



Kingdom Vision

Expanding The Kingdom Of God In Our Lives And The World Around Us

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Princeton Christian Church



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What Is The Vision Of A Christian?

What does it mean to have a vision? I want to quickly give you a few definitions that I believe pertain to every one of us. We must be a people with a vision, but what does that mean?

HAVING VISION IS DEFINED AS:

- the act or power of sensing with the eyes; sight (both physical and spiritual)
- the act or power of anticipating that which will or may come to be (having the right frame of mind and a good ability to discern what's happening and anticipate the future)
- an experience in which a personage, thing, or event appears vividly or credibly to the mind, although not actually present, often under the influence of a divine or other agency
- a vivid, imaginative conception or anticipation (the closer we are to the mind of Christ, the more vivid our vision will be.
- a scene, person, etc., of extraordinary beauty – This is all about Jesus and his working in us. The world doesn't see Jesus as anything beautiful. I submit to you that many in the church don't have a proper vision of Jesus either.

The world sees Him as nothing more than a man, and even as a common criminal that died on a cross. The world sees nothing but suffering, blood, death and then no more than any other "holy man" except that He makes a claim that none other can make, that He rose from the dead. They cannot see the beauty behind the veil of suffering and death.

Many in the church may confess Him as Lord and know of Him as a Savior, but they don't truly know Him. They see Jesus as a limiting factor in their lives, someone who tries to control them and keep them from enjoying life and doing what they want to do. Their vision is marred and limited, and they can't see the true beauty of Christ because of the veil of sin that still separates them from that clear vision.

The opposite of vision is called **blindness** and I also want to add a lesser, but just as limiting condition known as **shortsightedness**. The physical aspects of these

conditions are easily understood, but we need to understand that the spiritual aspects are vastly greater.

These conditions in the spiritual realm are the result of a wrong attitude of the mind and of the heart and are the causes for a lack of discernment.

God wants His people to be a people with a vision, not just to see the past, or the here and now, but to see into the future far enough to have a dream, to create a passion, to stir the Spirit within them, and give them a reason and a purpose for living; something that will drive them out of their comfort zones, out of their lethargy, and out into the world with but one purpose – to build the Kingdom of God by leading souls to Jesus. Everything else that we do must be centered upon that one purpose alone. Whether its bringing new ministers into the organization or building facilities; whether its having special services like youth camps, rallies, camp meetings or conventions; or whether its coming together for times of fellowship – everything must be geared to one purpose—

REACHING SOULS FOR CHRIST.

If we get caught up in trying to do our own thing, we risk the chance of losing the Mind of Christ. If we get caught up in personalities, or promoting our own agenda, instead of God's agenda, then it will only result in divisions and schisms in the Body of Christ. We must keep the Mind of Christ through prayer. Unity is only built and only maintained as long as we stay focused only on what Jesus wants and nothing else.

Just having a vision doesn't make us united. The fact is that we must all have the same vision.

~Robin Fortner



God's Call in a Vision

Are you a dreamer? Do you dream every night as you sleep? I rarely dream, but when I do it is usually a conglomeration of events which make no sense. At least to me they seem to relate to nothing in particular. We are going to look at a man here who frequently had dreams. And his dreams were more that random thoughts bouncing around in his head.

Joseph, God's faithful servant, was a man of vision. That is, he is one to whom God spoke in dreams. That is the part of Joseph's life that we are familiar with if we have spent any time in the Old Testament and, in particular chapter 37. Let's look at that passage.

In verse 5 we see "Then Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more." Then, in verses 9 and 10, we see this: "Now he had still another dream, and related it to his brothers, and said, 'Lo, I have had still another dream, and behold, the sun and the moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me,'" "He related it to his father and to his brothers, and his father rebuked him and said, 'What is this dream that you have had? Shall I and your mother and your brothers actually come to bow ourselves before you to the ground?'"

How do we understand what Joseph's dreams mean and how do they affect those who are wondering why Joseph has those dreams? First of all, we must know that these are not random dreams. These are dreams relayed by God to Joseph, his chosen messenger. And most importantly, we need to see what God's purpose was in giving these dreams to Joseph.



