

What drives you? I want to ask you to write that question on the top of your worship flier, or on something. Because that's the question of the day: What drives you?

The number one golfer in the world with more endorsements than any other sports figure, married to a swimsuit model and living in a gated community in southern Florida. What more could a man need? Evidently ... for some folks ... *everything* is not enough. Tiger Woods, by his own admission on Friday, said he felt entitled to more. I guess what we all wanted from him was an answer to our question of the day: What drives you? We had all hoped, I guess, that he was driven by the sport ... by a vision of being possibly the greatest athlete in the world. But it turns out ... again, in his own words ... that he was driven not by vision so much as impulse. And he discovered, like too many people, that no vision ... no drive ... no plan beyond following the next impulse ... is really no life.

What drives you? You don't think of this being a biblical question, but it is. God has always called his people to work from a vision. Go back to Abraham. When God first offered a covenant relationship to Abram (as he was known at the time), he took him outside and showed him the stars in the sky. Now, this was B.S. ... "Before Streetlights" ... so I imagine that when Abram looked up from that desert land into the night sky he was bedazzled by stars. Countless stars. And God said, "Go ahead. Try to count them. I tell you Abram, you will have descendants numbering in the neighborhood of stars." Abraham was 75 at the time, and childless, so this vision was not a done deal by any stretch. It would be 25 years before the first child was born. But from the moment God delivered that vision, Abraham was invited to go ahead and start acting like a dad.

That's typical of how God worked with those who would lead his people. God invited Noah to go ahead and start acting like a sailor long before the first rains fell. He invited Moses to go ahead and start acting like the leader of a nation long before they ever reached their promised land. He put David in line to become a king while he was just a shepherd boy. The point is that kingdom visions are not about the calendar. They are about getting ourselves in line with God's plan ... getting our drive in line with God's passion ... so that every decision between here and the realization of God's promises keeps us flowing in the current of His will.

That's what we're about today. We're going to look seriously at that question: What drives you? And we're going to listen for a vision to emerge. And like God's people through the ages, we do this understanding that this master plan we're listening for is not something we'll realize tomorrow. This is a vision that will carry us through the next five or ten years ... which is a long time. But the promise is that if we'll stay true to it, it will keep us in line with God's plan. I believe God is offering the people in this room the chance to build a personal vision around a common ministry. He is giving each of us a chance to invest our lives in something driven by vision and not by impulse. So ... are you ready to build a God-sized vision? Let's look at five principles for building a vision rooted in God's Word.

A healthy (holy) vision begins with the kingdom of God.

Let me say something here about that word "healthy." Back in January, I told a group I sensed this was the word over Mosaic for 2010. I sensed God was calling us to focus on health ... spiritual and emotional health but also physical health. Someone did a little word study around that and discovered that the word "health" finds its root in the word "whole," which finds its root in the word "holy." Which sort of blew me away. Maybe what God really wants from us this year is to do something holy. And clearly, that begins with the Kingdom of God.

In Luke, chapter twelve, Jesus taught his followers the importance of getting in line with a holy drive. He says (Luke 12:22-26, 29-31) - *"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. 23Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. 24Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! 25Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? 26Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?"* John Piper says Jesus is challenging his people here to replace thing-seeking with kingdom-seeking. Jesus says (Luke 12:29-31) – *Do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. 30For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. (read this last verse with me) 31But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.*

A holy vision does not begin with our needs, then seek to fill them. It begins with the kingdom of God. So as we talk about where we go from here, I challenge you to begin not with your own needs but with the values of God. What matters to God?

A healthy vision is led by prayer.

Every person, every decision, every project covered in prayer. Because if we want to know what matters to God, we have to ask. This isn't a "mother-may-I" game God is playing with us ... he just wants our faces pointed in the right direction. In 2 Chronicles 7:14, God teaches us that - *If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.* It's about position. Prayer is about getting God out front. That's why we did 21 days of prayer and fasting in November. That's why we'll do another 24 hours of prayer on March 5th and 6th. Because getting God and his power out front is critical.

Do you remember that place in Exodus when Moses hit this crossroads? The people had done some really stupid things, and God was just plain mad. And he told Moses, “You guys go on ahead. I’m hanging back because ... honestly? I don’t like these people.” And Moses said to him, “But if your Presence does not go with us, how will anyone know you are pleased with me and with your people? What will distinguish us from everything else out there if you don’t go with us?” Which is a huge question. If God is not with us, what makes us any different from any other non-profit out there? Nothing! A healthy ... holy ... vision *must* be led by prayer. In a few minutes, we’re going to open this area up for prayer. That’s the invitation today ... to come and pray for God to lead us as we move into shaping a master plan. And I am going to trust that those who are driven by a desire to follow a vision together will have the courage today to step out in prayer. To be led by prayer. It’s about getting God out front.

A healthy vision is empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Just before he was raised up into heaven after his resurrection, Jesus was with his disciples. And you just know they were sort of at a loss about what they would do once his physical presence was no longer with them. After all, he was the show. He *was* the vision. But he told them two things: that whatever he did, they’d be able to do ... and that the vision ... whether he was physically present or not ... was still about making disciples. Which was really a continuation of the vision given to Abraham ... remember? “I will make your people as numerous as the stars of the sky?” So Jesus told his followers to focus on making disciples and then he empowered them for success. He said (Acts 1:8) - *You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.* A healthy vision is empowered by the Holy Spirit.

