

# The Blueprint for a Vision Casting, Biblically Vacuous Message

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*“Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures. You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.” - 2Peter 3: 14-18 (ESV)*

*“And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ,” - Philippians 1: 9-10 (ESV)*

Those who have been paying attention to "churchianity" for several decades now have witnessed the demonic shift in church culture. A shift in how "church is done." This path accelerated with the publishing of the Purpose Driven Church, which most new pastors are trained on. The result flips the Gospel on its ear as the shepherd is traded in for a vision casting CEO. Instead of tending to the sheep, his job is to "grow" his individual church under the ruse that he is building the kingdom. There are discernible patterns however within this model that are easy to spot if you are inclined to not be deceived. Patterns that if we detect give us our clue to run as fast as possible. Today I present to you a new seeker friendly pastor to review, Pete Wilson:

<http://crosspoint.tv/media/house-party>

The sermon we are looking at is the opening in this series entitled, the Invitation. Pete Wilson is the prototypical seeker friendly, vision casting pastor. Good looking, young, energetic and always trying to be hip and relevant. In and of themselves these are not bad things. I do not know Pete Wilson. He seems like a very likable fellow. I can give him the benefit of the doubt when it comes to intent. After all, he has been taught this way of doing church and has fooled himself into believing that because he has seen his church grow into a multi site mega church that somehow "God" is responsible. Once we dissect the preaching though we will see that God could not possibly be involved because He would not bless what goes against His Word.

Let's progress through the sermon by highlighting the typical aspects of a vision casting, yet biblically empty sermon.

**1) Hipster Relevance** - sermon time from this perspective is not meant to properly exegete the Word of God for His people. The majority of seeker friendly, purpose driven pastors will readily admit that they gear their church for the unsaved. It is always couched in evangelistic sounding Christianese like, "we have to save as many for Jesus as we can" or "It's not all about you"; which is actually the opening line from the Purpose Driven Life book. The truth however biblically is the opposite:

*And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul,*

*and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. - Acts 2: 42-47 (ESV)*

The truth is that the church is intended for the saved. It is intended for the shepherd to feed and care for the flock. Yes, we should encourage the lost to come. Not so they can have their ears tickled but so they can hear the Gospel. God decides to add to the number of the fellowship; not the schemes of man. But the seeker friendly pastor, such as Mr. Wilson, think it is HIS job to grow the church and the only way to do that is to market the church to people who do not already attend, which would be the unsaved. That is why we see smoke machines, disco lights, carnal music, and messages about our "purpose" and how great we are. Remember, the object is not to save them. It is to convince them to come back. To this end there are always attempts to be overly hipster and relevant to the lost.

Most seeker friendly pastors will outright admit it. Just look at the title of the series Wilson is preaching! "House Party." In fact, the first ten minutes of this 30 minute message is all about how much we all like to party. That is the hook. Something bold and audacious. Something goats would be surprised to hear in a church.

That is why you see sermon series about improving your sex life and others about how much "church sucks." Of course once you draw them in you must "Jesusfy" the irreverent hook. Wilson starts his sermon by exclaiming that Jesus has called us to have this house party every single weekend. No He has not Pete. Anything to draw them in.

2) Vilify Biblical knowledge to push an agenda of vague piety - we have all seen it a hundred times. We may have even heard it in our own churches. God is love. Love is God. Love, love, love. The problem is that it is a carnal understanding of love because a biblical understanding of love can never be separated from the truth and the truth is His Word. I picked two verses for our key verses today to highlight this. There were

plenty of others I could have chosen. In the verses from Peter, we see the acknowledgement that the ignorant and unstable twist the harder things of God and His Word. Therefore should we all hold hands and pray for wisdom? No. Should we just love each other and hope for the best? No. We are instructed to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ so that we may remain stable and not be carried away with the error of lawless people.

The second set shows us a prayer Paul has for the members of the church at Philippi. He mentions love. There is no doubt that love is a central part of the Gospel. For God so loved the world that He sent Jesus. But to divorce it from knowledge is what the world does. Paul prays that their love abounds more and more with knowledge and all discernment! Love abounding separately from knowledge and discernment is impure. It will be guided by our flesh and our deceitful hearts. Our duty is not to merely love. It is to approve what is excellent by growing in our knowledge of who Jesus is. Yet Wilson enters this portion of the sermon with a frightening admission about himself and his church:

*"We're trying to figure out what this following Jesus is really all about."  
Pete Wilson*

It sounds so hip. It sounds so relatable. Yet I tell you beloved if you ever hear a pastor utter such nonsense you need to run out of that church as fast as you can. If the pastor cannot figure out what following Jesus is all about then I assume he is not reading the Word:

*Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. - Matthew 16: 24 (ESV)*

Now I know that picking up your cross doesn't do well in the focus groups mega churches run. I understand that denying ourselves is not seeker friendly. It doesn't matter. Our job is not to entertain goats. It is to tend to sheep. Wilson actually goes on to preach that spiritual maturity is not achieved through biblical literacy. I kid you not. As proof he offers up how much Jesus railed against the Pharisees, who knew it all about Scripture. What an inane comparison. The problem with the Pharisees is not that they knew too much Scripture. It was that they ignored the heart of it. They strained gnats while swallowing camels. They tithed religiously after devouring widows homes. Can you make

the argument that they had knowledge without love? Sure; but that does not mean that the answer is love without knowledge. The first is ignorant cruelty but the latter is ignorant platitudes. They are both ignorant. One tears down while the other builds up falsely. To wrap up his point here, Wilson has a cute saying. He believes that the problem in the church is that we are educated beyond our obedience. What? So the answer is to stop educating or to start obeying?