Joseph's dreams were very clear. There was no doubt what was going on in the dreams. Although Joseph may not have known when the fulfillment of his dreams would take place, he did know what was happening as he experienced the dreams, or as it was, messages or visions from God. But he did know

what the message was. And he was bold enough to share it with his father and brothers. After all, they were the subjects of the dreams.

Clarity of where biblical dreams and their content came from – that is, the author and the interpretation, has been a constant. There was no doubt what was going on or what the message was. This leads us to believe that if God were to use a dream to speak to you or me, we would have no doubt it was from God, and we would know what the message was. In our common dreams, we might ask "What did that dream mean? What should I gain from the dream? But if the dream originated with God, we likely would know the answers to both questions with great clarity.

Joseph had two dreams as we read before (37:5 and 9). Both of the dreams are looks into Joseph's future. Most of the biblical dreams from God to his people were generally regarding the future.

Dreams were at least similar to visions, the difference being that dreams happened while someone was asleep and visions happened while someone was awake. In fact, "dreams" are mentioned about 122 times in the Bible and "visions" about 101 times.

It is a fact that dreams were used on occasion in the Bible, but it was rare. Examples would be Joseph, as we have already seen. Then also, to another Joseph, the husband of Mary at the announcement of the coming of Jesus. Again, in the Old Testament, Solomon, and several others, including Daniel. There is also a quote of the Prophet Joel (Joel 2:28), spoken by the Apostle Peter in Acts 2:17, that says "And it shall be in the last days, God says, That I will pour forth of My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." Yet, over a period of about 4,000 years, we only have a few actual dreams recorded in Scripture. So, it would seem that while dreams or visions were effective and served God's purpose, He used them sparingly.

In addition to the dreams sent by God being future focused, the dreams were almost always fatal, or potentially fatal. In Genesis 37 beginning at verse 19 we hear this: "They (the brothers) said to one another, 'Here comes the dreamer. Now then, come and let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits; and we will say, A wild beast devoured him. Then let us see what will become of his dreams.'"

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God's Call in a Vision—Continued

We see also that Joseph's dreams were fulfilled. That is, they came true. Years later we see Joseph's brothers bowing down to him in Egypt. And though they didn't realize it, Joseph knew what was being fulfilled. The Bible says in Genesis 42:9, "he remembered his dream."

Much like prophecy, this is the true test of a biblical dream. We must be diligent when we claim something to be from God and for what we give credit to the Father.

The most important thing about the events and dreams given to Joseph is that it tells us more about God's desire than it does about Joseph's dreams.

In this text and through these dreams we get to see God's sovereignty and his providence. We see Him laying out a plan to save the Hebrews, long before any of them knew there would be a famine. We see God preparing a remnant well in advance of the need. We see God selecting his leaders for tasks and roles long before anyone ever knew they would be called upon for certain duties



This reminds us that Paul said in Romans 8:28 - "And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."

This is exactly what God was doing in Joseph's life, and he started it by giving Joseph a dream – a glimpse into what his vision was for Joseph's life. This dream was God's preferred planned future for Joseph. In reality, that is what a vision is – a glimpse into God's preferred future for you.

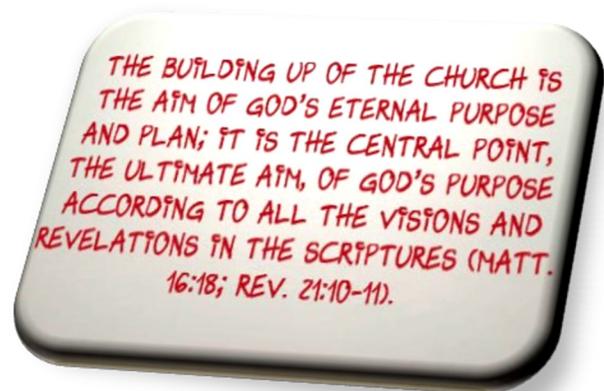
Without a doubt, our God is a visionary God, sovereign and providential in his actions and plans! He is a God we can trust! Joseph did exactly that, and God subsequently entrusted him with this task – to be faithful to God's vision for his life as revealed in his dreams.

