

The Power of Vision

Recognizing God's Call



by Ericka D. Jackson

Speaker. Author. Breakthrough Coach.

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my mother, Thelma, who has supported me every step of the way. When I looked crazy to the rest of the world for following God's calling on my life, she supported me emotionally, financially and spiritually. Thank you for all of the cards over the years that came just when I was getting weary on this journey. Thank you for your unconditional support and encouragement. It really means the world to me and I look forward to demonstrating my thankfulness for years to come.

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INTRODUCTION

Have you ever had one of those days where you just feel off? You are standing in the bathroom in your paisley pajamas, blankly staring into the mirror just waiting to receive some divine guidance to know exactly what you should be doing with your life? You may not know what it is, but you know it's got to be better than this! Living without knowing your vision feels like an eternity of "one of those days." Now, more than ever, you must slow down and take the time to know *your* specific vision and what you were born to do.

This morning I was listening to the gospel station here in Raleigh and they played one of the last songs the late, great Gerald Levert recorded shortly before his passing. The song was called, *He Never Left Me* and a portion of the chorus line of the song struck me very deeply. It was, "I did not heed the call." This line reminded me of the incredible importance of heeding or answering God's call in your life and

committing to living God's vision. It is time to urgently respond to God's calling on your life. Now is your time. Today is your day. It's time to harness and activate The Power of Vision.

**God created you for a very specific purpose
and vision.**

There is a sense of urgency for you to bring forth your vision. God has called you to make a difference in the lives of particular people who can only receive and act on the message and information they need to hear from you. God has a specific purpose for your life. Your particular life's journey has happened so you can be a living testimony in their lives. The longer you put off bringing forth your vision, the longer those lives suffer, because you have the information, insights, process, support, testimony or product that will bring them out of their situation and free them up to live God's vision.

This is the continuum of Vision and it is a chain that should not be broken. Unlike those chain emails that you get twice a week in your inbox, which claim to wreak havoc in your life or the lives of others if you do not forward them, the Vision chain is about everyone doing what it is God called them to do *when* God has called them to do it. As a result, your vision intertwines

with mine and mine connects with others and our visions propel each other's forward.

Your vision assignment does not come all at once; God slowly unfolds and reveals it to you with each faithful step you take.

Although I was moving forward on the pieces of what God called me to do as a speaker and success coach, the fullness of God's vision for my life was revealed to me as I was sitting at my desk one morning about four years ago doing internet research on the speaking and coaching industries. I found websites for many coaches and even more speakers. Each coaching site was using the same words and phrases – "purpose...achieving your goals...living your dreams..." Each speaker claimed to be the best and described their speaking as "inspirational, motivational, and entertaining..." I remember sitting in my burgundy office chair, desiring to be deeply clear about what sets me apart from these other speakers and coaches. I was clear about my speaking skill and years of expertise, but I needed the big picture.

As always, I asked God for the answer. This was one of those wonderful moments in which God responded quickly and clearly. I heard the words, "I have put the answers in my children and they are not being obedient. I have given them the solutions to solve

all of the world's problems, but they are not listening. Your job is to assist and to guide them in being obedient to my call." All-right-tee then! Wow! I sat there for several more minutes taking in what I had just heard.

With that clarity, I began to clearly understand my *specific* purpose and how to achieve God's Vision for my life. My entire business took on a whole new meaning and depth. As I connected with others, I was crystal clear that I was fully on God's path for my life. I knew I was being obedient and responding to God's call. It is the most amazing feeling in the world (yeah, *really*) and that day I vowed to God that I would spend the rest of my days assisting others in living God's vision for their lives full-time, not part-time as most believers do. What would God's Kingdom look like if His saints were living His will and making a wonderful living while they did it? I call it "Living God's Vision as Your Vocation."

In the years since that epiphany, I have been asked so many questions to clarify the truth and I wanted to write this little book so you can fully understand the nature of God's Vision for your life. This is a compilation of the main questions I have received and answers that will help clarify the incredible power of vision and how you can begin to recognize God's call

on your life. This will enable you to move forward and take the necessary steps to bring forth your vision.

RECOGNIZING GOD'S VOICE

Before I delve into the questions about recognizing all of the aspects of God's call, I want to talk briefly about how to begin to train yourself to hear God's voice. While God uses many people, feelings and urgings to communicate with you, the most powerful communication tool He uses is your voice of the indwelling Christ. There is a voice within you that acts as a spiritual compass to guide and direct your every step. It is imperative that you are in touch with and learn to distinguish this voice in order to move forward in your vision.

God created you with a receiver that stays tuned to His voice. This inner voice is the Holy Spirit. You may use phrases to describe your indwelling voice of God such as, "Something tells me...", "My gut is telling me...", "I have a hunch..." or "I have a strong feeling...". This voice keeps you tuned into the invisible spiritual world all around you. You may have heard it referred to as *intuition*.