The seeker friendly, purpose driven answer is to stop educating. We see this all the time in different manifestations. Perry Noble once preached that the people who want to go deeper into the word in his church were "jackasses." David Hughes once preached that those who want sound doctrine are the "excrement" in the body of Christ. It is the same message. You don't need more bible, you just need more love. "Aww" nonsense. The fact is that the church has never been more biblically illiterate than it is today, which is why there is such a proliferation of false teaching being blindly accepted.

**3) Focus on relationship with Jesus but in worldly terms** - it is true that our Christian faith is about us being in relationship with Christ. The problem in the seeker friendly, purpose driven realm is they turn this into a relationship based on our inherent carnality. For the youth the message is usually about Jesus being our buddy or for girls, our boyfriend. Much of modern "worship" music could be easily confused with secular love songs. Moving past that however, the overall makeup of the relationship sold in these churches is for a Jesus that simply does not exist. Remember, the game is not saving the person but convincing them to come back to your church. During the altar call of this message, Pete Wilson uses a familiar refrain from the seeker driven world. He does not explore our nature as sinners and in fact offers only lip service to it by suggesting that "maybe" we have patterns of sin in our life. Maybe? Are there people who need Jesus who do not have patterns of sin in their life? The refrain however, is that he encourages people "explore what this relationship with Jesus means." Beloved, we cannot explore Jesus. He is not a parcel of land. I saw a mega church pastor offer to unbelievers to "try Jesus out." Go ahead, give Him a few months and see if you are not satisfied. As if He were a new car you could test drive. What they really want is for you to try their church out. How do I know this? Because you cannot try Jesus out. You either repent and are

forgiven or you do not and are not. Without being saved, there is no indwelt Holy Spirit to lead you into all truth. Thus as you come back to the false church week after week the things of God are still foolishness to you.

Jesus is not your friend if He is not first your Lord. That is the true relationship. In Scripture we see Jesus almost exasperated asking why people bother to call Him Lord if they refuse to do what He says. Wilson based this sermon off of the calling of Matthew because Jesus commanded him "follow me." But Wilson reads into the text that Matthew wanted to try Jesus out. That he must not have been satisfied with his life and was wondering if there was more. Then he deftly shifts to the crowd and asks them if they too are wondering if there is more and that maybe they too should try Jesus out. Of course none of this is actually biblical because Wilson created the portions where he seemingly knows what Matthew is thinking. Matthew did not choose to try Jesus out. He left everything and followed Him. Oh that pesky Bible again.

**4) Demonize anyone who would exercise righteous judgment** - lastly, we must realize that most of these false teachings can be easily discerned and rebuked. As such, there is routinely built into these sermons stern words about judging others. Wilson again sounds so pious when he states that he does not have the time to judge others because his job is just to follow Jesus. While this sounds all spiritual it is of course wildly unbiblical. We are our brother's keeper. We are to judge righteously. We are to help our brother with the speck in his eye. The purposed driven, seeker friendly model does not care if part of the body is diseased. Paul taught the opposite:

*"It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you."* - 1Corinthians 5: 1-2 (ESV)

*"But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler--not even to eat with such a one. For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? God judges those outside. "Purge the evil person from among you." 1Corinthians 5: 11-13 (ESV)*

This is Paul instructing the church at Corinth to expel a brother who refused to repent of a sin he was committing by sleeping with his father's wife. It says we are not associate with anyone who calls themselves our brother yet is an idolater, reviler, drunkard or swindler. I can hear the falsely taught already - Judge not! I guess Paul was just devoid of the true love a Christian should have. No beloved. The truth is simpler.

Love is to point out the sin we see in our brother. Gently but towards restoration. It is not love to hold someone's hand while they are driving off a cliff and tell them everything is going to be OK. When I see people sitting under such gross deception my fear is for their eternal life. For their salvation. People who sit under this type of deception think they can lease Jesus. Just make your monthly tithe *payment* and they have bought their way into heaven. Unfortunately the Bible says they have not.

I know. The Bible is for legalists who don't have the love of God in them. Except the funny thing is God wrote the Bible and He is love. Wilson at one point actually said that nowhere in the New Testament does Jesus say that spiritual maturity or growth is about knowledge. This is often a tact used by preachers such as this. To claim the absence of something indicates a doctrinal position that does not exist. Except the key verses show that knowledge is intricately intertwined with maturity and growth and Jesus wrote the entire Bible. To trade in sound biblical understanding for some carnal false love paradigm may be seeker friendly. It may drive you to a purpose. It will not save you though and isn't that what this is supposed to be all about?