

Double Vision Approved by the GLD Board 9/14/2007

Now he had them go through Samaria....

Do not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest' (John 4:4,35)

*Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talents of money, and to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained **five more**. So also, the one with the two talents gained **two more**. But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money (Matthew 25:14-18).*

“Double Vision” is an *application* of the visionary leadership of Jesus in John 4 to see “the harvest in Samaria” and the parable of the talents in Matthew 25 to work together to double our **size** and Samaritan **service** in the next chapter of ministry.

“Double Vision” is a proposal for GLD churches to **pray, preach, and partner** as we trust God to double the GLD from 50,000 (52,817) precious people in 2007 to 100,000 people and to double each church’s resource allocation to their Samaria.

- **For example**, churches with 1-100 precious people working with God to grow to 2-200 people with a new church service for recent immigrants.
- Churches with 200 working with God to plant a daughter church of 200.
- Churches with 400 working with God to grow to 800 by focusing on reaching small children and single mothers in our Jerusalem & Samaria.
- Churches with 800 working with God to multi-site for 1,600 people.

It is “double vision” because we will emphasize inward care **and** outward focus, prayer **and** preaching, evangelism **and** edification, adults **and** children, Jerusalem **and** Samaria, faithfulness **and** fruitfulness, quantitative **and** qualitative measurements. How can we work together to double in size **and** service?

Prayer

“And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it” (John 14:13-14). “When mission moves forward by prayer, it magnifies the power of God. When it moves by human management, it magnifies man” (John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad*: 67). Let’s pray at **every level** of the GLD for God to give us a double portion. Let’s **prayer walk** asking God to send forth laborers into his harvest. Let’s pray for one hour on “**first Thursdays**” for our movement and our greatest church need. Those that are able can meet from 4-5 PM on this “first Thursday” at TIU to pray together and have a dinner conversation from 5-7 PM discussing an agreed “book of the month” on ministry of prayer and the Word.

Preaching

“Until I come, devote yourself to preaching and to teaching” (1 Timothy 4:13) ...so that everyone may see your progress.” (1 Timothy 4:15) Colin Smith, the preaching pastor of the Arlington Heights EFC, has agreed to provide practical training in Transformational Preaching for pastors @ AHEFC. This training begins on Thursday, January 31, 2008 and continues for six consecutive weeks on the book of 1 Thessalonians. We are praying and preparing for 30 pastors.

Partnership

“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others” (2 Timothy 2:2). Healthy churches that have doubled in size and in service can encourage other churches on the path. Regional Leadership Teams of the GLD will identify and mobilize “trustworthy” churches in their region to partner with other churches.

GLD superintendents and GLD regional leadership teams will care for GLD churches that are struggling and are not ready for “Double Vision”. **EFC of Naperville** has agreed to be a prototype for the first go at “Double Vision.”

- “Double Vision” learning community meets bi-monthly @ **EFCN** on Saturday from 9 AM-Noon-November 17, January 26, March 29, and May 17, 2008.
- **Vision**-Rick Thompson, Dale Hummel, Conrad Lowe, and GLD leaders Communicating a compelling vision for your church (with examples)
- **Huddles**-GLD Coaches lead church teams in their area of harvest emphasis in learning, prayer, strategy, plans, measurements, and accountability. Some **examples** of huddle groups with a coach include:
 - **Children** The harvest fields of families with young children
 - **Celebration** The harvest by new and improved worship services
 - **Call to Samaria** The harvest fields of Hispanics in your Samaria
 - **Church Multiplication** The harvest by extension sites & c plant
 - **Cells** The harvest fields of multiplying small groups
- **Skills**-GLD leaders train on skills applicable to every church (for example):
 - Congregational Life Cycle and “S” Curve Changes
 - Opening the Front Door of your church
 - Closing the Back Door of your church
 - Building Effective Systems in your church
- The participating “Double Vision” churches will send at least the **pastor** (preferably the senior pastor) **and an elder** (preferably the chairman). (The entire pastoral staff and the entire elder board can come!)
- There will be no cost for GLD church plants, ethnic churches and GLD churches that have a plan to move toward a fair share of **1.25%** to the GLD. All other churches are asked to bring a check for \$100 made out to the GLD to each Saturday session they actually attend (one check per church). **Come and see for free** on November 17, 2007 @ EFCN!

Will this discourage churches that are in difficult places or seasons?