While the secular world refers to this spiritual "ear" as intuition, it moves to a new level once you have devoted your life to Christ. It is a pure voice that constantly whispers instruction, direction, wisdom and knowledge. In order to hear this holy voice within as clearly as possible, you must actively do several things

on a regular basis:

1. Read and study The Word
2. Spend time in silence as often as possible. In the course of this quiet time, you will begin to recognize your inner voice (meditation).
3. Keep your energy clear and positive by taking regular inventory of yourself. When you find things that are not of God or The Holy Spirit, confess/admit them and ask for forgiveness.
4. Learn to be obedient to this indwelling Christ at all times.

You can always confirm that it is the voice of God because this voice always leads you toward that which is good for your spiritual development and away from those things that are of flesh or of fleshly desires. This voice always leads you toward the light of God and away from the darkness of negative spiritual forces. If you hear an inner voice urging you to do things that harm your mind, body or spirit or that of others, that spiritual voice is not The Holy Spirit.

As you read through the following questions and begin to take steps toward clearly identifying God's vision for your life, make sure you are quieting the "noise" in your life to be able to unmistakably distinguish God's voice, like a mother who can recognize their child's voice over any other voice. With practice, you will come to know God's voice in a

powerful way.

I am so looking forward to moving you through this process. Congratulations on taking this step and I am honored to be supporting and guiding you on this wonderful journey. Let's get started...



I Hear A Lot Of People Talking About Vision, What Is The Big Deal?

This is an interesting question, because so many people live their lives everyday without thinking about vision and they appear to do just fine. You can stay busy 24 hours a day, study The Word, attend church, manage your family, career and life's obligations for the next 50 years and not move God's vision for your life forward. This is just existing and surviving and not tapping into the goodness God has reserved for you. It is like walking around as an unfulfilled, empty person that goes through the motions without ever touching the glory God created you to experience on a daily basis. Living your vision brings a deep passion and joy that is yours for the taking when you focus your time and energy on vision.

Vision is not just a big deal, it is *the* deal. God's

vision for your life is the one thing you were put here to do and it is your sole purpose for living. Vision is the ultimate picture of what God has shown you to be possible for your life. Not taking the time to know and act upon the big picture of what you are capable of being and doing in your lifetime leads to an unfulfilled life in which you just exist.

When you just exist, you bound around life like the colorful ball in a pinball machine, just waiting for the next obstacle to rebound off that sends you in another random direction. Think about all of the time you may spend in The Word, attending church, doing good deeds, working to get sin underfoot and fellowshiping, but still not functioning within the fullness of your purpose. When you pull back the layers, it's all about you finding your vision and living it.

I really came to understand the depth of the importance of vision a little more than 6 years ago when I looked up and felt like my life was wrapping a death grip around my neck and choking any semblance of happiness out of me. My life was suffocating me. I was a single mother of a very demanding little girl, struggling to make it to the next paycheck, incredibly unhappy and feeling unappreciated at my job. What made it even worse is that one of my greatest spiritual gifts is my ability to feel what others feel and my office

was located outside of the Psych ward and near the Cancer ward at the Seattle hospital in which I worked. This meant that everyday I constantly absorbed and felt the confusion, terror, panic, fear, disillusionment and dis-ease of people coming and going to and from the hospital.

This was slowing killing me and it seemed that no matter how much money I made, it was not nearly enough. I was living without the covering of God (I was not consistently tithing) and there always seemed to be a financial crisis to keep at bay. I realized that not living God's purpose for my life felt like experiencing a slow, spiritual death. The scariest thing is that no one around me knew the depth of my pain. As an event coordinator, I became masterful at staying calm and collected in the midst of a crisis. I realized that it was not only a big deal to live God's vision for my life, it was life or death for me and my daughter.

Vision is also a tremendous deal because as you take a good look at the world, it's conflicts, clashing cultures, war, poverty, sin and suffering, it seems to be falling apart. God has deposited answers within you that will alleviate a portion of the world's troubles. Deep, huh? Your vision is such a big deal because it is imperative that you bring forth the piece that you have been called to do.

Perhaps you are passionate about ending hunger and your talents are organization and graphic design and your gift is helping others do and look their best. Then it is time for you to find an organization that supports hunger causes around your city, state, nation or world in which you can contribute your gifts and talents. If you commit to living God's vision, He will open up doors and His divine timing in a way that simply cannot happen without His favor.

Although your life may appear to be just fine, God has more for you. Even if you always look well-dressed, have a great job and drive the latest edition of a luxury car, God has something for you when you commit to living His purpose which is exponentially better than anything you can even imagine.

God has shown me that all of the world's problems can be solved when His saints heed His call on their lives. Can you imagine? I can.



What Exactly is Vision?

While this seems like a straight forward question, it really isn't because there are so many different uses of the word "vision." While vision can be a prophetic "seeing" of something that has not yet occurred in the natural world, it is also used to describe a goal. Vision, as I discuss it, is *the ultimate conception of what God shows you as possible for your life*. Vision is the big picture of what you were born to do. Vision chooses you. You cannot choose your vision, it is already assigned to you. Your job is to uncover it and take action on it.

I remember when I began realizing my vision. I was 12 years old and my sister talked me into running for class Vice-President. I had to prepare a speech to deliver in front of the entire 7th grade class. I clearly remember looking up into the bleachers and seeing the faces of all of my friends, acquaintances and teachers and feeling no nervousness at all. I stood at the table-

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