

Vision | What Are You Aiming For?

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Introduction

In one of my favorite conversations in the marriage and parenting classes we do here at Grace Chapel, we open with a question—and it's one of my favorite questions. I've found that whether or not you've ever answered this question before, it's really helpful to ask it of yourself on a regular basis: **Can you become like Jesus?**

Seem simple, right? Think about it for a second.

**On this side of heaven, through the power of the Holy Spirit,
can you become like Jesus?**

Some of the most common answers I get:

- No, not really.
- Well yeah, but not totally.
- Yes, but we'll always struggle with sin.

Here's what Scripture says on this topic:

1 John 2:1

My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

1 John 2:6

He who says he abides in Him (Jesus) ought himself also to walk just as He (Jesus) walked.

John 14: 12–14

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

- Jesus raises the bar. Can we be like Jesus? Jesus says we can do greater works than He did because He goes to the Father and is our Advocate. This is about obedience, not self-glory.

Now as important as the theology of this is, the question of whether we can become like Jesus or not is a **vision** question, not a theological one.

Proverbs 29:18 (KJV)

Where there is no vision, the people perish . . .

Vision is important! Contained in the meaning of the original Hebrew word, is this idea of *mental sight*.

- What are your sights on?
- What are you aiming for?

Vision → Intention → Action

Vision dictates your intention, which dictates your action.

A different way of thinking about it is:

Everything you do (action) is rooted in vision, whether you've thought about it or not. And if you haven't thought about it, chances are it's just bad vision.

An example of good vision—

Vision—I want to know God more.

Intention—I intentionally posture myself as a student. I research Bible reading plans and strategies. I research devotionals about the character of God

Action—I learn more about God, I dig into the Word, and I surround myself with wise people.

Because I intentionally posture myself as a student, I'm ready to soak up information wherever I am.

An example of bad vision—

Vision—I just want to survive Christmas.

Intention—I think on all of the things my family may do that will hurt or bother me.

Action—I get mad at them every time they do anything that seems like an attack, because according to my vision they're interfering with my survival.

Alternate Vision—I want to love and serve my family and be free from everything they do to me.

Application—When I ask if we can become like Jesus, and you say, “Yes, but we'll always struggle with sin,” you're making a declaration of your vision. Your vision is always to struggle with sin, and you will act accordingly! You have made a plan for sin to be present for the remainder of your life. Then, when you spend the rest of your life struggling with sin, it meets expectations based on the vision you have. This radically changes the trajectory of your life as a disciple of Christ. Call me crazy, but I don't think that is what Jesus meant when He said we should have abundant life.

John 10:10

The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Vision is in everything

I'm using this idea of becoming like Jesus to make the point, but let's step outside of that for a minute.

Vision is in everything we do—everything, all the time!

- When you drove to church, you had vision for your car ride.
- When you got to church, you had vision for your experience here today.
- You have vision for your family, for your friendships, for work or for school.
- If you're a boss, you have vision for your employees.
- If you have a boss, you have a vision for you boss.

You may think, “Well, that's not true. I didn't stop and think about my vision for driving to church this morning.”

But simply because you haven't stopped and thought about your vision doesn't mean you don't have any. It usually means you have bad or passive vision.

What you do at any given time tells you what your vision is, because everything you do is rooted in vision.

Example—If while driving here this morning, you got mad at everyone in front of you who was going slower than you, then maybe your vision was to get here as fast as possible. A better vision would be, “I’m going to follow the Lord in everything I do, including driving to church.”

Example—If at some point during worship, you thought, “I’m going to go to the bathroom, because I don’t really like this song,” then maybe your vision was to show up as a consumer Christian and pick and choose what you’d like from the spiritual buffet. A better vision would be, “I’m going to be a disciple of Christ who gathers with fellow disciples of Christ to serve and be a contributing member of the body of Christ.”

**We are always operating from a place of vision,
whether we’ve thought about it or not.**

Three vision guidelines

If vision is in everything we do, I’d like to offer three practical guidelines for cultivating good Godly vision:

1. No **NOT** Vision

- I want to not fight with my wife.
- I want to not think about that.

When you’re trying *not* to do something, the very thing you are trying not to do gets all of your attention.

2. No **JUST** Vision

- I just want to make it through this day.
- I just want to make it to the weekend.
- I just want to pay the bills.
- I just want to not fight with my wife.

“Just” vision is setting the bar low—it is not abundance! The Lord has more for us than just getting through something. We are not to survive—we are to thrive!

Romans 8:37

Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

3. No Vision **CONTINGENT** on Other People Changing

- I want my wife to be happy.
- I want my kids to respect me.

These thoughts are fine if they stay in the desire category—it’s good to desire good things for other people. But your vision should not be dependent on another’s emotions, behaviors, or outcomes.

Have no **not**, no **just**, and no **contingent** visions. This doesn’t mean all of your problems go away. You’re guaranteed trials. But this helps get you pointed in the right direction.

Conclusion

As we wrap up today, I want to circle back to the original question—

Can you become like Jesus?

Is that what you’re aiming for? Or are you aiming for something other than this standard?

Are you aiming to be like Jesus while accepting you will always struggle with sin?

Are you aiming to be kind of like Jesus?

If so, why?

Consider this—

Jesus had disciples, ordinary men He invited on a journey. They followed Him. They were changed by Him and went on mission with Him. In doing so they became more like Him.

Jesus died and was resurrected, and before He ascended to heaven, He said:

Matthew 28:19–20

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen.

As the disciples obeyed Jesus and went out and made more disciples, people in Antioch saw them. They watched these guys and saw how obsessed they were with Jesus.

How much they talked about Jesus.

How much they behaved like Jesus.

And they said, *Surely, you are Christians. You are like Him, you belong to Him—this is clear.*

Think about this:

If people watched you live your life outside of Sunday morning, would they come to that same conclusion? Would they say, *You are so like Christ, you clearly belong to Him!*

This is an actual work that the Holy Spirit can accomplish in us, primarily and often through discipleship! Where does discipleship happen? In community.

You can't live out your faith behind closed doors and simultaneously be disciplined and make disciples. Discipleship, by definition, must involve other people.

We've got you covered. You can walk out these doors today (or go on our website any time) and get connected to community.

Discussion Questions

1. Can you become like Jesus? How would you have answered this question before today's message? Do you think about it differently now? What does Scripture say about it?
2. How does the idea of *mental sight*—contained in the original Hebrew word for vision—shape your understanding of vision?
3. Discuss the relationship between vision, intention, and action.
4. Have you considered that vision is in everything you do? Reflect on ways good or bad vision has shaped your life.
5. What are the three guidelines for establishing good vision? Which is most challenging for you? How might following these guidelines for good vision help you in trials and challenges?
6. Reflect: Has the Lord revealed anything to you about vision today?

NOTES