

Rick Warren & Vision Casting

The use of the term "visioning" and all of its variants is part and parcel of the futurists' method of operating. They believe that "vision casting" is a way to transform Earth's future and man's destiny. Just before his death, Willis Harman (see previous posts) served as co-editor for *The New Business of Business: Sharing Responsibility for a Positive Global Future*, a publication of his World Business Academy (Berrett-Koehler Pub., 1997). Part Five of the book, entitled "Discovering the Spiritual Dimension of Business," details how to integrate spirituality (not Christian!) with the business domain. An example of this is given in a chapter by Taoist Diana Whitney, "Spirituality as an Organizing Principle," in which she explains "visioning."

"Shared **vision** and common values are said to create organization meaning and to provide the impetus for organizational change. Leaders at all levels of the organization are guided to inspire (**to fill with spirit**) rather than to motivate. **Visionary leadership**, . . . is said to make the difference between successful and unsuccessful organization change. '**Visioning**,' or conversationally projecting the organization into the **future**, and creating **alignment** among organizational members about the desired future are essential organizing endeavors." (p. 193-194) [emphasis added]

This type of language has entered evangelicalism like a flood. It came into the church via the business gurus and consultants. Churches have been feeling pressure to define their "mission, vision, and values." Pastors have been told they should strive to become "visionary" leaders. Rick Warren holds himself up as an example. He wrote:

"I know my leadership style. I am a big-picture, **vision-casting** leader. . . . There is nothing inherently right or wrong about being a **vision-casting** leader. It is simply the way God wired me."

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"Creative Visualization" is said to be the "process of using mental images in order to acquire what one desires or produce changes in one's attitude, thus creating one's own reality. . . ." according to the *Seeker's Handbook*, an occult dictionary by John Lash (Harmony Books, 1990). Envisioning is being widely used by neoevangelical leaders, both individually and corporately, as a way to "name it and claim it," "declare" something into existence (United States Strategic Prayer Network), or bring about desired

transformative results. In a recent interview in the *New Yorker* magazine, Rick Warren provides a poignant example of this practice:

"Warren's publishers came to see him at Saddleback, and sat on the long leather couch in his office, and talked about their ideas for the book. 'You guys don't understand.' Warren told them. 'This is a hundred-million-copy book.' Warren remembers stunned silence: 'Their jaws dropped.' But now, nearly three years after its publication, *The Purpose-Driven Life* has sold twenty-three million copies. It is among the best-selling nonfiction hardcover books in American history. Neither the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, nor the *Washington Post* has reviewed it. Warren's own publisher didn't see it coming. Only Warren had faith. 'The best of the evangelical tradition is that you don't plan your way forward -- you **prophecy** your way forward,' the theologian Leonard Sweet says. '**Rick's prophesying his way forward.**'" (Malcolm Gladwell, "The Cellular Church," 9/12/05) [emphasis added]

The Truth:

*"Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and **not we ourselves**;"* (Psalm 100:3a)

Christians are being deceived into thinking that "visioning" processes such as these are necessary to bring about the Kingdom of God. Nothing could be further than the truth!

"I know of no scriptural requirement that our visualization is necessary to fulfill Jesus' prayer 'Thy Kingdom Come.' His Kingdom will come with or without our visualization. But it could well be that our visualization -- deliberate disobedience of God's prohibition against sorcery -- could prevent us from entering that Kingdom!" (Constance Cumbey, *A Planned Deception*, 1985, pp. 179-180)

*"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, **and sorcerers**, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."* (Revelation 22:14-15)

-Discernment Research Group