And so, the personal question must be asked: "Are you being faithful to God's vision for your life?"

Let us be very clear on this question. It is not asking if you are being true to your vision or your wants or desires. The question does not suggest that we hope for dreams or visions that satisfy our secret and selfish desires. The question simply is this: Remember – He is a God of vision, and he does have a preferred future for us.

How should we respond to God after seeing Joseph's faithfulness to God's vision for his life? It is simple – focus on and be faithful to the One with whom the vision starts – God! Avoid the distraction of human vision and instead become fully engaged with God's vision – who He is and what He wants for you, for us – His body, and for others. Let him and his character consume you. As you are faithful to that, God will use you in mighty ways and you will find yourself to be someone God can trust with a vision.

Gary K Fair



What A Kingdom-Minded Church Looks Like

Any significant reflection on the “Kingdom of God/Heaven” will reveal that there are internal/external evidences repeatedly showcased in the Scriptures. First and foremost, Jesus said to the Pharisees and to the disciples that God’s kingdom was a sovereign, spiritual dominion that lived within his people. Jesus said in Luke 17:21: **“The Kingdom of God is within you.”** Therefore, the only way a person could enter into this realm of the Spirit was through supernatural birth or conversion (John 3:3, 5) through water baptism, (Romans 6:4-6, Colossians 2:12) by the call of God, (1 Thessalonians 2:12, Matthew 22:14). This entire internal process was marked by power (1 Corinthians 4:20)—the kind of inner transforming work that would produce fruit and noticeable spiritual qualities in the lives of everyone who truly embraced it (Matthew 21:43).

Inward Evidences

If a congregation is faithful and strategic in attempting to impact a community for Christ with these Kingdom values, what kind of inward transforming qualities would people see?

The list is impressive and thought-provoking.

You can tell if God is advancing his Spiritual Kingdom in people’s lives when you see, hear and feel noticeable evidences of the following in growing measures. In fact, these measures will be seen in the people who are advancing the Gospel:

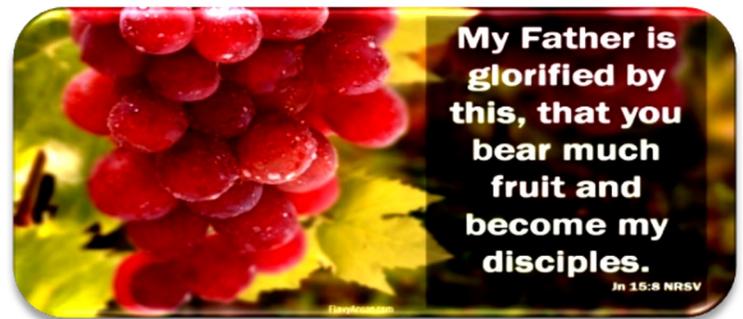
- **Repentance** (*Matthew 3:2, 4:17*). There is no substitute for mind altering change, godly sorrow over sin, brokenness and human frailty.
- **Spiritual poverty**— *our realization we need God’s intervention* (*Matthew 5:3*). Jesus said you’re “blessed” if you were poor in spirit.
- **Righteousness** (*Matthew 5:10*). Notice in this text that the inward evidence is accompanied from an outward result— **persecution**.
- **Spiritual understanding**—a growing awareness of the values and laws of God’s Word and the movements of God’s Spirit (*Matthew 13:11*). As this awareness grows within you, it becomes more valuable than the greatest treasure or jewels (*Matthew 13:44-45*).
- **Childlike humility** (*Matthew 18:3, 19:14*)—seen in servant attitudes such as obedience of God’s will (*Matthew 7:21*), preparedness and prayerful watching (*Matthew 25:1, 13*), love for God with emotions, mind and will (*Mark 12:29-34*) and the willingness to forgive others who have wronged you so that your account with them before God can be settled (*Matthew 18:23-35*).

- **Attitudes of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit** (*Romans 14:17*).

