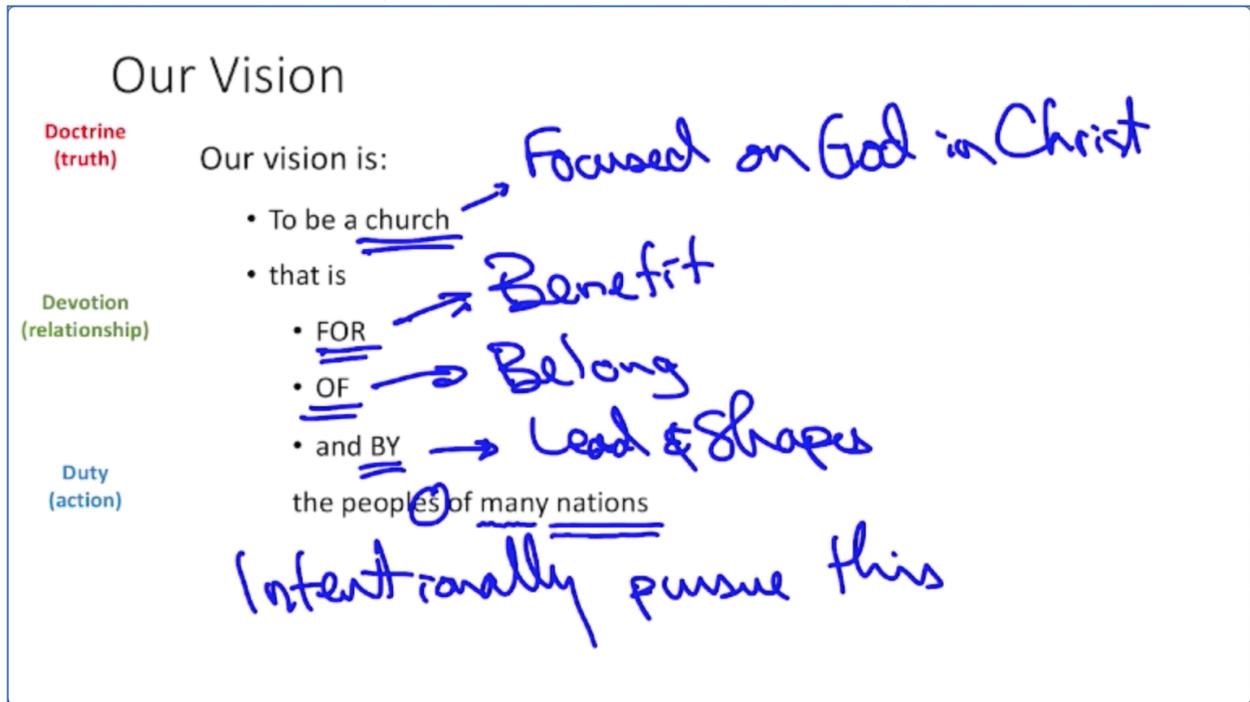


The Vision of Crossway Multinational Church (form 2)



This is a second way to express our vision as a church. Our vision is to be a church that is FOR, OF, and BY the peoples of many nations.

So it's important to us to state most fundamentally that we are a church, that we are a people who are focused on God in Christ. And so we recognize that Jesus is the Son of God. And we worship Him, and we worship through Him. We are Christians who are given new life by the work of Christ. And so that is our fundamental identity as a church. We are a church that proclaims the Good News, the Gospel as expressed in the Bible. We're a church that practices baptism and Lord's Supper, or Communion. And we're a church that spurs each other on to love and good deeds, and holds each other accountable in doing that.

We are a church that is FOR, OF, and BY the peoples of many nations. And so it's very important to us to be drawing people together from many places because this is the vision that God has for his people in Revelation, that people from every tribe, language/tongue, and nation would be gathered together as one, in worshiping God. And so we long to be that.

We say many nations because realistically, we don't see ourselves able to have people from every nation. Yet we would love to see them! We expect that that will be fulfilled in heaven, in the new earth, but now we are living with a subset of that. And so we welcome people from any nation. And we're intentional about the "s" in peoples because we recognize that there are, within any nation, there are groups of people, some groups that are part of the majority culture, some that are minority cultures, grouped in different ways. Sometimes people are

grouped across national boundaries. And so we recognize that complexity, and want to include all these different groups.

What we mean by including people from all these different groups is stated by these three prepositions: FOR, OF, and BY.

And what we mean by FOR is that our church would be for the benefit of peoples of many nations, that people would be blessed, that needs would be met, and they would find hope, they would understand the gospel, that people would be challenged to grow in the gospel. Our hope is that people from many nations peoples from many nations will benefit from who we are as a church.

We also long to see peoples of many nations to be able to belong. So we want them to feel at home, to feel that this is their church, not just a church where they gain but it's a church for each of us, that we say, "This is my church. This is a place where I belong. I am a part of the community, a part of the family." And so sometimes people can receive benefit from something they don't belong to. So our hope is that both people would receive benefit and they would belong, that the church would be OF them.

And then it is also our hope that the church would be BY the peoples of many nations. And so here we say that we want people to lead and shape, that we want peoples of many nations to be a part of leading us. And this can be through visible leadership, so those who are up front on a Sunday morning, those who have formal roles of leadership at the whole church level, in subgroups of the church. And also we want people to shape who we are. And so sometimes this is by a form of leadership that is different from what is obvious, behind the scenes in various ways, that we want the influence, the role of peoples of many nations to help shape who we are.

So we want to be a church that is FOR, OF, and BY the peoples of many nations. And in this, we want to intentionally pursue this. We believe that there's something fundamentally different between saying, "I'm not opposed to this" and saying, "We're intentionally pursuing this." So this is a goal for us to understand what might be a barrier. What is making it so people receive benefit but don't feel like they really belong? Or people feel like they belong but believe that they will never be in a position to be able to shape or lead us. So we want to be intentional in pursuing this vision, all of which is to express God's vision of His people, that together with one voice we would glorify our God through Christ. And we would do that in a way in which we're a body together.

So we want to be a church that is FOR, OF, and BY the peoples of many nations.

Reflection Questions

- How would you describe FOR, OF, and BY in your own words? How have you experienced some of these but not the others (for example, FOR by not OF)? What was that like?

- What is the difference between passively allowing this vision, and intentionally pursuing it?
Why is it important to intentionally pursue it?