And *also* rooted in the gifts of many kinds of people ... called to reach beyond the walls in mission. I've joked a lot about how easy it would be to have a church full of people like me, but actually ... a healthy church takes all kinds. Romans 12:4-8 says – *Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, 5so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. 6We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. 7If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; 8if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.* You hear what Paul is really asking here? He's asking, "What drives you?" Figure that out, then go after it. The more we individually know what drives us the better we'll be at making a master plan for ministry. You show me a church where the people are energetically committed to Jesus Christ and each one is working ... not to fill a volunteer spot ... but out of what drives them spiritually ... and I'll show you a healthy church. A place that is not so concerned with the perpetuation of an institution as with the spreading of the gospel.

A healthy vision reflects the Kingdom of God.

A healthy vision, when it is lived out, becomes a demonstration on earth of Kingdom values. Here's a question: How did Jesus teach us to pray? He taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Jesus taught us that if we want to see God's will being done on earth, then we should start with what's happening right now in heaven. Is there racism in heaven? No. Then we ought to fight against racism here. Is there injustice in heaven? No. Then we ought to fight against injustice here, wherever we see it. Is there rage? Or addiction? Or homelessness? Or hunger? Then those should be the things we fight against here. Those are not easy things, but they are the stuff of a God-sized vision. Isaiah 22 uses a

really powerful phrase. He talks about the Valley of Vision ... about a day of battering down walls and crying out to mountains that separate people from their destiny. That's what we should be about. We should be about battering down walls and crying out against anything that separates people from their created purpose.

Revelation 7:9-10 has always been a special passage for our church, because it voices those things that our Mosaic is about. John was taken up into heaven to witness the eternal realm, and he saw the most amazing things. And at one point, he said (read this with me ... Revelation 7:9-10) - *After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count (like stars in the sky), from every nation, tribe, people and language (unity among cultures), standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes (a symbol of healing) and were holding palm branches in their hands (a symbol of celebration). 10And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."* That's flat-out worship! Healing. Celebration. Worship. The Kingdom of God fully realized. And our vision is to be a demonstration on earth of God's Kingdom. To see the good news of Jesus Christ bring healing to broken people and salvation to lost people so that we are free to worship God in spirit and in truth. Our vision for today and tomorrow and the long haul is to see the good news of Jesus Christ bring healing to broken people and salvation to lost people ... so that when we come in here, it's a celebration. Amen?

And our warehouse is a big part of that vision. This is the building God placed in our path years ago and because of what it is, it helps define what drives us. A loading dock will definitely define a ministry! Imagine this building as ministry. And imagine it, too, as home base ... a place to go out *from*. We have the chance to be a mission center for our community ... a place where food and furniture move in and out ... where jobs and recovery bring hope.

But we also get to be the ones who go after the ones who live in the margins. What an honor. So we keep a conversation going with Augusta Urban Ministries about a partnership that would create a Columbia County ministry center at Mosaic ... not just for handing out help but for offering hope. And we continue to build our partnership with St. James so that we can love downtown. Make a note: Next Sunday at 5:30 in the afternoon, we'll host our first worship event in downtown Augusta. And we continue to build our ministry with those who've been incarcerated. What else can we dream into being?

Won't it be great to have a master plan in place so that as we become holders of a building title, we won't have to anxiously question every choice for developing it. Because we'll have a vision to drive us. Of course, as we've said already, God-sized visions don't happen overnight. We need patience and strength for the long haul ... strength for a God-sized vision has to be God-sized strength.

A healthy vision is built on the strength of God.

Here's the bottom line. We're not the ones building this mosaic ... God is. Only the strength of God can accomplish it. I love the word David gives in Psalm 18 (vv. 31-35). He says - *31 For who is God besides the Lord? And who is the Rock except our God? 32 It is God who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect. 33 He makes my feet like the feet of a deer; he enables me to stand on the heights. 34 He trains my hands for battle ... 35 You give me your shield of victory, and your right hand sustains me.* (and this is the best line of all) *You stoop down to make me great.*

That's the prayer we ought to be praying with every breath. *God, stoop down and make us great.* That's the prayer that ought to lead us today as we discuss what drives us.

God, stoop down and make us great.

I mentioned a few minutes ago that our invitation today is an invitation to pray for our ministry together. I'd like to make this area up front into our valley of vision ... a place where we can batter down walls and cry out against mountains that separate people from their destiny. I want to invite you into this valley of vision for a time of prayer and I trust that those who are driven by a desire to follow a vision together will have the courage to step out. To be led by prayer. It's about getting God out front.

You may want to find folks in your ministry team and pray together with them. Or you may want to just come and get on your knees and ask God to reveal what drives you. IF you're here for the first time ... I hope you'll be at peace. Remember: that Jesus doesn't ask anyone to wait until we're fixed or plugged in or all together before we come to the valley of vision. So come and get a personal vision. Ask God to get out in front of your plans.