Each of these qualities and others are like fruit that forms and grows on a healthy tree (*Matthew 21:43*).

They will be seen, heard and felt by others much like leaven that penetrates a whole lump of dough (*Matthew 13:3*).

This type of infectious takeover reveals to us that the power and missional intent of the Kingdom of God was not meant solely as a personal experience or a private **“trip on religion.”** God’s truths, values and laws were designed to be carried by his transformed people to the whole world under the leadership and power of His Holy Spirit. In other words, Kingdom power takes Kingdom values and transforms everyday people into Kingdom citizens who take the message of this Kingdom to the rest of the world. And as this Gospel is proclaimed, God’s power goes with it (*Matthew 4:23*).



To say it another way, personal transformation will produce corporate transfiguration. There will be noticeable changes in culture when God’s people take His transforming message and accompanying power to a broken and helpless society in love.

Outward Evidences

What type of external evidences and spiritual qualities will be seen when the power of the Kingdom invade a culture? What noticeable results will accompany those who obey God’s will and advance His cause? What will Kingdom power look like when God’s people take the gospel to the culture?

- Spiritual control and authority will be established, heard and felt in greater order, righteousness, peace, love and joy to all the institutions designed by God to govern and direct the affairs of humanity. Institutions such as marriage, the family, the Church, government, the Lord’s Day and labor were originally crafted by God to bring peace, order and meaningful structure to culture; however, sin and the effects of the Fall brought disruption, brokenness and decay to each institution.

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What A Kingdom-Minded Church Looks Like *Continued*

HOW DO YOU CHANGE A CULTURE?

One person at a time, one married couple at a time, one family at a time, one congregation at a time, one neighborhood at a time, one city at a time and beyond with the gospel!

Each of these qualities and others are like fruit that forms and grows on a healthy tree
(*Matthew 21:43*).

They will be seen, heard and felt by others much like leaven that penetrates a whole lump of dough (*Matthew 13:3*).

All kinds of spiritual battles and evil strongholds will be confronted and attacked on the front lines of operation. In Jesus' day, spiritual power was released to battle the forces of physical sickness and demon-possession (*Matthew 9:35, 12:28, Luke 9:2, 10:9, 11:8*). As humanity draws closer to the end, Christ taught His followers that spiritual battles in the political, geological, atmospheric and astronomic dimensions of time and space would signify the nearness of God's Kingdom coming to fruition (*Luke 21:10-31*). In these spiritual confrontations, power will be unleashed in both directions—from God's army moving the lines and reclaiming the devil's territory and from the forces of darkness that are bent on retaliation and disarmament.

Oftentimes the forces of evil choose to attack believers with persecution, hardships and suffering (*Acts 14:22, 2 Thessalonians 1:5*); however, we as children of God need to see this as a sign of God's favor and worthiness in His Kingdom (*Acts 5:41, Philippians 1:27-30, 2 Thessalonians 1:4-7*). By putting on the full armor of the Lord and resting in the strength and power of the Lord, we will win the battle if we persevere (*Ephesians 6:10-18*). And for standing with and for Christ in the conflict, our great King will confer on us a Kingdom where God's goodness and glory will reign (*Luke 22:28-30, 2 Timothy 2:11-12*).

Progress, growth and development of the Kingdom of God will be unnatural, unexpected and out-of-the-ordinary.

Who among us would have ever imagined growth in the midst of a global pandemic, church shut downs, voids in leadership, social distancing and the like.

The parable of the mustard seed (*Matthew 13:31-32*) backs this claim. Too often the interpretation of this parable has been misapplied and misrepresented. Ask any botanist about the mustard plant and they will tell you that it's an herb, not a tree. If it grows to become a giant tree as Jesus presented it, it becomes greater than its true species and abnormal. Most likely it developed in different ways and some of those ways were not classic "textbook" ways.

