

# Living Your Legacy

Discovering your family's vision statement



*weave*

The average adult in the US makes 3,000 decisions a day. The majority of those decisions are small—what chair you will sit in, what you will eat, which lane you will drive in—but others have more significance. When combined, it is the daily choices that determine our path and shape who we will become.

Why do companies spend months creating vision statements, pouring over lines of text, putting energy and thought into every single word and punctuation mark? They realize that by knowing a desired end goal, they can better make the decisions necessary to get there. That vision statement will serve as a vital part of the decision-filtering process. It will be the point of origin employees will always return to, reminding them of who they are, what they do and why they do it. Companies who consistently stay aligned with their vision statement are more likely to thrive.

What about you? What guides you in the 3,000-plus decisions you make every day, particularly the ones that effect the development and growth of your children? If you want certain things for your sons and daughters, you must have a plan to get them there. Building a family vision statement is a first step in doing so.

*Vision statements* are as unique as the families who create them.

Here are some of the benefits of creating and living out a family vision statement:

- **Sense of identity:** provides a clear understanding of who you are, what you value, how you operate, and who you serve
- **Sense of purpose:** defines what compels and motivates you
- **Sense of priority:** creates a filter by which to evaluate opportunities, giving you the confidence to embrace some and say “no” to others
- **Sense of direction:** sets a course that keeps you on track and serves as a tool to direct you when times get tough
- **Sense of unity:** fosters a shared commitment and spirit of cooperation within the family unit
- **Sense of influence:** clarifies the way that God has uniquely created and blessed your family to impact the world
- **Sense of legacy:** acknowledges the long-range impact of your current obedience and faithfulness to God on upcoming generations

# Creating your own family vision statement:

- 1. Gather:** Family members will be more likely to embrace a vision statement if everyone has a part in creating it. Work with your spouse and children as you create. Begin with prayer. Ask God for wisdom and guidance as to the direction He desires your family to take.
- 2. Discuss:** Brainstorm ideas, making sure everyone has the chance to share his thoughts. Get all ideas out on the table without judging. Here are some broad discussion questions that will clarify values and bring unspoken ones into the open.
  - What makes our family uniquely us?
  - What do we value most? What are our priorities?
  - How is our family gifted and blessed to bless others—from our community to the nations?
  - What do we want to say about our family now? In 5 years? 10? 30?
- 3. Craft:** As you write your vision statement, keep these things in mind.
  - Create statements that are broad enough to apply to every family member.
  - Determine the arenas in which God is guiding (and *not* guiding) you to fulfill your unique family mission.

- Create statements that will apply as your family grows and goes through different life stages.
- Include statements with both an inward focus (family) and an outward focus (friends, neighbors, world).
- Add a phrase that acknowledges the crucial role of God in empowering your family to live out the vision statement. You may wish to include a Bible verse.

**4. Implement:** When fleshed out in actions, your vision statement moves from a list of hopes and dreams to a practical tool that informs those 3,000 daily decisions, enabling you to live out God's unique purposes for your family.

- Go over the final version with your family. Explain what each part means, answer questions, and give examples.
- Instill it in your children's hearts and lives by talking about aspects of it throughout the year as situations arise. Help them practice using it to filter personal decisions.
- Display it in a prominent place in your home as a reminder to family members and a testimony to visitors.

**5. Revisit:** Your family vision statement is not set in stone. To be effective, it needs to grow and change with how God is directing you. Review it periodically with your family to evaluate your progress. Update, revise, and add to as needed.

## Examples:



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## Pattons

By the grace of God, the Patton family desires to wholeheartedly love God and others and strives to serve God with the gifts He has given us, emphasizing the remaining task of proclaiming God's love to all peoples of the earth. 1 Chronicles 16:23-36

## We value:

- **Love** – Loving God, family, and others as Christ has loved us. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8
- **Growth** – Growing ourselves along with others in wisdom, maturity, and righteousness. 2 Timothy 2:2
- **Mobilization** – Mobilizing ourselves and others to be strategic with our lives for God's glory. Romans 10:14-15
- **Initiative** – Taking initiative when good work needs to be done. Galatians 6:9

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## Smiths

We are the Smith family. Jesus Christ is our leader and King.




We seek to honor Him with our thoughts, actions, and words.

We will be known as a people of character, courage, and commitment. Our mission is to be vessels used by God to produce disciples around the world. Our purpose is to bring Him glory. Amen.



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