

## **SBC Vision – Questions and Answers**

### **What does this new vision really mean?**

This is a really good question as it is often a question that comes with some underlying presuppositions. Some people feel that a vision is like a strategic plan and they want to know what the specific plan is. What does the vision mean for budgets and staff, ministry emphases, small groups, calendar planning, building expansions and parking? They are looking for detailed budgets, timelines and strategies.

Others however, look to see if there might be a “hidden agenda” buried in the vision. As a result of their life experiences, they may feel that all visions are political processes with hidden agendas that never come to light until it is too late to do something about it.

Yet again, some people ask the question because they are excited about the possibilities, want to be supportive and are seeking greater clarity as to where they can help in order to make the vision a reality.

SBC leaders believe that a vision process, rightly understood, is about a journey not a plan. It is about an emphasis and not an agenda. It is about a direction and not a strategy. Therefore, the vision that we feel God has given our church family is a journey, an emphasis and a direction. Our journey is to continue to follow Jesus. The emphasis will be his love, grace and healing. The direction is to focus our gifts and energies on the pressing needs of families, marriages and parenting so his love, grace and healing are experienced.

This is what we believe the new vision *really* means.

### **Why is the first sentence of the vision so negative?**

In order for a vision to be relevant it must address a need. The first sentence defines the need that the following statements cast hope into. All of us, in some way, have been impacted by failed relationships and/or broken families. These affect not only those directly involved but also those surrounding these situations. This is our present reality; our valley, our country, our world are filled with relationships and families craving healing and restoration. The first sentence is what sets the visionary stage for the love and grace of Jesus Christ that delivers hope to people who are so desperate for it. (Proverbs 29:18)

### **Why a narrow focus?**

Many leading organizational experts have determined that great organizations have a singular focus; one thing that they strive to be the best at. This is evident when looking at the many healthy and thriving churches today. These churches have stopped offering a smorgasbord of programs and instead have a laser focus on what God has called them to do. Without this focus, churches are chasing after too much, have too many programs, and struggle to do great work for God’s Kingdom.

When Christ physically left this earth, he gave instructions to his Church, The Great Commission. This is our overarching Mission and one which all churches should be pursuing. However, The Great Commission can be executed in a multitude of ways. God has gifted each church in a unique way; he has placed each church in a unique location; and has given each church a unique collective passion. It is with these elements and a clear direction from God that we focus on the unique purpose which God has for his Church in Summerland.

### **What about evangelism and prayer? They are not mentioned in the vision.**

Although not explicitly mentioned in the vision, evangelism is implied, especially in the phrase "people within our valley and beyond." These are people we want to reach with the hope, love and grace of Jesus. The vision itself is framed by four components that inform and support the vision and give more detail. On one side of the frame, SBC's Mission is "Following Jesus Together: *Reaching*, Restoring and Deepening." On the Missional Values side of the frame, "Our faith in Jesus leads us into a lifelong journey of transformation... taking risks and inviting others to follow." In Life Measures (evidences in the life of an individual that the church is achieving its vision), one of the sections is "Invests and Invites to Show the Way: gives of time, prayer, resources, and love to cultivate friendships with those far from Christ." These examples from the vision frame speak to how important an outward focus is to SBC.

Prayer has long been, and will continue to be, a core value of our church. This, too, is reflected in the vision frame where it is mentioned multiple times. For example, under Values: "Knowing that God hears and answers prayer, we pray together and individually, experiencing God's leading and being drawn into relationship with Him." Under Life Measures: "Prays - as a lifestyle; thanking and trusting; seeking and hoping; together and individually; Ephesians 6:18"

### **How do Seniors and Singles fit into this Vision?**

This is an excellent question and in answering it there are three key factors to consider: First of all let's recognize that vision is primarily about whom we will minister to and not about who will minister to us. In other words, vision indicates the direction and focus of our ministry gifts and energies. Therefore, anyone who desires to Follow Jesus Together toward the next chapter of our mission is welcome regardless of age or marital status.

Secondly, let's also recognize that almost all of our ministries will continue as they currently exist. We will not stop ministering to seniors or singles or any other demographic the Lord entrusts to us. We will however, invite everyone to join us as we address one of the greatest needs of this new millennium: marriage and families.

Finally, let's remember a very simple truth: we really are better together. When an intergenerational church family really decides to pursue the vision that God has given, the results will give him glory and we will see changed lives. That is how all of us will fit into this vision.

### **What is my role in the new vision?**

Just as each person in the church body is integral, everyone has an important role within the new Summerland Baptist Church vision. Prayerfully consider your role in the vision, and how you may serve according to your gifts (Romans 12:6). Some examples of practical service areas are hospitality, teaching, caring for children, leading/supporting initiatives and prayer. God has led us to an ambitious vision. It is inspiring and exciting to share with others "that the unfailing love and grace of Jesus can restore families and heal the brokenness of those scorched by the fires of failed relationships".