To some degree, Jesus told this parable to remind his disciples that the development of His Kingdom cannot be explained by natural laws and means. You can't predict how and where the Spirit of God will work, where you'll see activity in the Kingdom, nor can you manipulate the Lord into making it grow the way you want it to grow. God has his own agenda for his Kingdom. Our responsibility is to watch Him work and then join Him in the process. And His leadership and power will produce results that are abnormal, extraordinary and at times unexplainable by human logic. This is in keeping with his sovereign operations. The famous hymn, "God moves in a mysterious way" reminds us that He is building and shaping His Kingdom the way He wills it.

Now that we see the internal/external evidences of the Kingdom of God in Scripture, it's clear how the proclamation and teaching of the gospel becomes prominent in any Kingdom-minded Church. In every aspect of its life—worship, fellowship, evangelism, discipleship and shepherding, the Gospel is the centerpiece of God's Kingdom, for it reveals "a righteousness from God that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written "the righteous will live by faith" (*Romans 1:17*).

I end this with one of my all time favorite scriptures out of Ephesians 6: 7-8. Let's keep our eyes on the prize!

Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free.

~Aaron Jones

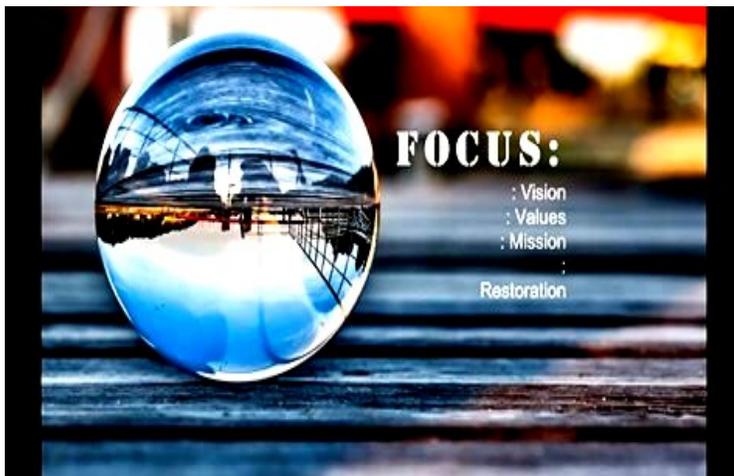


Spiritual Astigmatism

When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. “Oh no, my lord! What shall we do?” the servant asked.

“Don’t be afraid,” the prophet answered. “Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.”

And Elisha prayed, “Open his eyes, Lord, so that he may see.” Then the Lord opened the servant’s eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. 2 Kings 6:15-17



I believe that many of us are like Elisha’s servant. We are so distracted by the enemy that we oftentimes don’t see the army of God lined up for battle. We have Spiritual Astigmatism.

Satan is a master at what he does and his armies are advancing. Everyday they advance abortion, the homosexual agenda and work to strip Christians of our religious freedoms while they advance secular humanism. If Satan can turn our eyes away from Jesus and onto his armies he can easily discourage and even defeat us. Yes we are at war and the enemy does win some battles and inflict casualties. But God has his finger on “the button” and the day is coming when Satan feels the heat of unquenchable fire.

But do not be dismayed. Do not let Satan use the media to discourage you. All over the world the gospel is being preached and daily people are being added to the church.

Our job is not to study the enemy and his tactics. Our job is to study God’s word and keep our eyes on our commanding officer. The bible is our “Field Manual”, it contains God’s instructions for us on how to advance the gospel and stand our ground against the enemy.

Those who are with us are more than those who are with them. Jesus commissioned us to rescue the perishing. The time has come for us to take a lesson from the Minute Men of the American Revolution.



IT IS TIME FOR US TO SLEEP IN OUR ARMOR

What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? Romans 8:31

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry. 2 Timothy 4:1-5

Standing together, led by the Spirit, with our swords in hand ready to rescue the perishing at a minute's notice, we will share in Christ's victory. Duty Demands It!

~Ron Smith

ARE YOU KINGDOM MINDED?

There's one topic Jesus talked about more than all others. It wasn't judgment, hell, money, family, or sexuality. The topic that seemed to be Jesus' favorite was the kingdom of God. Since it was a favorite of his, we should probably pay attention to it.

