Planning, Strategizing, Setting Goals and Organizing

Making every effort to maximize the time God has given you

Charles McCaul
Planning, Strategizing, Setting Goals and Organizing
for Maximized Effectiveness and Impact

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There was an ancient Greek statue of a man. This man had wings on his feet, a large lock of hair on the front of his head and no hair in the back. Below the statue was written: "What is your name? My name is Opportunity (Kairos). Why do you have wings on your feet? That I may run away quickly. Why do you have hair on the front but not on the back? So men may grab me when I come, but when I am gone no one may grab hold of me."

All of us only go around in this life once. God has uniquely shaped us through education, talents, life experiences and spiritual gifts to make a difference in this world in our lifetime. As an individual, a church, a business or organization we have an opportunity, but as the saying goes, “time waits for no man.” I’ve seen so many people while away the days, weeks, months and years – some doing nothing that will leave an impact for the Kingdom of God, and some engaging in a variety of activities but leaving no lasting impact.

We won’t go forward without a plan. Jesus entered the world with a plan – to live among us, do the good works of God, and to offer his life as a ransom for fallen humanity. God, the Father, Creator of the Universe had a plan from the beginning. He created the earth and universe in a systematic way with a purpose – to prepare it for mankind. He created the first man and woman with a purpose.

It’s so easy for time to get away from us and to live haphazardly in life. Before you know it the days, months and years are gone and we feel we’ve wasted too much. It’s not too late for you to take some time in the next few weeks and think through your life, church and ministry.

This lesson was originally created for the churches I was pastoring and overseeing in Cambodia, so you will see many personal references to New Life Fellowship of Churches in Cambodia, however, it’s applicable to your personal life, whether you are a church leader or not.

I hope this will prove helpful to you as we all seek to be all we can be for Him!

**Start with the Big Picture**

If we’re driving down the road it’s helpful if we have a destination. What are the end results that we want? Who determines success? How do we know if we’ve hit the target in life or are even on the correct road?

I’d like to suggest that we must evaluate any endeavor, vision statement, mission statement, set of goals by comparing it to the Big Picture that God has in store. What is God up to? Historically and universally, what has He been doing and what is He doing now? Where is He going with all of this? If our plans and goals are not in alignment with God’s, then what’s the use?
We must start with at least a basic understanding of what God has been and is doing, then compare our ideas, feelings and plans to see how they fit into God’s parameters.

**God’s Purpose for Mankind**

Since it’s true that God has a plan and purpose for each of us individually, it makes sense that He has a plan for mankind. Why is it that our planet flourishes the way it does? Why is it we are exactly the right distance from the sun with the exact right mixture of an atmosphere to sustain life? It’s because God has a plan for this planet and its inhabitants.

The Book of Genesis records the act of God creating the universe, the earth and the first man and woman. The very first words that God speaks to our great ancestors, Adam and Eve, are significant, for they reveal the essence of why we were created, our purpose in life and our guidelines for daily living and all decisions we make:

*Then God said, “Let us make people in our image, to be like ourselves. They will be masters over all life-the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the livestock, wild animals, and small animals.” So God created people in his own image; God patterned them after himself; male and female he created them. God blessed them and told them, “Multiply and fill the earth and subdue it. Be masters over the fish and birds and all the animals.”*  
*Genesis 1:26-28*

In these verses we find four Reasons for Life; four items to include on our Daily Task List; four principles that should be used to guide us in all of our decisions in life. Following is a brief explanation of each one:

1. **God created us to have a relationship with Him.** Although it’s not explicitly mentioned in these verses, it’s implied that mankind was created to have a living, loving, thriving relationship with his creator. God created mankind to know Him. There are different levels of “knowing” someone. One level is to **know about them.** We see people on TV or in the news or read their story, but we only know about them. We aren’t on a friendship level with them or even acquaintance level. We recognize them and know a bit about them. This is where many people are in their relationship with God – they know there is a God; they may know a bit about His characteristics or activities, but they don’t have a personal relationship with Him as He desires. This level is the lowest level of knowing God. A second level of knowing God is to be **acquainted with Him.** I know hundreds of people on the acquaintance level. I know their name, where they live. I might even know some personal details about them, but there is no depth to our relationship. They are an acquaintance, not a friend. This is the level of many people who profess to be Christians. They attend church, perhaps read their Bible, maybe even talk to God from time-to-time or often, but they are not in an intimate relationship with Him. There is no regular give-and-take in that relationship – mutual communication. There is little depth. This is a higher level of knowing God than knowing about Him, but there’s more. A higher level of knowing God is to **know Him intimately as a Friend.** In a friendship there is a giving back and forth; there is a communication – He speaks to us, we speak to Him. There is a sharing of hearts on a regular basis; there is an honoring, sacrifice, affection. This is the level of relationship that God wants with every single person on the earth – those who don’t yet know Him, those who hate Him, those who are acquainted with Him. There is not a person on this earth that God does not passionately desire to have a have an intimate relationship with. This is the basis of what we call **The Great Commission.** Take a moment and evaluate your relationship with God – to what degree do you know Him? On a scale of 0-10, with zero representing not knowing Him, and ten representing knowing Him intimately, how do you rate yourself? Is there room for
improvement? If you’re like most people there is always more room for improvement. Let’s pursue God with all of our heart, mind, soul and body to know Him to the fullest.

2. **God created us to represent Him in everything we think, say and do.** It says in the Genesis text that God created mankind “in His image” and to “be like Ourselves” (speaking of the Triune Godhead). God’s intent was to have ambassadors scattered throughout the earth that would accurately represent Him and His Kingdom. This is what much of the New Testament teaching is about – instructing us on how to represent God in everything we think, say and do. How’s your thought life? Is your mind filled with God thoughts or thoughts that really have no eternal value? Thoughts that might even be displeasing to God? Thoughts of making a name for yourself; increasing your status in life; thoughts of anger, bitterness, revenge? Thoughts of regret? We need to filter every thought, and “take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ” on a moment-by-moment basis so that our thoughts honor God and if they were to be shined on a screen for the entire world to see would represent Him. We represent God in everything we say. Ephesians 4:29 was one of the first verses in the Bible I memorized when I became a Christian:

> Don’t use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.

Our words should be honoring to God, with no foul or abusive language. Our words should not be critical or judgmental, but uplifting to others. Honestly, I’m surprised at what comes out of the mouth of many who profess to be Christians; in my humble opinion it certainly doesn’t represent God. Finally, we represent God in everything we do – what we do with our money, our time, our actions toward others, including relationships with family, employers and those in authority, neighbors and co-workers. Do they see God in us? Do they recognize that we are gentle, loving, kind, generous, forgiving, or do they see us as harsh, vengeful, hot-headed, dishonest, and untrustworthy? God’s purpose for us is to represent Him in everything we think, say and do – how do you stack up? Take the same test as before – on a scale of 0-10, how do you rate yourself? Do you need room for improvement like most of us? Let’s pray right now: “Lord, I fall short in so many ways. More often than not I do not represent you in what I think and say. Lord, please forgive me. I repent. I intend to change and evaluate every thought, word and deed in light of what I know would represent You. But Lord, I can’t do it on my own. I need strength and empowerment from You. Come in and clean me out, Lord. Move me off the throne of my life and you sit as the King, empowering my mind, will and emotions to do what is pleasing to You. Amen.”

3. **God created us to rule and reign in life.** The New Living Translation of the Bible says, “masters over life” – that’s God’s intent. Life is hard. If you don’t know that yet, you’ll find out soon enough. Life is hard and will chew you up and spit you out if you’re not careful. There are so, so many who suffer in life through poverty, sickness, mental duress, demonic attacks – it’s terrible. This is not God’s plan for mankind. God’s plan for mankind is to overcome the demons and difficulties in life – to be winners and master the challenges of life rather than be mastered by life. However, this is not the case for most people. Most people are tossed to and fro by circumstances, the sin of others, sickness, the power of the flesh and the world and demonic assignments. They are living under the oppression of poverty, sickness, abuse and fear. Even in the midst of difficulties, pain, the strength of the inner sinful nature and demons, God’s intent is for us to live above them and still live in His perfect will. Here’s a side note: *Living in God’s perfect will does not guarantee we will be free from pain, attacks of disease and demons or abusive people; but what it means that in the midst of these difficulties we can rise above them and allow them to turn out for our good rather than*
our destruction. In the Book of Revelation, Chapters 2-3, the promise is made to “those who overcome.” There is a position of overcoming that is available to the follower of God that we can tap into and live in. Romans 5:17 says it clearly:

