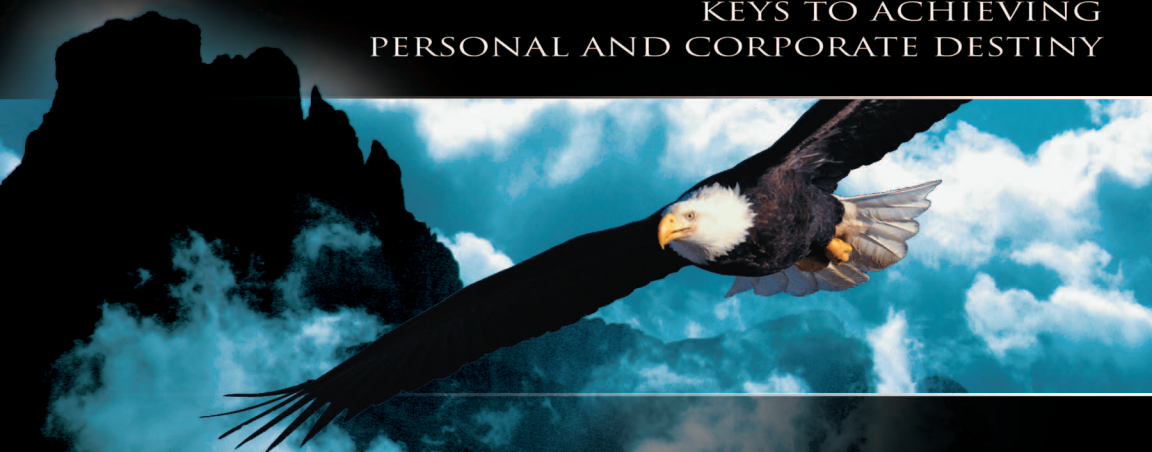


THE PRINCIPLES AND
POWER
OF
VISION

KEYS TO ACHIEVING
PERSONAL AND CORPORATE DESTINY



DR. MYLES MUNROE

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WHITAKER
HOUSE

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THE PRINCIPLES AND POWER OF VISION:
Keys to Achieving Personal and Corporate Destiny
Hardcover Edition

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ISBN-13: 978-0-88368-951-6
ISBN-10: 0-88368-951-0
Printed in the United States of America
© 2003 by Dr. Myles Munroe

Whitaker House
1030 Hunt Valley Circle
New Kensington, PA 15068
website: www.whitakerhouse.com

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Munroe, Myles.

The principles and power of vision : keys to achieving personal and corporate destiny / Myles Munroe.

p. cm.

ISBN 0-88368-951-0 (hardcover)

1. Vocation—Christianity. 2. Success—Religious aspects—Christianity.
3. Self-realization—Religious aspects—Christianity. I. Title.

BV4740.M84 2003

248.4—dc21

2002154348

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Dedication

To the visually impaired among us. May the visions of your hearts replace the limitations of your eyes.

To my spiritual father and mentor, Oral Roberts, whose visionary leadership accomplishments inspired my own.

To Richard Pinder III, my faithful friend and partner in vision. Your faith and belief in me and the vision over the years has encouraged me.

To my executive leadership team at BFMI. Thank you for your visionary support.

To the millions of people in the developing Third-World countries who daily aspire to believe in a vision of a better world. I believe, also.

To my beloved wife Ruth, daughter Charissa, and son Chairon. Thanks for believing.

To the Source of all true visions and the Sustainer of all dreams.

Acknowledgments

This work is the result of a lifetime of learning and development from many mentors, teachers, supporters, advisors, pastors, counselors, friends, and family, who invested their time, energy, and interest in my life. For this, I am eternally grateful.

No achievement in life is without the help of many known and unknown individuals who have contributed to our lives. We are all the sum total of what we have learned from others, and we owe any measure of success to the array of input from so many. Here are just a few who made this work possible:

To my wife Ruth, for your unwavering support.

To Lois Puglisi, my talented and excellent editor. Your relentless pursuit of and patience with me during the inception, incubation, development, and delivery of this work was a tremendous source of motivation and encouragement. You're a writer's dream.

To the members and followers of BFMI who allowed me the privilege of sharing and testing the ideas and principles in this book in our relationship over the years. Without you, my vision would have remained just a dream. I am forever grateful.

