**Building and maintaining focus in life**

Jesus says in Matthew 6: 33, “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” Jesus wants us to understand that those who come to God the Father through Him are automatically caught up into God’s mission for the world. Whatever they do for a living, the center of their life is now reborn to be in concert with God’s mercy ministry to the world. For those of us who have been set apart by the Spirit of God to be in the midst of the Body of Christ, keeping them focused and maturing in this, we have at least three domains in which to keep ourselves defined, focused and maturing, if we are to faithfully and effectively carry out our servant task. 1. In our own personal lives. We cannot honestly transmit to others what we are not first experiencing. 2. In the life of our local congregation. 3. In the life of the broader city or region in which our congregation lives.

I am assuming that you are one who has gone through the renovation training. If not, you will want to do so, before trying to bring definition to the three domains mentioned. Or, your efforts at definition will be, in my words, probably less than Biblical.

For those of us who are experiencing the journey of reformation through the renovation material, I want to commend three tools, one tool for each of the three domains in which you have responsibility. You will rapidly notice that there are a few common areas of concern expressed in each. In gist, we can number those as follows: 1. Are we and they living the most important values that arise out of people who have been born again by their identification with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ? 2. Are our lives and its assets fully focused on God’s mission? 3. Are we staying focused upon strategies that make us, individually and corporately in fulfilling God’s desire for His Kingdom on this earth?

Spend time in each of the domains to think through the questions that you are being asked to consider. It may take months before you are fully satisfied with your answers. And, of course, the Spirit of God will continue to grow our understanding in them as we spend daily time with Him in God’s word, and occasionally find extended time alone with God. Although other books do help us, I believe that God and His word are the most reliable sources for finding the Kingdom focus God has ordained for His children. So, use it often.

Many of you are in regular relationship or contact with me. I would be glad to receive and comment on your progress. And, of course, rejoice in what God is teaching you! More help can be found at www.scpi.org

Dwight Smith

 **What is God saying to me about the design and outcome of my life?**

 **Matrix One**

In what follows, I am using my own work on the design and outcome of my life as a guide for you to do the same. Though I think that the categories and the work that I have done on each are probably explanation enough, I will make a few clarifying comments along the way. There are several time realities in what follows. The mission and values summaries are life long. The mission, capacities and goals for everything range between one and five years. I have no deep conviction on the time spans, only that I need to identify what most needs attention in my life to keep the mission and values in daily focus.

**Mission outcome**

Obviously, you will need to decide on what God says in His word that is so important because of its eternality and universality that it consumes the center- piece of my life with and in God. You can see that I have begun my thinking with the relationship and representation conviction that I think rise out of the early chapters of Genesis and extend across the pages of the Bible, until God completes His mercy ministry. I am born again into relationship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ, and indwelled by the Spirit for effective service for God.

And, so I have written:

To live in daily, sensitive relationship with God, with my life poured out as fully as possible into the blessing and evangelization of every man, woman, and child in the world, especially those with whom I come into regular contact

**Values**

Again here, you will need to decide what success looks like, not only for your church, but also, more importantly in your personal life. I have captured what seem to me to be the essences of what it means to have been born again, and now the implications of the Spirit of God living in me, orchestrating the life of Jesus through me. And, so I have written:

1. To continually expand the understanding and use of the gifts that the Spirit

 works through me.

2. To allow the Spirit to daily and demonstrably mature the fruit of the Spirit in

 relationship to others

3. To yearly grow my active stewardship of all of my assets for the expansion of

 the kingdom of God

4. To so live my personal experience of grace, gifts and function that I stay in

 the middle of the most strategic Spirit provided opportunities and relationships

 that most contribute to world evangelization and the maturing of His Church

**Measuring the mission and values**

These convictions can be meaningless unless I anticipate some of the more exact and personal things they mean to and for me over the next few years. So, I have tried to focus in on the most important outcomes for each as I mature in my obedience listening to God in His word. As well, I have tried to describe in brief a bit of the why of each in the section called expectations. I want to be able to align my thinking in all of the areas as much as possible. And, so I have written:

Mission goals for next five years

1. Exegete the book of Hebrews

2. Complete a turn over of SCPI to an expanded leadership.

3. Assist Dan in a full launch of the Montana training

4. Determine a place to settle into that brings Patti and I together again into

 shared ministry.

Expectations associated with these mission goals

1. The truths of Hebrews will dominate my focus over the next few years and give greater definition to the importance of the fundamentals in my life and those I touch.
2. Scpi will settle into a healthy and expanding structure, target more nation and

 see full funding for those things that are necessary.

3. The Montana training will rise to a key strategy in the life of the Church

 worldwide that will help to spiritually and cognitively form at least one

 thousand present and future leaders globally to serve in the midst of

 national churches that fully integrate their members into a life of faith and

 full participation in the ministry of the purpose of the Church towards the

 full evangelization of their respective nations.

4. God has a restoration in store for us that once again unites us in ministry

 activity together and maximizes her Spirit given gifts.

Values goals for the next year

1. Update my understanding of my gifts, function and domain through regular

 reflection

2. To see gentleness increase in my life as demonstrated by receiving affirmation

 from Patti that she has seen it increase.

3. To increase our regular monetary giving to X% annually and see at least one

 woman living with us

4. To see God affirm the domain of most active involvement through a complete

 unity that Patti and I achieve between us..

Expectations associated with these values goals

1. I will be affirmed in my present understanding or see need to adjust.

2. The natural reflection of my function needs constant oversight and

 accountability to the interpersonal fruit that the Spirit wants to produce in me.

3. We need to regularly expand the release of our financial assets and hold the

 rest of our assets with open hands

4. Patti and I will come to greater agreement about where to live and which

 ministry opportunities to give our greatest time.

**Capacities assessment and some actions to consider**

Dan Scarrow has helped all of us see that we come with limited capacities in the pursuit of the mission and values. I have found it extremely helpful to have identified the most important categories of capacities, my assessment of my degree of capacity in each, and then set Holy Spirit inspired regimens for each.

And, so I have written:

**Physical**

Assessment

1. Need eight hours of sleep at night to be able to function at full capacity the

 next day

2. Need days in a row after extended travel to get caught up, renew spiritual

 balance and feel rested

3. Don't do well anymore traveling more than 5-7 days in a row away from home.

4. Don't feel good if I have eaten too much food more than two days in a row.

 Feel better with two meals a day, one small, one larger.

5. Feel better when I walk at least twenty minutes regularly.

Goals

1. Try to be in bed by 10pm regularly

2. Plan most trips no more than five days long.

3. Take two days off when trips exceed ten days.

4. Limit food intake to two meals a day and reject sweets 75% of the time

5. Exercise at least three days a week

**Mental**

Assessment

1. Reading stimulates thinking

2. Solitude promotes creation

3. Too many hours of media time increases laziness

Goals

1. Read at least one new book a month

2. Find at least five hours a week for solitude.

3. Consider when to eliminate cable

**Emotional**

Assessment

1. Too many days of heavy personal interaction depletes emotional energy

2. Travel without Patti increases loneliness

Goals

1. Find the mark where personal interaction overly depletes, and try and

 schedule those occasions accordingly

2. Work out a travel schedule acceptable to both

**Spiritual**

Assessment

1. Not finding almost daily time in God's word increases insensitivity.

2. Places of solitude produce the greatest moments of relational connection to

 God.

3. Extended times of meditation help me understand Scripture and hear God's

 voice best

Goals

1. Assure that I spend at least twenty minutes a day at least six days a week in

 God's word.

2. Seek out at least two windows each week of extended solitude

3. Seek out three days a week of extended windows of meditation with journal

 entries.