For if by the one man's offense (Adam’s sin) death reigned through the one (Adam), much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness (those of us who receive Jesus as Savior) will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. (Italics added by me) New King James Bible

I hope I’ve whetted your whistle, so to speak, and given you a vision and hope for living life victoriously rather than allowing life to trample over you and hinder you from becoming all you can be in God’s plan. How do you rate yourself in “ruling and reigning in life”? Use the same scale of zero to ten and rate yourself. After rating yourself, say a prayer: “Lord, I see what you have for me – more. You intend for me to not live under the circumstances, but above them. You intend for me to be the “head and not the tail”, the victor, not the defeated. Lord, I want that. Do Your work of transformation in me so that I might become the influencer of circumstances in life rather than the one influenced by circumstances. Amen.”

4. God created us to reproduce others in His image. You’ll notice in the last verse of Genesis 1:26-28 we’re called to “multiply and reproduce.” That’s not only referring to having lots of children, but also to reproducing others in the image of God. This is what we call “discipleship.” It’s when you rise to a certain level in your relationship with God and then you reach out and start helping others to grow in God. This is the plan, purpose and destiny of each and every person – know God, represent Him in a measure, begin to be an overcomer, then look for others God brings into your life and help them do the same.

You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. 2 Timothy 2:2, New American Standard

This process usually involves meeting with others one-on-one or in small groups to share what God’s doing in your life, study the Bible, pray together or a recreational activity where “life is shared and imparted to one another” with the purpose of mutual growth in our relationship with God. Here’s the question for evaluation: Who are you helping to grow in God? Into whom are you investing your life? Who has God brought into your life so that you can be a blessing to them?

These are the four purposes of God’s plan for mankind. There are more that we can find in the Bible, but most, if not all of them fall into the category of one of these. There is a more personalized plan for each person – exactly what God wants us, as an individual to be and do – our vocation, where we live, how many children to have, our standard of living; these are not found specifically in the Bible, but can be determined by doing the known will of God that is revealed in the Bible.

Societal Influence
In order for God’s purpose to be fully established on earth, He must penetrate the following areas of society with Spirit-filled believers:

Religion: We must have people who have a passion for God’s purpose and holiness leading religion. People must be brought to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This happens by being added to the Universal Church as well as the Local Church.
Education: Education has tremendous influence on society. We must have Christians involved in every aspect of education.

Government: It goes without saying the power of influence of government. We need Christians involved in all aspects of government.

Entertainment: Entertainment includes sports, music, drama and the arts in every form, including writing and publishing books.

Media: Media includes radio, TV, newspaper, internet and any other form of communicating information to the world.

Societal Relationships: Social relationships involve how families relate to one another, workers relate to one another as well as how society relates to one another in every way.

Business: God is the God of innovation and success. We need Christians in every aspect of business and open to God giving them creative business ideas

**Values**

Values are going to talk about vision, planning and goal-setting, but all of these flow out of who we are and what we value. What is important to you? What are your personal values? What do you believe about life? Relationships? Integrity? People? What do you believe about a mission and purpose in life?

Do you have any quotes or Bible verses that act as a guide for you in life, that you use to determine what you will or will not do?

Below are some things that are important to me and I want them to be important to those who work with me:

1. People must truly be born again.
2. Christians must have a real relationship with Jesus Christ.
3. Every believer must try to become a disciple.
4. We make disciples in small groups.
5. Christians must be holy.
6. God's work done in God's way will have God's support.
7. Christians must tell others about Jesus and help them repent and start following Him.
8. Families should believe on Jesus and parents should teach their children the ways of God.
9. We must help people in spirit, soul and body. (holistic ministry)
10. Christians sacrifice for the Kingdom of God.
11. True worship creates an atmosphere for the presence of God. We need the presence of God in our church meetings. We must allow Jesus to do what He wants to do when we gather together to worship.

These are just some of my values that will determine my vision and goals. In the space below list your values. They may be just a word, phrase, Bible verse, prophecy or belief that you have.