To the friends and distinguished members of the Board of Trustees of the International Third World Leaders Association, for your example of visionary leadership over the years. You inspired me to believe in mine.

To my friend, Jim Rill, who helped with the early stages of the development of this work and the conceptual development of the cover design. You are a part of my history. Thank you.

Contents

Preface.....	11
Introduction: Life without Vision	15
PART I: WHAT IS VISION?	20
1. Vision: The Key to Fulfilling Your Life's Purpose.....	21
2. The Source of Vision.....	41
3. Overcoming Obstacles to Vision	63
PART II: TWELVE PRINCIPLES FOR FULFILLING PERSONAL VISION	78
Introduction to Part II.....	79
4. PRINCIPLE 1: Be Directed by a Clear Vision.....	81
5. PRINCIPLE 2: Know Your Potential for Fulfilling Vision	91
6. PRINCIPLE 3: Develop a Concrete Plan for Your Vision	99
7. PRINCIPLE 4: Possess the Passion of Vision	109
8. PRINCIPLE 5: Develop the Faith of Vision	119
9. PRINCIPLE 6: Understand the Process of Vision.....	129
10. PRINCIPLE 7: Set the Priorities of Vision	137
11. PRINCIPLE 8: Recognize People's Influence on Vision	151
12. PRINCIPLE 9: Employ the Provision of Vision	165

13. PRINCIPLE 10: Use Persistence in Achieving the Vision.....	189
14. PRINCIPLE 11: Be Patient in the Fulfillment of Vision.....	203
15. PRINCIPLE 12: Stay Connected to the Source of Vision.....	209
PART III: THE POWER OF VISION	214
16. The Generational Nature of Vision	215
17. How to Write Your Personal Vision Plan	217
Taking Action: Action Steps to Bringing Your Vision into Reality	223
A Word to Third-World Nations	231
About the Author	235

Preface

Vision is the source and hope of life. The greatest gift ever given to mankind is not the gift of sight, but the gift of vision. Sight is a function of the eyes; vision is a function of the heart. "Eyes that look are common, but eyes that see are rare." Nothing noble or noteworthy on earth was ever done without vision. No invention, development, or great feat was ever accomplished without the inspiring power of this mysterious source called vision.

Civilizations were born and developed through the driving power of a visionary leader. The canvas of history is painted with evidence of the creative, tradition-defying force of vision. Social, economic, architectural, medical, scientific, and political achievement and advancements owe their conception and birthing to the power of vision.

Any civilization that is trapped in a time warp of the past, suffocated by the traditions of past experiences and buried in the grave of the glories of past successes, is doomed to die. Vision is the key to unlocking the gates of what was and what is, to propelling us into the land of what could be, and has not yet been. Vision sets you free from the limitations of what the eyes can see and allows you to enter into the liberty of what the heart can feel. It is vision that makes the unseen visible and the unknown possible.

Vision also makes suffering and disappointment bearable. Vision generates hope in the midst of despair and provides endurance in tribulation. Vision inspires the depressed and motivates the discouraged. Without vision, life would be a study

in cyclic frustration within a whirlwind of despair. Vision is the foundation of courage and the fuel of persistence.

It was vision that inspired the first biblical civilization established by the great hunter Nimrod. Vision produced the great Egyptian civilization over four thousand years ago and gave rise to the towering pyramids that still amaze us today. Vision inspired the Greeks to produce philosophy and art that still impact the thinking of our world. Vision motivated the great Roman empire to expand its influence and colonize the known world. Vision inspired the explorers who circumvented the globe and ignited the creation and expansion of many of the nations that we know today. Vision transformed the agricultural world into the industrial age. Vision gave birth to the thousands of inventions in the last two centuries that have transformed our lives.

It was the vision of flight that inspired the Wright brothers to invent the airplane. It was the vision of light that possessed Thomas Edison to invent the lightbulb. It was the vision of a desk-sized computer that motivated Stephen Jobs to invent the desktop computer. It was the vision of giving every person access to people-friendly software that inspired Bill Gates to develop and invent the Microsoft global empire. Vision is the energy of progress.

Our world today is in desperate need of vision. Even a casual look at the prevailing conditions in our twenty-first century world is enough to produce fear, hopelessness, uncertainty, insecurity, emotional and social trauma, depression, disillusionment, discouragement, and despair. The threat of economic collapse, social disintegration, moral decay, religious conflict, political instability, global health epidemics, ethnic cleansing, and the clash of civilizations demands leadership that can see beyond the now into a preferred future, that has the skill to transfer that vision into reality, and that has the courage to inspire us to go there.

The wise king of Israel, Solomon, stated in his book of Proverbs, *"Where there is no vision, the people perish"* (Proverbs 29:18

KJV). These words have been quoted and repeated by millions of people over the years because they capture the significant role vision has in our individual, corporate, and national lives. The full essence of his statement implies that where there is no revelation of the future, people throw off self-control, personal discipline, and restraint. Simply put, vision is the source of personal and corporate discipline.

There are many who have no vision for their lives and wonder how to obtain one. There are others who have a vision, but are stuck in the mud of confusion not knowing what to do next. Then there are those who had a vision but have abandoned it because of discouragement, disillusionment, some measure of failure, or frustration. If you are in one of these categories, *The Principles and Power of Vision* is designed to help you understand the nature of vision, define vision, capture or recapture a personal vision, simplify your vision, and document your vision.

I also hope to help you understand the principles of vision and to provide the practical tools and skills necessary to bring your vision into reality. You were born to achieve something significant, and you were destined to make a difference in your generation. Your life is not a divine experiment, but a project of Providence to fulfill a purpose that your generation needs. This personal purpose is the source of your vision and gives meaning to your life. I therefore encourage you to believe in your daydreams and to reconnect with your passion; your vision awaits your action. Your future is not ahead of you—it lies within you. See beyond your eyes and live for the unseen. Your vision determines your destiny.

Introduction: Life without Vision

In the mid-twentieth century, in Bangkok, Thailand, the government wanted to build a large highway through a village. Yet in the path of the planned road was a Buddhist monastery with a little chapel, so they had to relocate the monastery—including a heavy, eleven-foot clay statue of Buddha—to another place. Using a crane, the government workers moved the monastery in sections. When the workers transported the statue of Buddha to the new location and began to lower it into place, however, the clay on the statue started to crumble and fall off. The people were afraid because this was a precious religious symbol to them, and they didn't want it to be destroyed. Yet the more the workers tried to place the statue, the more it fell apart until, eventually, all the clay was falling off. Suddenly, the workers stared in amazement because, as the clay fell away, something unexpected was revealed: The statue was pure gold underneath. Before the statue was moved, people thought it was worth about fifty thousand dollars. Today, that golden Buddha is worth millions and, because of the story behind it, is visited by hundreds of thousands of people every year.

This story illustrates that what we can see is not necessarily what really is. I believe that many of us are living as clay vessels when, in reality, we are pure gold inside. Our lives do not reflect who we truly are or what we can be. I travel around the world speaking to various groups, and I meet people on every continent who have no sense of personal purpose. I see them struggling with aimless or misdirected lives.

A lack of purpose and unfulfilled potential is epidemic in our world. Yet just as the gold statue was hidden inside the clay one, the “gold” inside each of us is waiting to be revealed. This gold is the dreams we have—or once had—for our lives that are not yet reality, the gifts and talents that we have not yet developed, the purpose for our lives that is not yet fulfilled, the “something” we’ve always wanted to be or do but for some reason have not been able to accomplish.

No matter who you are or what country you live in, you have a personal purpose, for every human being is born with one. God created each person with a unique vision. He has tremendous plans for you that no one else can accomplish. The tragic thing is that many people live their whole lives without ever recognizing their visions.

How do you remove the clay and uncover the gold within you? Your dreams, talents, and desires can be refined in a process of discovering and fulfilling your life’s vision so that the pure gold of your unique and personal gifts to this world can shine forth.

Helping you capture and fulfill your vision is the purpose of this book. My own life’s vision is the transformation of followers into leaders and the maximization of individual potential, and I’m excited about the potential within you right now. Every person is a leader in his or her own vision, because that person is the only one who can imagine, nurture, and fulfill it. What is your vision? What have you always wanted to do? What is your heart’s desire? What is your dream? When you can begin to see your vision clearly, you will be able to fulfill your life’s purpose.

