



REJOICE
IN THE LORD
MINISTRIES

DREAM BIG

VISION 2026: Creating God's Vision for Your Life

A 4-Week eGroup Study Series
Based on Pastor Roderick Zak's "Dream Big" Sermon Series
Rejoice in the Lord Ministries | Apopka, Florida

INTRODUCTION FROM PASTOR ZAK

Family, I'm excited to share this eGroup study with you, designed specifically for our Rejoice eGroups. Over the next four lessons, we will explore how to create God's vision for your life. Not random dreams or personal goals, but clear divine direction that shapes how you live, serve, and grow.

This study comes from my "Dream Big" sermon series, and I've structured each lesson to be approximately an hour. We'll break down Scripture line by line and keep it practical for everyday living. I've included my personal stories because God uses our testimonies to encourage others.

Each lesson includes reflection questions. I encourage your eGroup to dig deeper and let the Holy Spirit speak to your specific situations. Share openly, pray for one another, and hold each other accountable to what God reveals through His Word.

Remember, vision without action is just daydreaming. Let's get started on this journey together.

Blessings,

Pastor Zak

WEEK 1 – Where Am I Now?

You cannot move forward with God while hiding from the truth about where you are. Vision begins with honest self-assessment before God. Making Honest Assessments "Before God Can Direct Your Steps" | Duration: 1 Hour

MAIN SCRIPTURE: Genesis 3:8-9 (ESV)

"Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, 'Where are you?'"

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND

Genesis 3 records humanity's first act of disobedience and the immediate consequences. Adam and Eve knew God's voice because they had walked with Him daily. Sin didn't erase recognition. It created fear. God's question "Where are you?" isn't about geography. It's about awakening awareness and honesty.

TODAY'S BIG IDEA

You cannot move forward with God while hiding from the truth about where you are. Vision begins with honest self-assessment before God.

LINE BY LINE SCRIPTURE BREAKDOWN

"Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God."

- "heard the sound" - Recognition of God's presence. They knew that sound from a relationship, not just religion.
- Sin didn't eliminate God's voice; it made them afraid to hear it.

"and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden."

- "hid" - Shame always leads to concealment. When you know you've fallen short, hiding feels safer than honesty.
- "among the trees" - Using God's creation to hide from the Creator. We still do this by using good things to avoid God.

"But the Lord God called to the man, 'Where are you?'"

- "called" - God initiates the conversation. He pursues even when we run.
- "Where are you?" - Not a request for information. This is an invitation to self-awareness and honesty.
- God blesses truth-tellers, not pretenders.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

Psalms 139:23-24: "Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

David invites God's examination because he values truth over comfort. This is the prayer of someone ready for vision. Asking God to reveal hidden issues that block forward movement.

Lamentations 3:40: "Let us test and examine our ways, and return to the Lord!"

Self-examination isn't punishment. It's preparation. Before returning to God's path, you must acknowledge where you wandered off. Honest assessment creates space for divine redirection.

KEY CONCEPTS TO REMEMBER

The Power of Honest Self-Assessment

God asks "Where are you?" not because He doesn't know, but because we don't know. We get so good at hiding that we start believing our own cover-up. But here's what I've learned: God cannot lead you from where you pretend to be. He can only lead you from where you actually are.

Three Levels of Hiding We Practice:

1. Hiding from God - We avoid prayer, skip Scripture, stay busy with good things to avoid dealing with God about real things. Like Adam using trees to hide, we use ministry, family, work, anything to create distance.
2. Hiding from Others - We perform instead of being real.
3. Hiding from Ourselves - This is the most dangerous. We've repeated the lies so long we believe them. "I'm fine." "I've got this." "I don't need help." We become strangers to our own hearts.

The Courage to Stop Hiding

It takes more courage to be honest than to keep pretending. But here's the promise: when you stop hiding, God stops chasing. When you come out from behind the trees and stand before Him honestly, you discover He's been waiting there all along.

Vision requires clarity. Clarity requires honesty. Honesty requires courage. And courage comes from knowing that God already sees you and loves you anyway.

MY PERSONAL STORY

I remember sitting in seminary in a preaching class. Our professor assigned us to write a sermon about something God was teaching us personally. I thought I was ready. I had my notes, my points, my structure.

When I stood to deliver the message, it fell apart.

After class, my professor said something I'll never forget: "Roderick, you're preaching from your head, not from your life." Those words stayed with me. That evening I sat in my car and said to God, "I'm tired of pretending I'm okay. I'm broken and I need You."

That moment changed everything. It was the first time I truly admitted where I was, and that's exactly where God met me. You cannot hear God clearly until you stop performing for Him and start being honest with Him.

God can't bless the person you pretend to be. He blesses the one willing to be real.

REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Individual Reflection Questions:

1. **In what area of your life have you been avoiding the truth, and what makes honesty difficult in this area?**
2. **What has God been trying to show you about yourself that you have resisted or ignored?**
3. **How could being honest about where you are bring peace or clarity to your current situation?**

Group Discussion Questions:

- 1. Why do you think Adam and Eve hid when they heard God's voice, and how do we hide from God today without realizing it?**
- 2. What do you believe God wanted Adam to realize when He asked, "Where are you?"**
- 3. How does awareness of your current condition help you prepare for what God has next?**

Application Questions:

- 1. What specific step will you take this week to stop hiding and start being honest with God about where you really are?**
- 2. How might your relationships change if you approached them with the same honesty you're bringing to God?**

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YOUR WEEKLY ACTION STEPS

- 1. Morning Honesty:** Spend 10 minutes each morning asking God to show you where you really are spiritually, emotionally, and relationally
- 2. Truth Journal:** Write down one honest admission to God daily about your struggles or failures
- 3. Mentor Meeting:** Share your honest assessment with one trusted believer for prayer and accountability
- 4. Scripture Meditation:** Read Psalm 139 daily and invite God's examination

THOUGHT TO CARRY

Honesty is the bridge between where you are and where God is calling you. You cannot have a vision for tomorrow while hiding from today.

WEEK 2: MASTERING YOUR MIND

Your mind is the steering wheel of your life. God changes you by teaching you to think differently. Where your focus goes, your future follows. Renewing Your Mental Focus
"What Am I Thinking?" | Duration: 1 Hour

MAIN SCRIPTURE: Genesis 3:8-9 (ESV)

"Romans 12:2 (ESV) "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND

Romans 12 marks Paul's transition from theological doctrine (chapters 1-11) to practical application. After explaining salvation by grace, Paul addresses how transformed people should live. The "renewal of your mind" isn't a one-time event. It's daily retraining your thought patterns to align with God's truth.

TODAY'S BIG IDEA

Your mind is the steering wheel of your life. God changes you by teaching you to think differently. Where your focus goes, your future follows.

LINE BY LINE SCRIPTURE BREAKDOWN

"Do not be conformed to this world"

- "conformed" - Letting external pressures shape your internal standards. The world squeezes you into its mold.
- This means refusing to let culture write your values or dictate your convictions.

"but be transformed by the renewal of your mind"

- "transformed" - Complete change from the inside out. Same Greek root as "metamorphosis" like a caterpillar becoming a butterfly.
- "renewal of your mind" - Daily process of unlearning lies and replacing them with truth.
- God doesn't just change your circumstances. He changes how you think about them.

"that by testing you may discern what is the will of God"

- "by testing" - Proving through experience what works versus what doesn't.
- "discern" - Sharper spiritual perception. Renewed minds recognize counterfeits.
- When your thinking is healthy, you can tell the difference between what feels good and what is God.

"what is good and acceptable and perfect"

- "good" - Beneficial and life-giving
- "acceptable" - Pleasing to God, not just people
- "perfect" - Complete and whole, lacking nothing
- God's will leads to peace and wholeness, not confusion and chaos.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

Philippians 4:8: "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things."

Your thought life requires intentional management. Paul gives a filter for deciding what deserves your mental energy. Garbage in, garbage out. Truth in, transformation out.

2 Corinthians 10:5: "We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."

Thoughts are not neutral. They're either aligned with Christ or against Him. Taking thoughts captive means actively choosing what you'll meditate on. This is spiritual warfare fought in the mind.

KEY CONCEPTS TO REMEMBER

The Battle for Your Mind

Family, let me be straight with you. Your mind is a battlefield. Every day, you're bombarded with messages about who you should be, what you should want, how you should live. The world is trying to conform you to its pattern. But God wants to transform you by renewing how you think.

Three Truths About Mind Renewal:

1. What You Feed Grows – Your mind is like a garden. Whatever you plant is what will grow. If you're feeding your mind junk, social media drama, negativity, fear, that's what's going to grow. But if you're feeding it truth, worship, Scripture, that's what takes root. You can't consume poison and expect to produce health.
2. Transformation Takes Time – Nobody renews their mind in a weekend. This is daily work. It's like going to the gym. One workout doesn't change your body, but consistent workouts over months transform you. Same with your mind. Daily time in God's Word, daily worship, daily prayer. That's how transformation happens.
3. Right Actions Strengthen Right Thinking. Change doesn't begin in your feelings; it begins in your choices. When you follow God's lead even when it feels uncomfortable, your thoughts slowly fall into place, and your mind becomes steadier.

The Focus Filter

Before you give mental energy to something, ask yourself: Is this true? Is this noble? Is this pure? Is this lovely? If it doesn't pass the Philippians 4:8 filter, don't give it space in your head. Protect your mind like you protect your home. Lock the doors. Don't let just anything walk in.

MY PERSONAL STORY: FOCUS DETERMINES FLOW

Let me tell you something I've learned the hard way. You cannot pour from an empty cup.

For years, I tried to show up for everyone. Family, church, community. Running from one thing to another until I was running on fumes. I was preaching full but living empty.

One day, God stopped me in my tracks. He reminded me that the cup has to be filled before it can overflow. He said, "Roderick, I don't want you serving from exhaustion. I want you serving from overflow."

That shifted everything.

When your soul is empty, everything feels heavy. Every call feels like a burden. Every conversation drains you. But when your soul is full, serving becomes joy again. You start loving people out of abundance, not obligation. Peace replaces pressure. You wake up excited instead of exhausted.

