

Casting a Biblical Vision and Develop Core Values for Children's Ministry

What Drives Your Children's Ministry? What are you doing? Is it ministry driven? Sunday-to-Sunday, Wednesday-to-Wednesday? Is it event driven? Is it driven by the church calendar? Are you being led by a Martha mentality or a Mary mentality? Are you busy and worried about many things or have you chosen the better place? The better place is designed by a biblical vision for your children's ministry.

Define Vision: A vision must be greater than you can ever ask, think, or imagine; (Eph. 3:20) but must be clearly articulated so others can adopt the vision, and articulate the vision. People need to know why they are serving. The vision must be based upon the Word of God. You don't want a son of flesh (Ishmael), you want a son of promise (Isaac). Ishmaels are born out of "great ideas" from people. Isaacs are born from the word of God.

A Vision is Not: The coolest children's ministry, the most dynamic children's ministry, the children's ministry with fog machines, the most relatable children's ministry, the children's ministry with the coolest branding, the most fun children's ministry, or the children's ministry that gives out the coolest prizes and incentives. Vision cannot be defined by statistics, surveys, or focus groups. If you follow trends, fads, or man-made ideas, you will always be chasing a moving target, and no one will grow as a Christian (Grandma's magician pastor). Ask yourself if your vision is rooted in the Word?

Don't Miss the Point: There was once a group of philanthropists who wanted to build a beautiful orphanage and furnish it with all the best amenities. They spent a fortune making sure everything was up to code and the facility was filled with the newest and best furniture, resources, toys, games, etc. They spent a large sum on a sprinkler system to protect the children from fire. Well, everything went fine until one night a fire started and the sprinkler system didn't turn on. Many children were killed, and the facility burnt to the ground. The fire marshal discovered that the water was never connected to the system and the pipes were unable to do what they were designed to do. We can't afford to waste time, effort, and energy in children's ministry without making sure we are connected to God and obeying His Word. (A Pastoral interview in the Bay Area was secular).

Your Vision Must be Biblical: 31 Flavors doesn't sell tires. In-N-Out doesn't sell furniture. Churches are not activity centers. No Christian gets to create their own vision for ministry. We simply adopt what Jesus has clearly defined in scripture. Ex: Matthew 28:19-20 and Acts 2:42; these are two examples for reference and are not the only scriptures to build a vision for ministry upon.

Make Disciples: Matthew 28:19-20: Kids that: 1. Know God (Teach them the Bible), 2. Love God (Relationship, talk with God, worship God, pray to God), 3. Serve God (Serve their family, church, community for Jesus), and 4. Share God (Tell others about Jesus/Evangelism). Another passage to use for vision is Acts 2:42. Church isn't church without, 1. Teaching the Bible, 2. Praying, 3. Worshiping Jesus, and 4. Fellowship. We don't have time to waste, we must be about our Father's business.

Core Values: Core values are the pillars that uphold and undergird the vision. Core values are three or four ideas that define how your ministry functions. Core values help align volunteers with the vision of children's ministry. If volunteers can't align with and get behind the core values; children's ministry isn't for them. Core values help everyone to unite with the ministry and keep the ministry operating in a

healthy manner. They must be broad enough to cover a big idea and specific enough to define. The core values will help create a hierarchy that isn't centralized and will help you clearly say yes to some things and no to others.

Our Core Values: 1. Safety (Proverbs 22:3), 2. Care for Others (John 13:35), 3. Team Player (Ecclesiastes 4:12)(Two is one and one is none, versatile, flexible.) and 4. Communication (Proverbs 18:21). Every Core Value is rooted in the Word. The core values are how we help the vision stay healthy and continue moving forward. (Domino effect of poor **communication**. 17 servants out at once!)

Aligning Vision and Core Values: The vision helps everyone aim at a target. "If you aim at nothing, you will hit it every time." This helps capture the heart of the ministry. The core values must help strengthen the vision and make the vision possible. What is your vision? What do you need in place to make sure your vision can be materialized? (Being early to class is a **safety** issue.)

Communicating Core Values: The core values must be clearly communicated so your team can get behind what you are doing. If something is suggested outside of the core values, you don't do it. This will help you keep everything you do on track and not become distracted. You need to stay focused on the main values of ministry. Our core values are on our Policy and Procedures Manual that I read with and to every person who joins the Children's Ministry at C.C. Modesto.

Ministry Culture: Core values either grow organically through passive leaders (negative) or they are established through clear communication by proactive leaders (positive). Leader's lead. Get used to confrontation or get used to sin and a crumbling culture. The values your ministry adopts creates the culture you will live with, good or bad. The core values you create shape the entire culture of the ministry. Ask yourself what kind of culture you want in your ministry. (Call sick people. Send a card. **Care for others**.)

Enculturation: After you have a vision and core values, help train the children's ministry staff to embody them? Imbed the vision and core values in your onboarding of all servants. Take time to tell the story of children's ministry through your vision and values. (Being flexible is being the hands and feet of Jesus. AKA, a team player.) Go to new kids and welcome them into the class, introduce them to other kids.

Casting Vision: How do you communicate your vision with others? Create an announcement or video that you can share during a service, on the church's website, and on your social media. People can't join what they are not aware of, and they won't get behind or support what they can't agree with. Create awareness through announcements, videos, and social media. This is the culmination of vision casting.

Vision: We help children know God intimately, love God passionately, serve God selflessly, and share God fearlessly. This is a vision that will continue growing throughout the lives of the children we serve. This vision will never be fully met, will continue to develop, is a clear target, is measurable, and is commissioned by God.

Calvary Chapel Children's Ministry Video

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