



## **Vision Starts with You!**

Written by Lauren Harding

Four years ago, when I volunteered to teach music for the children on Wednesday nights, I had no idea that God was drawing me into a ministry that would become my calling and passion. We had about 3-5 kids attending our Wednesday night services. It wasn't until months later during Vacation Bible School, as I looked around at the 60 unreached kids that we had bused in from the community, that I felt God birth in my heart a passion to reach children. At this time we did not have a children's minister and I felt God calling me to step up. We had many obstacles to overcome...but we made a decision among our core volunteers to step out in faith and start a bus outreach ministry. God has used this first act of obedience to spark amazing changes in our church, including starting two annual outreach events, each drawing over 300 people from our community, as well as our VBS, which has grown to reach 100 kids. God has provided all the funding and the volunteers we needed at every point. We now are able to serve a meal for the kids on Wednesday night, have teachers for both a preschool and elementary class, and God has provided the support and resources for a renovation project to transform our children's ministry space. We now regularly have between 18 and 25 children, 10 to 15 youth and 10 volunteers on Wednesday night! In the last month alone God has sent 16 new kids through our doors....Praise the Lord! God is faithful when we obey!

These are a few lessons I have learned through my journey.

### ***Be the change you want to see in your church.***

You could look around and be discouraged....or, you could be an agent of change! You might say, "my church is too small, there is no one to help, we don't have any money for resources..." Any number of obstacles may stand in your way, but our God is greater! He will provide your every need. All he is asking of you is obedience. If your situation seems difficult, choose to be the change you want to see. Be committed, be positive, be full of the love of Christ. Decide from the outset that no one and no thing will deter you from the ministry that Christ is calling you to do. Paul said, "there is an open door for great ministry, AND many oppose me!" (1 Corinthians 16:9).

### ***Vision starts with you. Be willing to lead.***

Be the leader God has called you to be. If you look around and see what the Lord wants to do, step up! Without vision the people perish. God needs leaders to catch his vision and inspire others to join in the amazing things he wants to accomplish through his people. Time after time in the bible God inspires ordinary men and women to lead his

people to do extraordinary things. God places the call, he births the vision, he surmounts the obstacles, all we have to do is listen and obey. Are we ready for the extreme obedience that will lead to God's bountiful provision?

***Seek the Lord. What has he laid on your heart for your ministry?***

Don't substitute your good plan for his great plan. Look around. What does God want to do through your church, in your neighborhood and community? Pray about it. Search His Word. Focus out and think big. How has God positioned you strategically to reach the lost? Write a vision statement that encapsulates in a few brief points of the purpose and plan for your ministry. This will serve as the foundation for everything you do and the focus of your energies.

***Get passionate about it! Your enthusiasm is catching!***

Your enthusiasm and passion is the best motivation for those around you. Excitement is contagious! Your volunteers and congregation will be moved to greater involvement, responsibility and support as you share with them the greatness of the purpose you are working together to achieve. No one will be motivated unless **you believe** in the importance of your calling, the urgency of your mission, and the magnitude of your impact.

***Communicate, communicate, communicate!***

Share the vision! Take every opportunity to share core principles, Scripture, statistics, and testimonies. Share victories and milestones. Share the credit. The more people know about your vision and how God is accomplishing it in your ministry, the more they will want to become a part!

***Expect God to do amazing things!***

If God is for us who can be against us? It is God's plan to reach children. If we are faithful and obedient to the call that he has given, he will bring it to fruition.