mission statements are companion documents that can work together to connect us in marriage, and then connect the marriage to the greater plans that God has for it. After the Vision Statement has been written, the Mission Statement allows the couple to systematically think along these lines: “We have prayed and sought God for His vision for this marriage. Now, how do we get there?” Together, the mission and vision statements are a tangible one-two punch that gives structure and intentionality to our intimate connections with each other and God.

To keep your marriage mission focused, it is of value to create a Marriage Mission Statement that creates a shared sense of purpose and direction within the relationship. See, we can’t just allow the fact of our need to connect in intimate, spiritual ways with our spouse to sit in our heads and hearts. If you are anything like me, I can know things in my head but I need to be reminded every now and then by seeing it in writing.

Here is an idea: Write a Marriage Mission Statement together—a simple document of just a few sentences you and your spouse can create together that gives shape to your marriage. It recognizes that we need each other to arrive at the places of God’s promise for us as individuals. So we create a set of guiding principles that will remind us to respect our points of mutual need. It is important for the couple to create a personal document that really keeps them centered on what is important between the two of them. Yet, there are five key areas that you will want to consider in creating a mission statement for your own marriage:

1. **Start by asking big questions.** Where are we going? What do we want to accomplish throughout the course of our marriage? What legacy do we want to pass on?
2. **What guiding principles shape our relationship?** One key element that you may want to include in your mission is a list of the things that matter the most to the two of you. The more specific the better! Think of areas like communication, money, trust, parenting, and life itself. For example: “We will honor Christ in how we speak to each other, even and especially in times of conflict. We will seek to build each other up and not use words to tear each other down. We will listen to learn of each other’s feelings, not listen to win an argument.”
3. **What marriage legacy do you want to leave?** A marriage mission statement should include where you want to end up. At some point, God is going to call one of you home and what will remain will be the blessed memories and the love that your marriage has sown in the lives of others. An example might be, “It is the mission of this marriage to be an example of

love to our children, those that enter our house, and those that we call our friends and family.”

4. **What Scriptures will guide your marriage?** In many ways, the message of the Bible is our mission statement. So Scripture has to be the backbone of the direction of our marriage. For example, when thinking about how to handle money, the words of the Lord, “It is more blessed to give than to receive,” may be helpful. There is no shortage of guidance from the Word of God.
5. **What do we need to do and how do we need to treat each other, daily, to achieve God’s mission for our marriage?** Simply, writing our mission on paper does not move or shape our relationship. Rather, it is the action that we put behind the mission. The points of our mission statement call us to consider our individual and collective actions toward each other. For example, “We will set aside one hour a week to talk about our goals and our future together.” Or, “In order to bridge our communication gaps, I will set aside ten minutes out of every day just to listen to his/her feelings or needs.”

As you work through these questions as a couple and consider the direction already determined from your Vision Statement, you can start to develop the Mission Statement for your marriage. So, if the sense is that God’s vision for your marriage is,

To demonstrate the love of Christ through our marriage by exercising patience and concern with each other. To walk shoulder by shoulder through life’s challenges as a team, with God. To seek to serve God by opening our home to others in need.

then the prayer focus and discussion of how God wants you to actually “get there” can center on what needs to happen daily. Perhaps the mission would then look something like this.

On a daily basis, we will set aside time to talk and listen to each other. We will spend time sharing our concerns and giving each other equal time to air feelings when they happen and not harbor them. We will also discuss and reach decisions for our children and family— together.

On a monthly basis we will plan time to spend quiet, fun time together, just the two of us. This will be a time of connecting and reconnecting spiritually and intimately. Then at least once a year we will enjoy one big vacation together. At least once a quarter we will host an event for friends and family that will be a time to share, enjoy our friends, and allow our home and marriage to bless others through fellowship and friendship.

The vision that God has shared with our marriage has to be backed up by a mission.

Christ Centered Vision Statement Worksheet

1. Big Questions:

- How did God bring us together? Why do you think He did it that way?
- From your (individual) perspective, how do we complement each other?
- What three qualities do you treasure most in having a balanced relationship?
- What consistently brings you joy in your life?
- What makes you feel uncomfortable in our relationship?
- When are you closest to God?
- Where do you see God's presence the *most* in our marriage?
- What legacy do you want to leave to our children/others?
- What spiritual testimony is it important for our marriage to leave?
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2. Finding Common Threads:

Common Core Values:

Common Principles:

Common Themes:

3. Prayer: The prayer menu PDF with Session 2 provides 10 unique ways to search the Lord as a couple. Agree on how you will search the Lord as a couple to gain further clarity of the vision God has for your relationship.

4. Write the Vision:



Christ Centered Mission Statement Worksheet

1. **Start by asking big questions.** Based on the *vision*:

Where are we going?

What do we want to accomplish throughout the course of our marriage?

What legacy do we want to pass on?

2. **What guiding principles shape our relationship?** Example: “We will honor Christ in how we speak to each other, even and especially in times of conflict. We will seek to build each other up and not use words to tear each other down. We will listen to learn of each other’s feelings, not listen to win an argument.”

3. **What marriage legacy do you want to leave?** Example might be, “It is the mission of this marriage to be an example of love to our children, those that enter our house, and those that we call our friends and family.”

4. **What Scriptures will guide your marriage?** In many ways, the message of the Bible is our mission statement. So Scripture has to be the backbone of the direction of our marriage. Write what verses will guide your marriage (this will continually change)

5. **What do we need to do (action), and how do we need to treat each other, daily, to achieve God’s mission for our marriage?** Example, “We will set aside one hour a week to talk about our goals and our future together.” Or, “In order to bridge our communication gaps, I will set aside ten minutes out of every day just to listen to his/her feelings or needs.”

Write the Mission: Pull it all together. The answers to your big questions, the guiding principles of your marriage, the specific legacy, the Scriptures, and the daily actions frame the specific mission statement for your marriage.

Now add your Christ Centered Vision Statement and your Christ Centered Mission Statement to your the *Elevate Your Marriage Frame-Work of a Healthy Worksheet*