WHAT IS THE KINGDOM

In short, the Kingdom of God is the realm in which God rules and reigns. Through Jesus' first coming, He inaugurated this never before seen Kingdom, evidenced by the miracles of healing, exorcisms, and resurrection that He performed during His time on earth. When Jesus comes again, He will fully establish God's Kingdom here on earth by enacting justice, defeating satan, resurrecting all who are in him to eternal life, and recreating the world to flourish as He intended in the beginning.

Between His first coming and His soon expected return, the forces of evil are still at work in our world. Satan still has (a limited) power to create disorder, chaos, tragedy, and division. In response, our mission as the Church is to expand God's Kingdom during this time through our proclamation of the good news and our actions which make God's rule and reign in our lives visible to the rest of the world.

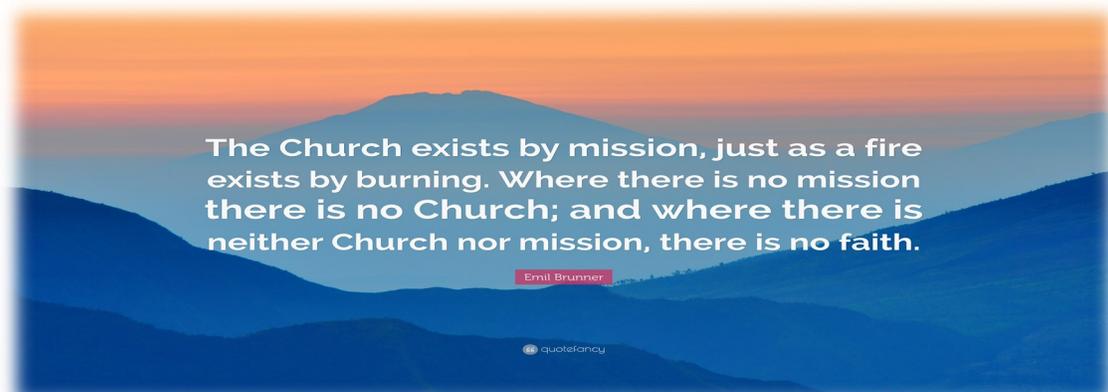
A KINGDOM-MINDED CHURCH

As His Church, we're to focus on God's Kingdom by concentrating on accomplishing God's mission in the world. We know we can't do this alone and it's not a one person—or even one congregation—job. So, what does it look like for each of us to be Kingdom-minded? Here are some ideas:

- 1 // You care more about the Church than this local congregation, so we encourage other congregations by sharing resources with one another. By Joining arms and work together on Kingdom projects and activities.
- 2 // You support organizations, like our local and global mssions, who are serving Princeton, Gibson County, Indiana and the world. Compounding the expansion of the Kingdom of God.
- 3 // You're more focused on how our church can expand the kingdom by reaching those outside of our walls than how the church can serve you and your needs or ego's.
- 4 // You focus on the majors of faith instead of the minors. Stay away from areas of disagreement to encourage and maintain unity.
- 5 // You continue to gain and grasp the understanding that we the Church is a group of called out people on mission (commission) to the world, from God Himself through His Son, Jesus Christ, who came and ultimately died to establish God's Kingdom. Not an insiders club that creates barriers and looks down on the world.

There's always a gravitational pull inwards as a church. So, to be and continue to be kingdom-minded, we must be vigilant to continue to ask ourselves, "How are we growing God's kingdom?" with every action we take—individually and corporately.

This is the mission of the church and the work we were all made for.





Kingdom Vision for PCC in 2021



- Develop Godly Men Willing To Lead
- Expand Community Outreach
- Resume 5th Sunday Rally With Area Congregations
- ~~Resume SOS Women's Ministry~~
- ~~Start Men's Development Ministry~~
- ~~Plan a Fall Revival~~

CONGREGATIONAL GOALS

- Individual Growth Is Intertwined With Church Growth.
- A primary function of the church is the edification of the saints... Ephesians 4:11-16. We are challenged to minister our gifts to one another... 1 Peter 4:11.
- As we grow individually, so we grow as a church, and vice versa.

The Princeton PathFinder

Kingdom Vision



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