My Values: (Name) ____________________________________________ Date: ______________
(not necessarily in order of importance)
For Pastors, Business-Owners and Ministry Leaders

What are the biblical values upon which you want Jesus to build His church, business or ministry which you lead? What do you see in the Bible as being your pattern? Are there several Bible verses, a story, passage of Scripture or book of the Bible.

When I was church planting and overseeing multiple churches in Cambodia, below is what I used as my guide. It will be useful for business-owners and ministry leaders and department heads as well.

**OUR PATTERN IN THE BIBLE**

We believe our pattern in the Bible is found in Acts 2:36-42. We believe the Holy Spirit led the first Christians according to His plan and purpose. Therefore, their actions in the Book of Acts is a pattern for us to follow.

1. Repent, v. 38
2. Receive water baptism, v. 38
3. Receive the Holy Spirit, v. 38
4. Save yourself from this evil generation, v. 40
5. Follow the teaching of the apostles, 42
6. Fellowship with other Christians, v. 42
7. Receive the Lord's supper, v. 42
8. Pray, v. 42
9. Expect God to do signs and wonders, v. 43
10. Sacrifice and share with one another, v. 44-45
11. Meet together in the temple, v. 46
12. Meet together in homes, v. 46
13. Sing and praise the Lord, v. 47
14. Expect God to add more people to your church, v. 47

These are the criteria I use to evaluate my church. When I evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of my church, or when my church is not growing, I evaluate everything according to these verses and ask the Holy Spirit to show me what I must change in my thinking, my actions or my church.

If you already have a church or ministry, here are two questions that will help you to discuss the health of that ministry:

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<th>What are the strengths of your church, business and ministry?</th>
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Vision

*If people can’t see what God is doing, they stumble all over themselves; But when they attend to what he reveals, they are most blessed.* Proverbs 29:18, The Message Bible

We have vision when we see something with our spirit and with our eyes. *What do you see for your ministry?*

- Your vision creates your future.
- Your vision creates faith. Faith creates your vision and your vision creates more faith. Faith brings resources to you to fulfill your vision. You must have a vision and you must have faith.
- Your vision must come from God. You must pray, seek the Lord and ask Him to give you His vision for your life.
- Your vision must come from God’s Word.
- Your vision comes from the inner passions God puts in you. Don’t be afraid to follow your passions.
- If you are working with someone, your vision is joined to their vision. If you are working with a church, your vision must be joined to their vision. If you are working with a business or organization, your vision is a part of their vision. If you create a different vision from the leader's God has put in your life, then you divide instead of build and God will not work with you.

- Those who worked with King David followed his vision. David’s vision came from God, their vision came from David. Because they had unity they were strong and overcame their enemies.
- John the Baptist had his vision from God, but his vision came under the Messiah's vision.
- Paul and Barnabus were a team. At first, Barnabus was the leader, but then it became clear that God called Paul to receive the position of the leader on the team. Barnabus submitted his vision to Paul and they worked together and had success in their ministry.

**Important Bible Verses for Me Regarding Vision**

Matthew 28:18-20  
Make disciples

Mark 16:15-20  
We do God's work by the power of the Holy Spirit

John 9:4  
When it is the season to work, we must work hard

Colossians 1:28-29  
We use all our energy to reach every person

1 Timothy 2:2  
We make disciples who make more disciples and plant churches which plant more churches

**What do you see for your ministry?** *You must have a vision for your ministry.*

What do you see yourself doing five years from now, or what do you see your church, ministry, organization or business doing five years from now. Make a list:

- ____________________________________________________________
Right now, what hinders you from that?

_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________

What must you personally do or change to move yourself close to that vision?

_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________

What must be done to move your church, business or organization closer to that vision?

_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________

Now finish this statement: *I exist for the purpose of…*
My church, business or organization exists for the purpose of...

Now write a mission statement for your life:

Example: I am called by God to live my life on this earth to glorify Him in everything I think, say and do. God has gifted me with unique spiritual gifts, heart motivations, abilities, personality and life experiences to do something special for Him during my time on this earth. I will use all my energies to do what God has called me to do in this life.

Now write a Mission Statement for your church, ministry, business or organization: