



Grasping Vision for Your Ministry Context

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Uploaded by Dr. Rick Griffith • Singapore Bible College

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Vision

How to develop a widely shared unifying vision in small and medium sized congregations.

Defining terms

- What do we mean by “purpose?”
- What do we mean by “mission”?
- What do we mean by “vision”?

Purpose answers the question “why?”

The over-arching reason. The *telos*. The end result we strive to accomplish.

Mission answers the question “what?”

What is to occur to lead to the fulfillment of the Purpose, to get to the ultimate goal?

Vision answers the question “how?”

With both the purpose (telos) and the mission (what) in mind, vision paints a picture of the path to get there.

Vision

- Answers the "How?" question
- A longer statement that explains...
 - What is this church going to do
 - In this community
 - With these resources
 - To reach those people
- Unique to each church and limited in time

The Problem

- Vision is essential because it determines how focus and resources will be allocated
- Vision is difficult because it requires the ability to balance “big picture” and “fine detail”
- Vision is difficult because it is a group process, especially in small churches
- Vision is challenging because it is never finished

The Problem

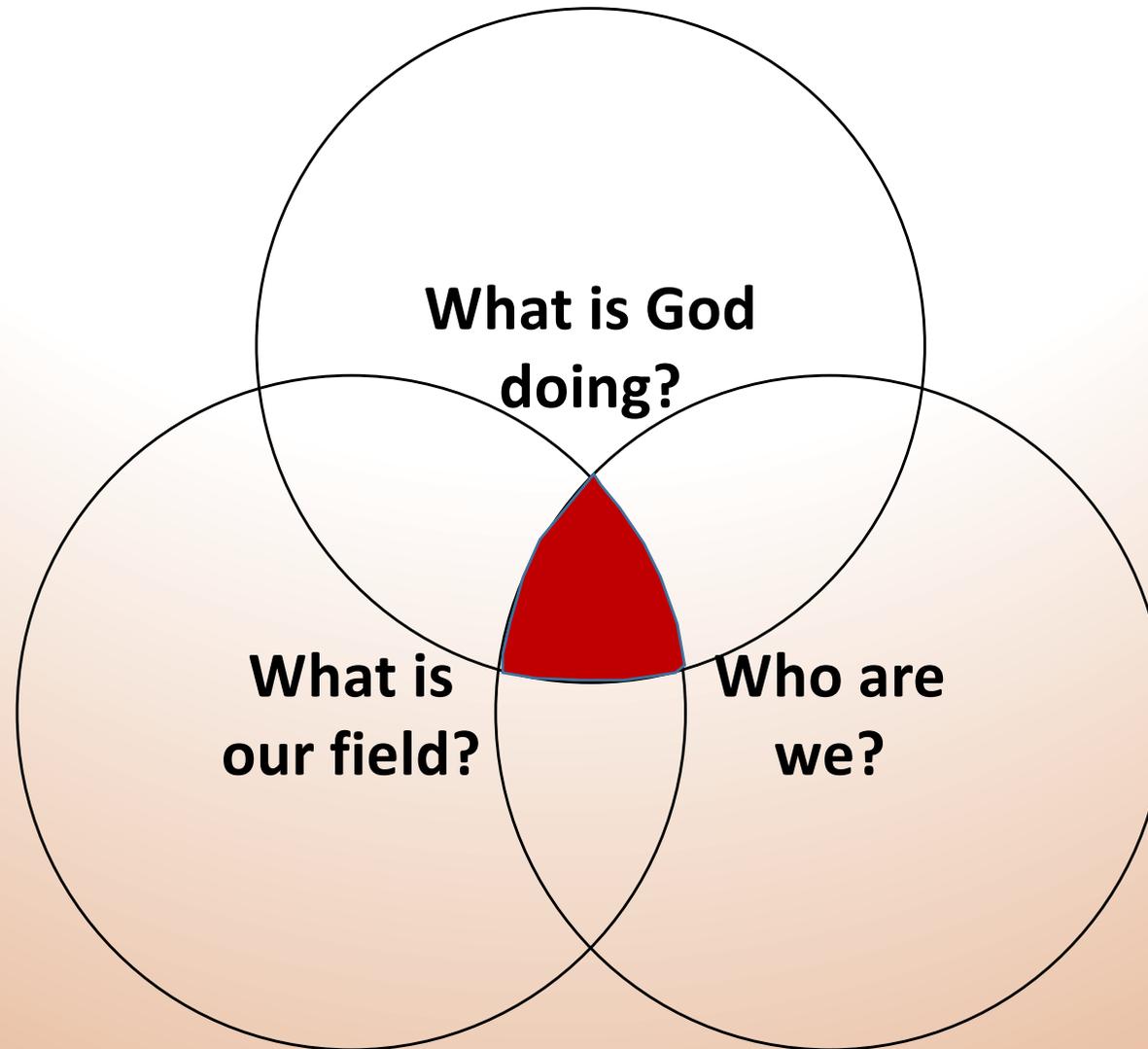
- Bible college and seminary don't teach pastors how to develop and organize ministry around vision
- Your congregants will fill the “vision vacuum”
 - “The church is here to protect me from the world”
 - “The church is here to help me raise my children”
 - “The church is here to change political culture”

“In those days Israel had no king; everyone did what was right in his own eyes (Jdg. 21:25)

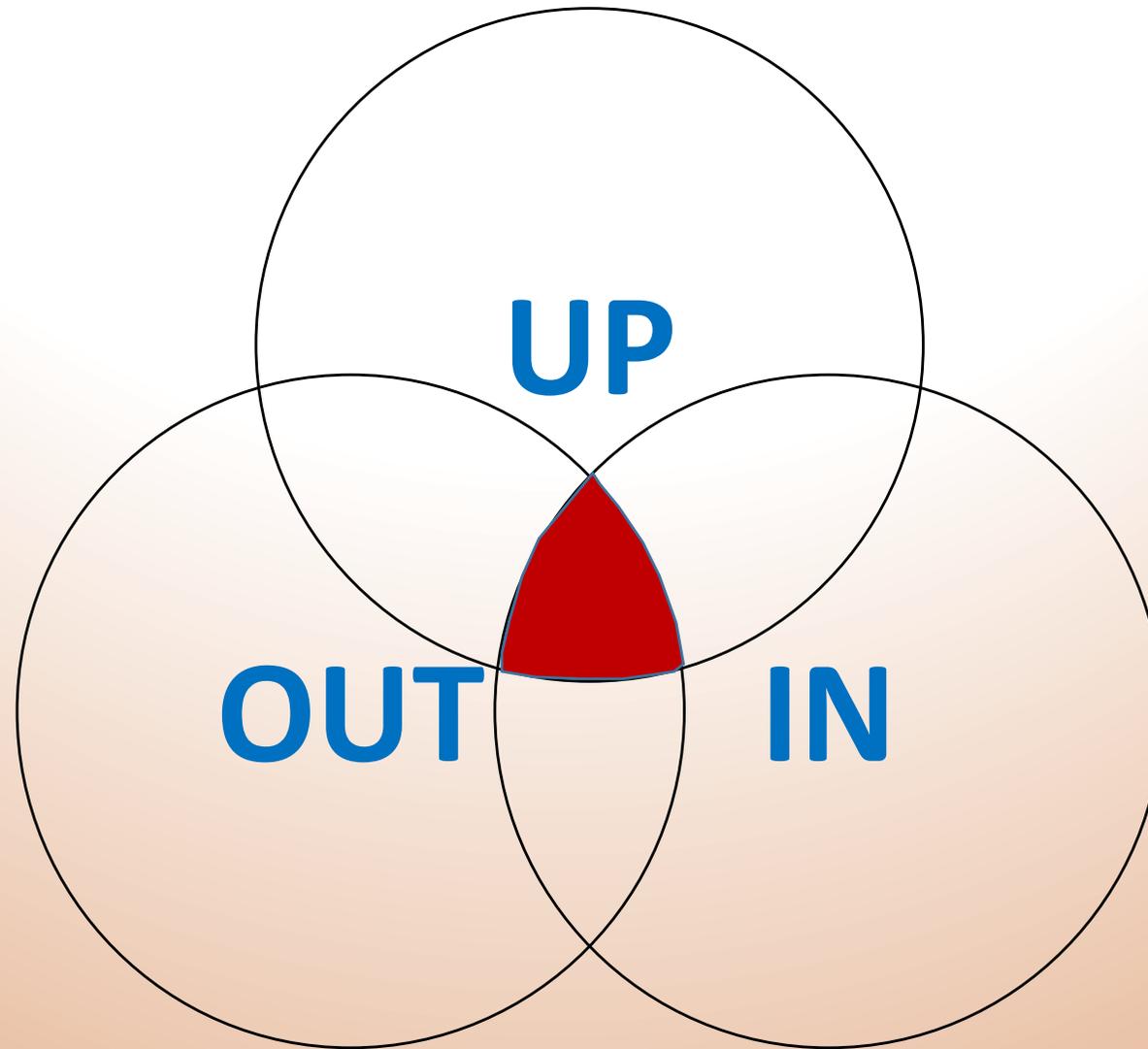
3 Elements of Vision



3 Elements of Vision



3 Elements of Vision



1. God's Mission

- The **first step** in guiding your church toward a vision that everyone owns is to insure that everyone understands the mission.
- You must explain two truths to the church:
 1. What is God doing?
 2. How do we fit in?

1. God's Mission

- Why?

Because the most important and most difficult change you must lead is not in what people do, but in *how they think*.

This is near the fountainhead of behavior.

1. God's Mission

- How do we change the way they think?

WE don't – but God will through his Word and his Spirit.

So we cooperate with God to bring both to bear on the hearts and minds of those we lead.

1. God's Mission

Tell the “big story”

- *Naturalism: everything that exists is the result of naturally occurring processes in a closed universe*
- *Hinduism: What is Hinduism's story?*
- *What is Buddhism's story?*
- *What is the Bible's account? All things are created by, through, and for Christ*

1. God's Mission

- The “big story” integrates the “little stories”
- The Bible’s metanarrative, like any other story, unfolds along a plot line.
 - The “little stories” advance the “big story.”
 - The “big story” lends sense to the “little stories.”

1. God's Mission

About the “big story”

- Your task as a turnaround pastor is to guide people through a transition in their thinking by showing them how *their little story* connects to the metanarrative.
 - Move them from a self-referential to a theocentric worldview
- Your hermeneutics (and your theological tradition) will determine how you present the “big story”

1. God's Mission

Master the art of connecting your preaching text to the “big story”

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind...”

“Big Story” Approaches

1. The Incarnation
2. The Two Covenants
3. Christo-centric
4. Salvation history
5. Worldview
6. Bible as Drama
7. Covenant progress
8. Presence of God
9. Mission of God
10. Kingdom of God

Sample metanarrative

Genesis

1. God creates a perfect world
2. God creates man in his image
3. Man appointed to rule the creation
4. God and man enjoy direct fellowship

Revelation

1. God recreates a perfect world
2. The image of God is restored in man
3. The God-Man rules all creation
4. God and man enjoy direct fellowship

Sample metanarrative

Genesis

1. God creates a perfect

2.

3.

4. God and man enjoy direct fellowship

Revelation

1. God recreates a

God is re-establishing his theocratic kingdom on earth by his Word and his Spirit, following the plan revealed in his covenants and promises

4. God and man enjoy direct fellowship

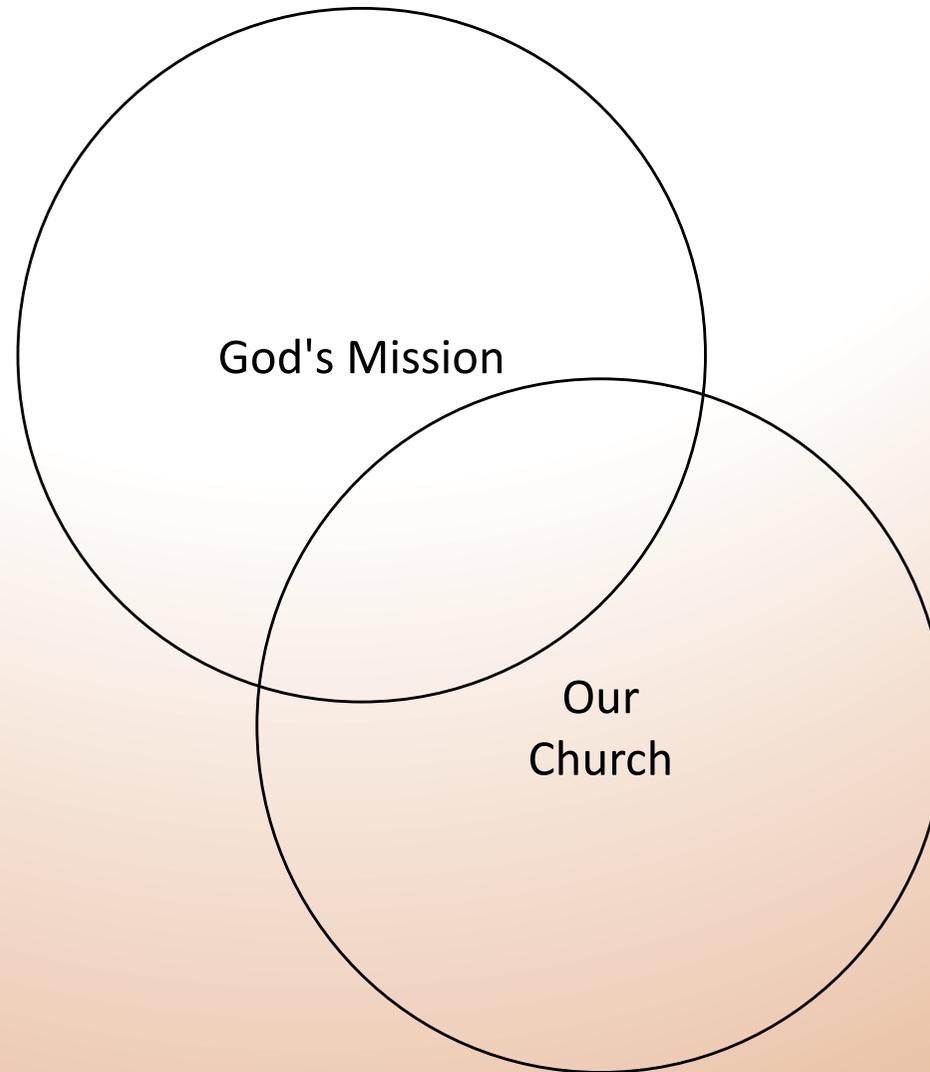
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1. God's Mission

Exercise

- Write down the metanarrative scheme you will use to reorient the way your congregation thinks:
 - A single declarative sentence if possible
 - At most a short paragraph of two to three sentences
- Identify key texts that will anchor your preaching and teaching

2. Our Church



2. Our Church

Your church's role in the “big story:”

- Evangelism: "recruiting" kingdom citizens
- Discipleship: training kingdom administrators

Vision explains *how* your church fulfills the mission

2. Our Church

Assumptions

1. Jesus wants to build his church here
2. He's already provided what you need for the next step
 - Tabernacle in the Wilderness
 - Offering for the saints in Jerusalem

Figuring out what God wants us to do starts with identifying what he's give us to work with

2. Our Church

Process:

1. Identify all the resources Jesus has entrusted to the church
 - Begin this process on your own
 - Invite staff (paid and unpaid) to join the assessment
 - Invite church leaders to join the assessment
 - If you do a “Journey Wall” consider adding this

2. Write an assessment report for later reference

2. Our Church

Identify the resources God has given

- Pastor's strengths, passions, experiences, interests and expertise?
- People's spiritual gifts, passions, experiences, interests, expertise, redemptive relationships?
- Prayer warriors, bridge builders, apologists, evangelists
- Material and financial resources?
- Reputation in the community?
- Acquired congregational wisdom?

Exercise: What has Jesus given your church?

- Identify the resources
- Differentiate your resources from other churches
- Rank the top 3 to 5 that could be most easily redeployed to bridge building or outreach activities

3. Our Community



3. Our Community

Identify the receptive groups in your community

“As you enter the house, give it your greeting. If the house is worthy, give it your blessing of peace. But if it is not worthy, take back your blessing of peace. Whoever does not receive you, nor heed your words, as you go out of that house or that city, shake the dust off your feet”

- Matthew 10:12-14

3. Our Community

1. Linked (kinship / friendship) to credible Christians
2. People like those already in your church
3. People with needs you can meet
4. Groups in which *any* religion is growing
5. People undergoing cultural change
6. Those who are dissatisfied with their lives
7. People experiencing major life transitions
8. Visitors to your worship service

3. Our Community

1. Assign a task force to identify the receptive groups in your community
2. Determine which receptive groups will be easiest for your church to reach

3. Our Community

E4

E1



- E1. No cultural, racial or linguistic barriers – only the need to believe
- E2. *More* like us: share a common language, culture, worldview
- E3. *Similar* to us: common language (not mother tongue), ethnicity and culture differ but of the same "cultural family"
- E4. *Different* than us: different language, culture and worldview

3. Our Community

1. Assign a task force to identify the receptive groups in your community
2. Determine which receptive groups will be easiest for your church to reach
3. Focus your ministries, bridge building and outreach activities on clearly defined groups of responsive people.

Exercise

Begin identifying potentially receptive groups:

- How many different groups can you identify within the “average drive” of the church?
- What types of people or groups does your church tend to attract?
- Who are the underserved, unwanted, or unreached groups in your community?

3. Our Community

Organize a Task Force to dig deeper

- Consult with community leaders
- Consult with first responders
- Consult with service agencies
- A “missionary tour” of your community
- Poll the congregation to identify community needs

3. Our Community

Facilitate a group process to evaluate and identify where your outreach will begin

- Assemble 15 to 30 influencers and officers
- Task force reports its findings and you report yours
- The group works in small clusters to evaluate

3. Our Community

Clusters evaluate outreach potential to receptive groups:

- “Which of these groups are most similar to us?”
- “Which of these groups are we passionate about?”
- “What resources tell us this is God’s 'next step' for us?”
- “What do we have to start doing or do differently to reach this group?”
- “Can we do this?”
- “Will we do this?”

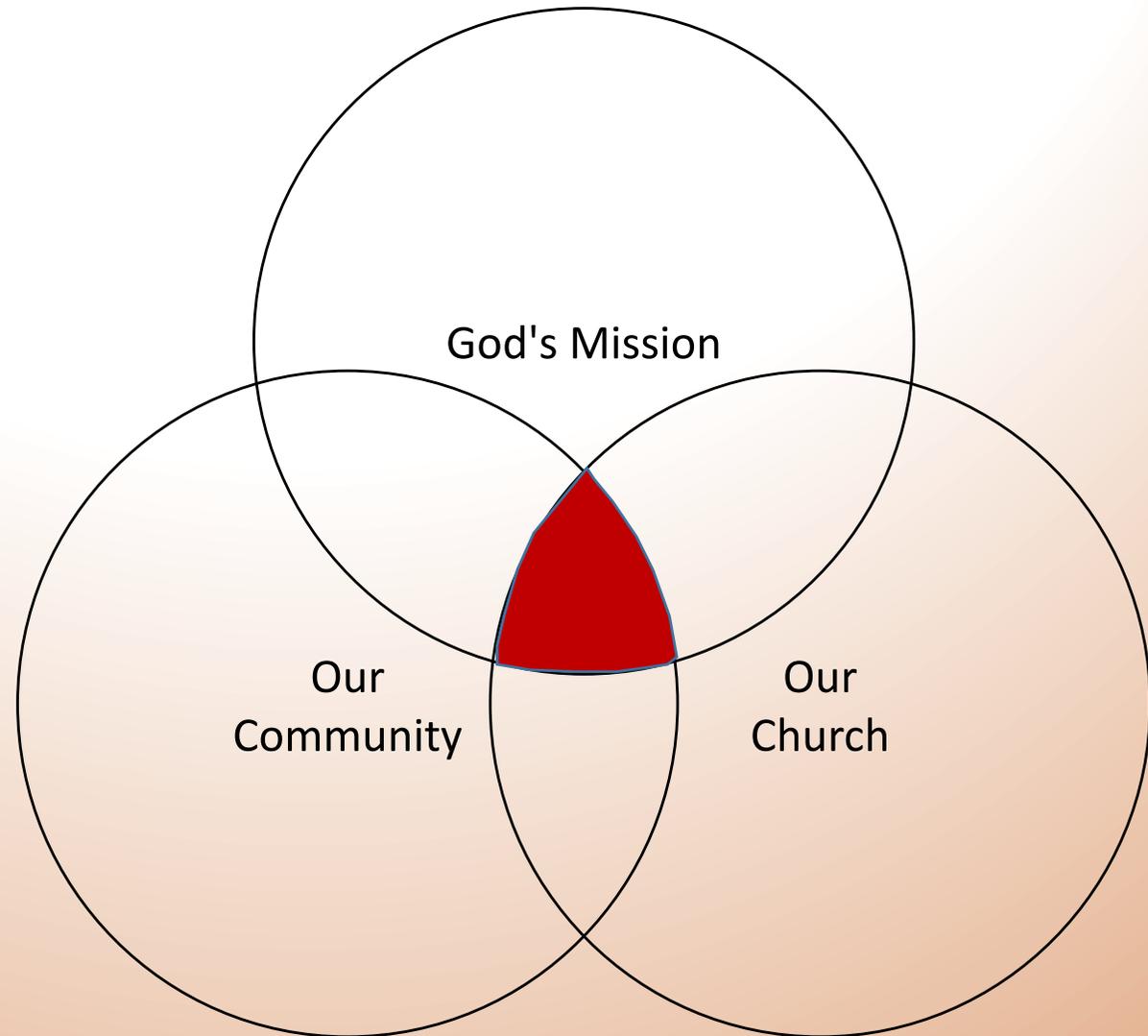
3. Our Community

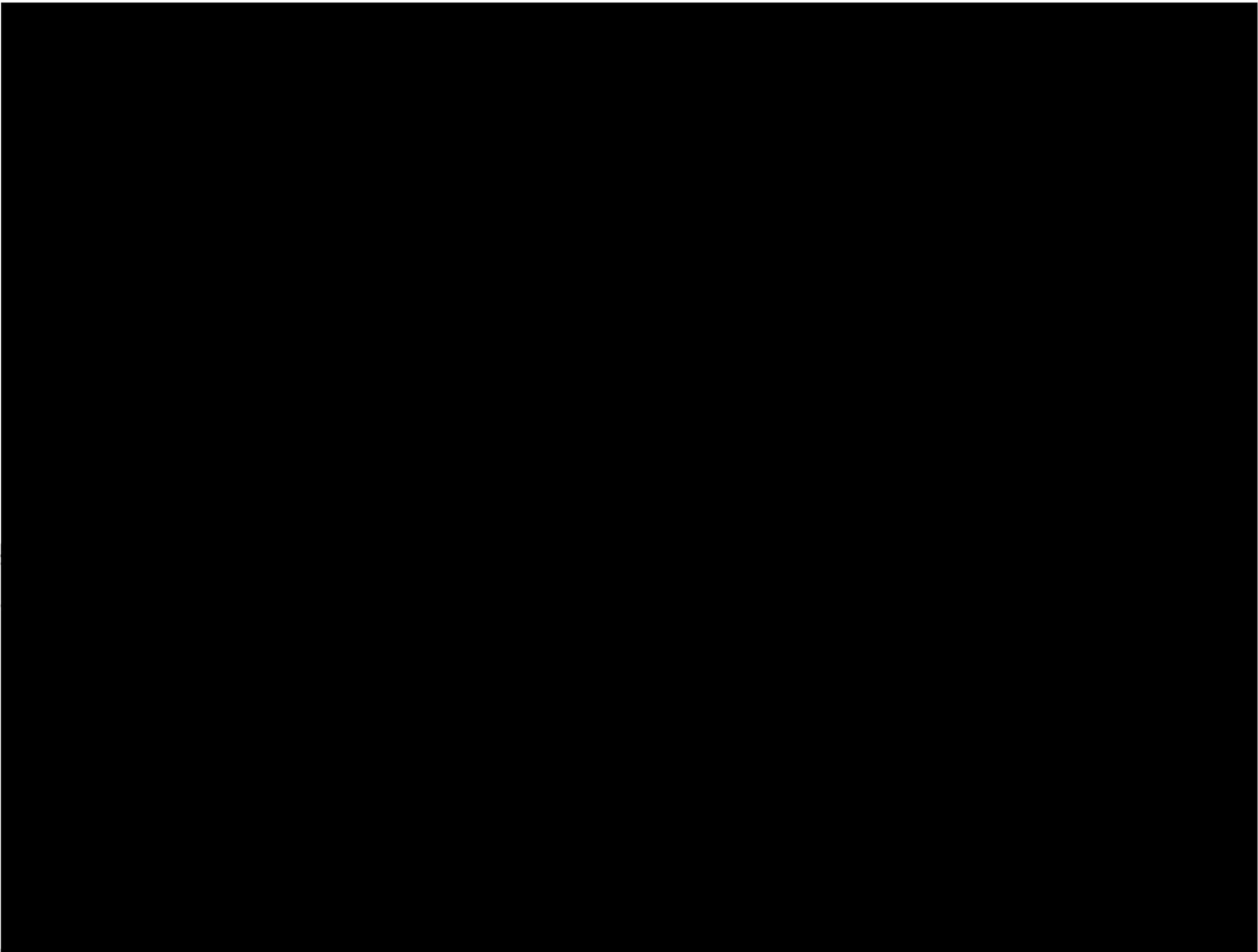
Facilitate a group process to evaluate and identify where your outreach will begin

- Assemble 15 to 30 influencers and officers
- Task force reports its findings and you report yours
- The group works in small clusters to evaluate
- The clusters report back
- Continue to facilitate group discussion until everyone is settled on one or two groups.

3 Elements of Vision

Vision resides where God's mission, receptive people, and church resources overlap.





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