

COMMITMENT #2

A STRONG CHURCH *CONSISTENTLY* REINFORCES A CLEAR THEOLOGICAL VISION THROUGHOUT THE CULTURE.

So what is a theological vision? It is a faithful restatement of the gospel with rich implications for life, ministry, and mission in a type of culture at a moment in history. —Timothy Keller

DEFINITION

Strong churches reinforce their theological vision in every aspect of their life together. This means the very systems and structures of the church are theologically reflective and intentional towards clarifying the gospel and forming people in Christ. Strong churches have the Triune God as their operating center and prioritize worship and discipleship as a way of life. This looks like theologically driven new member classes, sermon series, group curriculum, celebrated stories, corrected errors, and a host of other activities that deepen the church in Christ's image and mission. Creative repetition is critical in the formation of a distinct church that is true to her fidelities of right worship and effective discipleship.

QUOTES TO PONDER...

Culture eats values for lunch. —Peter Drucker

Behavior from important people in an organization, contrary to the vision, overwhelms all other forms of communication. —John Kotter

You've got to think about the big things while you're doing small things, so that all the small things go in the right direction. —Alvin Toffler

Every life consists of a few themes. —C. S. Lewis

[V]ision without systems thinking ends up painting lovely pictures of the future with no deep understanding of the forces that must be mastered to move from here to there. —Peter M. Senge

BIBLE STUDY

Read Leviticus 23:1-44.

God called for the festivals to be “a lasting ordinance for the generations to come, wherever you live” (14b). Why do you think God required Israel to maintain His festivals?



How do you imagine people were formed or reformed by the annual repetition of these festivals?

How did forgetfulness and remembrance play out Israel's salvation history with God?

How does the Lord's Supper relate to the OT festivals? Do you believe the church is any more or less prone to forget the faithfulness of God in our time?

QUESTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

How clear is your overall theological vision and philosophy of ministry among your leadership core? How clear is it for the average member of your church?

Has your leadership core defined on paper your church's answer to Lencioni's six questions of organization clarity? (Why do we exist? How do we behave? What do we do? How will we succeed? What is most important, right now? Who must do what?) When? Have you revised previous year's answers to reflect this year's reality?

Are all of your elders (and their wives), deacons, and leaders faithfully embodying your key distinctives and vision as a church? What can you celebrate in this regard? Where might you each press into greater faithfulness as examples to the church?

How are you reinforcing your theological vision and philosophy of ministry on a regular basis? Do you have any "festivals" or "rituals" that form and reform a gospel-centered theological vision for your people? What is an evidence of strength here? Where do you think there is room for growth?



What assimilation processes are in place for new members and leaders in your church (new members on-boarding, membership classes, leader training, etc.) to reinforce your theological vision?

Describe the average church member's understanding of what your church is all about. What is evidence of strength here? Where do you think there is room for growth?

Reflect on Appendix II: IV Dripping Culture. Are you dripping culture in each of the areas listed: Content, Conversations, Celebration, and Correction?

COMMITTED TO ACTION

What's one thing you or your team could do this week to strengthen this area?

What would it take to see this commitment strengthened over the next year?

