
An Exposition of the Mission & Vision of the Free Church

Introduction

The following is an explanation of our new Mission and Vision statements. Because of our desire to make the Mission and Vision concise and memorable, we thought it valuable to offer a brief explanation of each.

Mission

Magnifying Christ by Making Disciples of Christ

The mission statement is an effort to capture the ultimate purpose of the church. Its goal is to answer the question: Why does the church exist? There are two essential components in the answer.

First, God created all things for His glory (Isa 43:7; Col 1:16; Rom 11:36). All things are intended to evidence God's greatness because God is worthy to be exalted and worshipped above all things (Rev 4:11). Because this is the ultimate purpose for all things, it is also the ultimate purpose of the church: to give glory to God. We have expressed this truth as "Magnifying Christ." "Magnify" is a biblical word that is often used for making much of or exalting God.

We specify magnifying "Christ," because He is our access to the eternal Godhead, the way through which we approach God. (John 14:6; Eph 2:13, 18; Rom 5:10). Christ points us to the whole Trinity.

The second statement, “by making disciples of Christ,” clarifies how the church is uniquely called to glorify God. Jesus gave this special calling in the Great Commission (Matt 28:18–20). The church, through the representative leadership of the Apostles, is commissioned to go and make disciples. This task of discipleship in the Great Commission is not limited to evangelism but is much broader in scope, as seen in the command, “teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” This speaks to the continued spiritual growth of the believer throughout the Christian life. Discipleship does not have a specific context in mind. It is not limited to one-on-one ministry or to small-group ministry, for example. It encompasses all that the church does to facilitate growth in relationship with Christ. This is how the church uniquely glorifies God: by making disciples whose lives are transformed by God’s grace and through the work of the Holy Spirit. In affirming the church’s role, we are not diminishing the role of God’s grace or the Holy Spirit in spiritual maturation. Rather, we are emphasizing the commission that the church has been given.

So, the Free Church exists to magnify Christ by making disciples of Christ.

Vision

**Striving
to See, Savor, and Share Christ Together
through
His Word and Spirit**

Our vision statement is an effort to explain how we accomplish our mission. Its goal is to answer the question: How do we make disciples for God’s glory?

Our answer revolves around two principles. The first clarifies what we understand a disciple of Christ to be, and the second clarifies how we make disciples.

What Is a Disciple?

To begin, a disciple is a person who is “striving.” This asserts that the Christian life is actively pursued with intention. The Bible pictures the Christian life as a race, where we strive for the finish line (Heb 12:1). The spiritual life is consistently described as effortful (Luke 13:24; Phil 3:13–14; Phil 1:27; 1 Cor 9:24). This in no way diminishes our dependence on grace; as Paul said, “For this I toil, struggling with all His energy that He powerfully works within me” (Col 1:29). Grace fuels the Christian’s effort and “striving.”

Next, the goal of our striving is “to see, savor, and share Christ.” Each of these represents a different element of the spiritual life.

- **Seeing** refers to the cognitive component of the Christian life, the renewal of our minds (Rom 12:2). The spiritual life involves right knowing. It is not enough to have feelings and actions; right doctrine is an essential part of a genuine relationship with Christ (Matt 22:37–38; Rom 12:1–2; Titus 1:9; 2:1; 1 Tim 4:16).
- **Savoring** refers to right affections for Christ. This is bigger than emotion alone, and involves the will and inclination, so that we are oriented toward Christ with all our affections (Matt 22:37–38; Psa 34:8; Psa 63:5).
- **Sharing** refers to the Christian’s obedient response in actions of love, service, and discipleship toward others (John 14:15; 1 John 5:3; Gal 5:13; 1 Pet 3:15).

These three components — seeing, savoring, and sharing — largely sum up the spiritual life of the believer. As a church, this is where we hope to challenge one another to promote spiritual growth and discipleship.

The center of the believer’s spiritual life, however, is Christ (Heb 12:2; 2 Cor 3:18; Col 2:6–7). Christian growth is not something that happens apart from Christ and the gospel (John 15:4–5; Heb 12:2; 2 Cor 3:18; Col 2:6–7). When we refer to Christ in this statement, we mean to include both His person and His redemptive work. So, our efforts in discipleship are to promote a right understanding, affection, and response to the glory of Christ in the gospel. Spiritual growth comes out of our relationship to Christ.

This striving to “see, savor, and share Christ” is intended to be done “together.” While the Christian life includes the believer’s personal relationship with Christ, our focus here is on the community of believers in the local church. The

spiritual life is not meant to be lived in isolation, but rather in the context of the local church (Prov 18:1). God has created us to depend on one another for a flourishing spiritual life (Heb 10:24–25; Eph 4:11–13; Prov 27:17; Eccles 4:9–10). Therefore, the process of seeing, savoring, and sharing Christ is intended to be done together.

How We Make Disciples

We've addressed what it means to be a disciple and that the center of spiritual growth is Christ — but how do we cultivate that as a church? As already said, this transformation revolves around Christ and “beholding the glory of the Lord” (2 Cor 3:18). We behold Christ most plainly through His Word and the Holy Spirit. Because we believe that growth ultimately comes from God, we depend on Him. He leads us to Christ through both Scripture and the Holy Spirit.

- **Scripture** — God's Word, which, when rightly interpreted, leads the believer to Christ (John 5:39; Luke 24:27, 44; Acts 10:43). Scripture is sufficient for bringing spiritual growth and maturity and should direct all realms of the believer's life (2 Tim 3:16–17). This is not referring only to preaching, but to all life and ministry. All ministry should incorporate God's Word, so that we read the Word, preach the Word, sing the Word, pray the Word, and show the Word by our participation in the ordinances. Our longing is for our congregation to be an echo chamber, reverberating God's Word to one another.
- **The Holy Spirit** — We also affirm that this happens only in conjunction with the working of the Holy Spirit, who allows us to both rightly understand and respond to His Word (1 Cor 2:12–14; Eph 1:17–18; John 16:13; Psa 119:18). In our ministries, the Free Church depends on Scripture proclaimed, discussed, and lived out under the power of the Spirit for our spiritual growth.

Conclusion

Together, our Mission and Vision give shape to why we exist and how we intend to live it out. We exist to magnify Christ by making disciples of Christ, and we pursue that calling by striving, together, to see, savor, and share Christ

through His Word and Spirit. Neither statement stands alone: our mission tells us our purpose is ultimately about God's glory, and our vision reminds us that this glory is displayed as we grow together in knowledge, affection, and obedience toward Christ. May these words be more than a banner over our church; may they be a daily invitation to depend on God's Word and Spirit as we pursue Christ together, for His glory.