What does it mean to capture the vision for your life? Ted Engstrom, the former president of World Vision, told a story that went something like this: A little girl was on a cruise ship, and she and her father were standing on the deck. It was a beautiful clear day, and the air was crisp and fresh. The little girl, standing on tiptoe, said to her father, “I can’t see anything.” The father picked her up and put her on his shoulders, so that she

was higher than everyone else on the deck and was able to see everything around her. "Daddy!" she exclaimed. "I can see farther than my eyes can look!"

That little girl's statement captures the essence of vision: the ability to see farther than your physical eyes can look—to see not just what is, but also what can be and to make it a reality. Vision is a conception that is inspired by God in the heart of a human. The greatest gift God ever gave humanity is not sight, but vision. Sight is a function of the eyes, but vision is a function of the heart. You can have sight but no vision. Throughout history, progress has been made only by people who have "seen" things that were not yet here. Vision is seeing the future before it comes into being. It is a mental picture of your destiny. God gave humanity the gift of vision so we would not have to live only by what we see. The words *vision* and *revelation* are sometimes used interchangeably. To reveal means to unveil. Something that is unveiled was there all along but could not be seen externally.

Consider this analogy: The destiny of an acorn is a tree. By faith, you can see the tree within the seed. You have a vision of it in your mind's eye because you know the potential in the seed. The same thing is true for you and me. God has given us birth for a purpose, and as far as God is concerned, that purpose is already finished because He has placed within us the potential for fulfilling it. We can see that purpose through faith. To paraphrase the Bible, faith is the substance of things you hope to accomplish, the evidence of things you can see even when others cannot. Only by seeing what is not yet here can you bring something new, creative, and exciting into existence.

For true visionaries, the imaginary world of their visions is more real to them than the concrete reality around them. In fact, a visionary's vision is his reality. There is a story about when Disney World had just opened and had only one ride. Walt Disney was sitting on a bench on the grounds, seeming to just stare into space. One of his workers, who was manicuring the grass, came past him and said, "How are you, sir?" Without

looking at the man, he said, "Fine," and kept on staring. So the man said, "Mr. Disney, what are you doing?" "I'm looking at my mountain," he answered. "I see the mountain right there." Walt told his architects about this mountain. As he talked, they wrote down what he said, and then they drew up the plans. Walt died before Space Mountain was built, so he never saw it constructed. When Space Mountain was dedicated, the governor and the mayor were present, and Walt's widow was also there. One of the young men stood up to introduce her, and said, "It's a pity that Mr. Walt Disney is not here today to see this mountain, but we're glad his wife is here." Mrs. Disney walked up to the podium, looked at the crowd, and said, in effect, "I must correct this young man. Walt already saw the mountain. It is you who are just now seeing it."

The most powerful force in life is the force of vision. A young man did a college paper in his economics class on his vision for overnight mail. The professor took a red pen, gave him a "C," and wrote, "Do not dream of things that cannot happen." The young man left school and started Federal Express. I wonder where the professor is today. Your vision determines your destiny. When you can see what is possible and believe that it can come to pass, it makes you capable of doing the impossible.

At age thirteen, I wrote down my vision for my life. I carried it with me all through junior high and high school. Much of what I'm doing right now was on paper when I was a young teenager. Vision makes you persistent. Once you know what you really want and can "see" it, then, no matter what comes against you, you never give up. Persistence in fulfilling one's life purpose comes from vision. As long as a person can hold on to his vision, then there is always a chance for him to move out of his present circumstances and toward the fulfillment of his purpose.

I believe with all my heart that when you have no vision, you will simply relive the past with its disappointments and failures. Therefore, vision is the key to your future. Think about what happens to some football teams that are losing the game

at halftime. The players go to the locker room and meet with the coach. The coach changes certain game strategies and gives them a pep talk, telling them what they can accomplish. When they come back out, their whole attitude and perspective seems to have changed, and they win the game.

No matter where you are in life, and regardless of how old or young you are, it can be “halftime” for you. You can reassess your life’s strategies and focus on fulfilling your purpose. This book will help you to make the necessary adjustments in your life so you can know how to plan for the future and stop making the same mistakes and decisions that have hindered you in the past. It will answer crucial questions, such as these:

- How can I know what my vision is?
- What do I do if I have multiple interests?
- What are some strategies for overcoming hindrances to my vision?
- How can I set the right priorities for my life?
- What should I do when others criticize my dream?
- How can I make my vision a concrete reality?