Partnering together, praying together, and preaching Christ together can strengthen and encourage churches. "Double Vision" is intended to give hope to every church as we practice interdependence among our churches to accomplish the mission of God to make, mature and multiply disciples among all people.

I know that when I was a pastor I really wanted to see our church grow **in every way** and I also felt like the only way I could get help was to go to TEDS and do a Doctor of Ministry. By God's grace, I did that from 1995-2001. This is the next step for some pastors. One problem with my Doctor of Ministry experience was that I grew in the wonderful learning community context of the Doctor of Ministry program, but my leaders did not share my experience. A gap in understanding between us grew more and more acute. At the heart of "Double Vision" is tapping into a deep desire in appointed leaders of the church to see the size of the church grow, the service of their church expand, and to offer healthy direction to this desire through prayer and church-based partners.

We know that some of our churches are in a season of waiting for God to provide a new pastor or that they are struggling with a serious problem and our regional superintendents and regional leadership teams stand ready to serve.

Why the emphasis upon numbers and church size?

First, please notice that we are emphasizing size and service, evangelism and edification, prayer and partnering, member care and mission, growth and health, qualitative and quantitative measurements, and faithfulness and fruitfulness, all to the glory of God. In pondering the parable of the talents of money in Matthew 25:14-18, we asked, "what are the 'talents' entrusted to us?"

The GLD Board understands that a solid application is that the "talents" entrusted to us in the GLD are the precious people that attend an Evangelical Free Church and the resources that God has entrusted to us to be "servants" in the harvest field. "Double Vision" is a proposal of how we can work together to return to the Lord double what he has entrusted to us in the size of our church and in the service to our community measured by our resource allocation.

People who repented and believed and were added to the church are described in numerical form (Acts 2:41, 47), the people involved in the growing church of Jerusalem are described in numerical terms (Acts 4:4 and 5:14), the description of continued growth and progress of the church is described in numerical terms (Acts 6:1), and in Antioch the description of the wonderful beginning of the church is described in numerical terms of a great number of people turning to the Lord. And then, the church of Antioch was challenged by God's prophet to give of their resources to those in need in their "Samaria" by sending a gift to the poor in Jerusalem.

Is this surrender to the idolatry of consumerism in our churches?

Anything other than God himself can become an idol. The measure of maturity is Christ and maturity in a church will be expressed in faith, hope and love that cannot be reduced to statistics. At the same time, statistics are given in the Scriptures and used in the book of Acts to describe progress. We need to assess quantity and quality. Our movement has invested heavily in quantitative measurements like Natural Church Development and the 10 Leading Indicators (EFCA) and we will make this part of "Double Vision" training. The first indicator of health is the centrality of God's Word and to this end Arlington Heights Evangelical Free Church will host 6 weeks of training in *Transformational Preaching* beginning January 31, 2008. Preaching must **confront our idolatries** or it is not biblical and it will not transform. This will be our continuing emphasis.

We need to be careful with measurements. We can easily judge by outward appearance and compare ourselves with ourselves and be "without understanding" (2 Corinthians 10:12). What "Double Vision" seeks is an application of the spirit of Galatians 6:4: "Each one should test his own actions."

One of the responsibilities of a leader is to "climb up the tree" and look into the future asking the question, "Lord, where do you want us to go next?" Then, all the leaders must "climb up the tree" and see if they all see the same picture.

The GLD "climbed up the tree" and pursued God's purposes reflected in our mission and vision statements and the implementation of regionalization with regional superintendents and regional leadership teams over the last ten years. We are excited about our progress in this area with our regional superintendents and our regional leadership teams of God called servants to serve the treasure of thousands of disciples of Jesus Christ in our GLD churches and our mission field.

As we "climb the tree" in 2007, we see the need for regionalization **and** a central organizing theme for the GLD. In our view, our regional leadership teams need to continue to develop ways to serve their churches and at the same time work together on a central strategy that brings our regions and our churches together in pursuit of worthy goals interdependently to accomplish something only God can do in advancing the Great Commission to the glory of our God.

In our June 2007 Staff and Board meetings we took an honest look at where we are in an organizational life cycle. One measure is that 80% of the churches in America are either on a plateau or declining. We rejoice that 50% of our GLD churches have grown by at least one person in the past 10 years, but we cannot be satisfied with around 50% of our churches not growing in worship attendance over the last ten years. Our concrete vision for the future addresses this present reality. While preserving our past progress in the development of our purposes and programs, the GLD Board approved on September 14, 2007, our new central organizing strategy called, "Double Vision."