By the time you finish this book, you will be able to say, “I can see farther than my eyes can look!” You will be able to see not just what is, but also what can be, so that you can fulfill your personal vision.

—Myles Munroe

Part I

What Is Vision?

Chapter One

Vision: The Key to Fulfilling Your Life's Purpose

GOD HAS PLACED WITHIN EACH PERSON A VISION THAT IS
DESIGNED TO GIVE PURPOSE AND MEANING TO LIFE.

Years ago, during the Christmas season, my wife and I took our children to a large toy store. At the time, my son Chairó was about four years old, and his eyes lit up when he spotted a rocking horse. He climbed on, held tightly to the ears of the horse, and began to rock back and forth. After a few minutes, I tried to get him off, but he became angry. When we were about ready to leave, he was still having a wonderful time on that rocking horse, so we let him continue while we walked through the store one last time and told our daughter it was time to go. When we came back, Chairó was rocking even faster. By then, he had been going for about half an hour, and he was soaking wet with sweat. As I watched him, I felt as if God was saying to me, "That's how most people live. They're working hard, sweating hard, but they're making no real progress in life. They're not going anywhere."

Our world is filled with people who are busy but not ultimately effective or satisfied. They are doing much, expending time and energy, but getting little of value accomplished. Consequently, they spend their lives toiling away but never making any headway.

Where Are You Going in Life?

Consider these statistics of American employees:*

Nearly 50 percent of all U.S. workers feel overwhelmed by a growing number of job tasks and longer working hours.

—Families and Work Institute, 2001

Eighty-eight percent of employees say they have a hard time juggling work and life.

—Aon Consulting, 2000

Only 48 percent of workers aged 35–44 are satisfied with their jobs, down from nearly 61 percent in 1995. Older workers, aged 55–64, also express a low level of satisfaction. Only about 48 percent say they are satisfied.

—Conference Board, 2002

In all income areas, satisfaction levels have fallen since 1995.

—Conference Board, 2002

These statistics show that a number of people in the United States are struggling with job and life satisfaction issues. It's disheartening to work hard and not receive satisfaction and fulfillment from your work. What about your own life? What are you using your precious energy on? What are you accomplishing? Do you get up every day with a sense of anticipation and meaning because you know you're doing what you were born to do? Do you feel that your work is a match for your abilities and personality? Or are you pouring your life into your job without feeling fulfilled or having much to show for it? Have you been spending your life helping to make someone else rich while you are left with little or nothing? Have you secretly thought you were meant to do something significant in life, but you don't know what it is?

One of the dilemmas of contemporary society seems to be a lack of meaningfulness and purpose in everyday life. Some people are acutely aware that they aren't fulfilling their potential. They

* Source: <<http://www.fishervista.com/statistics.htm>> (31 October 2002)

dread Mondays and live for the weekends because they hate their work. Their whole lives seem centered around the only two days they are free from the trapped feeling they experience at work. They long to pursue their own interests and talents. In *Waiting for the Weekend*, author Witold Rybczynski wrote,

For many people weekend free time has become not a chance to escape work but a chance to create work that is more meaningful—to work at recreation—in order to realize the personal satisfactions that the workplace no longer offers.*

Other people are fairly content with their lives, but they have a vague sense that there should be more significance to life than they are experiencing. Still others live on a surface level, pursuing a series of emotional highs that leave them empty and constantly searching for the next thrill that might satisfy them. Neither of these groups of people realizes that hidden within them is the key to living a more fulfilling life than they ever imagined.

Do you know why you exist?

Whether they are satisfied or dissatisfied with their lives, the eventual goal of most people is retirement. Yet were we born just to go through certain life rituals—find a job, get married, buy a house, raise children, change jobs or careers, retire—and then die? Or is there more to life?

No Reason for Living

If you ask people, “Why do you exist?” most cannot tell you. They can’t explain their purpose in the world. They have no vision for their lives.

Do you have a sense of personal purpose? Do you know why you were born? Does your purpose give you a passion for

* Witold Rybczynski, “Waiting for the Weekend,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, August 1991. <<http://theatlantic.com/issues/91aug/rybczynski-p2.htm>> (31 October 2002)