Now I protect my soul like it's my greatest asset because it is. I rest, I pray, I breathe, and I let God fill me before I try to pour into others. I want the people around me to experience my overflow, not my leftovers.

REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Individual Reflection Questions:

1. What kind of mental clutter is currently preventing clarity in your life?
2. What daily habits could help you keep your mind centered on truth instead of chaos?
3. How can you practice staying focused when distractions come?

Group Discussion Questions:

1. **What does Paul mean when he says, "Do not be conformed to this world," and what does this look like practically?**
2. **Why is transformation linked to renewing the mind rather than just changing behavior?**
3. **What distractions tend to pull you away from what God is saying?**

Application Questions:

1. **What specific lie have you been believing that needs to be replaced with God's truth?**
2. **How might your heart change if you fully welcomed those steady truths into your life?**

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YOUR WEEKLY ACTION STEPS

1. **Morning Focus:** Begin each day with 5 minutes of Scripture before checking your phone
2. **Thought Audit:** Track your dominant thoughts for three days. What patterns emerge?
3. **Media Fast:** Remove one distraction that consistently pulls your mind away from God
4. **Truth Replacement:** Memorize one verse this week that counters a lie you've been believing

THOUGHT TO CARRY

Focus determines flow. When your attention stays on God's truth, your life will begin to reflect His peace.

WEEK 3: YOUR SOUL

The health of your soul determines the strength of your decisions. You cannot pour from what you do not have. Protecting Your Inner Life

"What Do I Value?" | Duration: 1 Hour

MAIN SCRIPTURE: Matthew 16:26 (ESV)

"For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?"

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND

Matthew 16 records Jesus teaching His disciples about the cost of following Him. Peter has just confessed Jesus as the Messiah, and Jesus immediately begins preparing them for the cross. This verse challenges the disciples' assumption that following the Messiah meant earthly success and comfort.

TODAY'S BIG IDEA

The health of your soul determines the strength of your decisions. You cannot pour from what you do not have.

LINE BY LINE SCRIPTURE BREAKDOWN

"For what will it profit a man"

- "profit" – Gaining advantage or benefit. Jesus asks a question that cuts to the heart.
- What good is success if peace has disappeared in the process?

"if he gains the whole world"

- "gains the whole world" – Accumulating everything culture calls achievement. Money, recognition, security, power.
- You can chase everything external and still feel incomplete inside.

"and forfeits his soul?"

- "forfeits" – To lose by neglect, not necessarily by deliberate choice.
- The soul is not usually lost in one decision but over time through small compromises and misplaced priorities.
- To forfeit is to trade something priceless for something temporary.

"Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?"

- "in return for" – The idea of exchange or replacement.
- You can replace a car or a job, but you cannot replace a soul.
- Once your inner life is damaged, nothing external can compensate for it.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

Psalms 23:3: "He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

God designed the soul to be restored regularly, not run into the ground. Restoration happens when you let God lead you, not when you force your own agenda. Soul care is not optional. It's essential for sustained Kingdom impact.

Luke 2:52: "And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man."

Even Jesus grew in balance. Wisdom represents mental growth. Stature speaks of physical development. Favor with God points to spiritual depth. Favor with man shows relational strength. A full life requires harmony between mind, body, spirit, and soul.

KEY CONCEPTS TO REMEMBER

The Soul Economy

Let me teach you something about how the soul works. Your soul operates on an economy. You can deposit into it or withdraw from it. Every time you rest, worship, pray, spend time in God's presence, that's a deposit. Every time you overcommit, skip rest, ignore boundaries, people-please, that's a withdrawal.

Most people are running a soul deficit. They're making withdrawals they can't afford. And here's what happens: when your soul account is empty, you start taking out loans. You borrow energy you don't have. You fake joy you don't feel. You manufacture patience from fumes. And eventually, you crash.

Four Deposits That Fill Your Soul:

1. **Sabbath Rest – This isn't lazy. This is warfare. When you rest, you're declaring that God is God and you are not. You're trusting Him to handle what you're not handling.**
2. **Worship Without Agenda – Not worship to get something or feel something. Worship because God is worthy. Put on music and just magnify Him. No phone, no multitasking. Just you and God. Watch how it fills your soul.**
3. **Honest Relationships – Stop performing for people. Find someone you can be real with. Someone who knows your mess and loves you anyway. Soul-deep friendship fills what isolation drains.**
4. **Saying No – Every yes to something is a no to something else. When you say yes to everything, you're saying no to your soul's health. Learn to protect your soul by setting boundaries.**

The Overflow Principle

Here's what I've discovered: when your soul is full, ministry doesn't drain you. It actually fills you more. When you're serving from overflow, you come home energized, not exhausted. But when you're serving from depletion, every conversation costs you something you can't afford to give.

MY PERSONAL STORY: REST IS A WEAPON

There was a season when I ran at full speed, thinking that nonstop work meant faithfulness. I poured out every ounce of energy in ministry, meetings, and people, but my spirit began to feel empty.

One morning, I realized my soul was like a phone that never stopped running apps. It just kept losing charge.

That day, the Lord reminded me that rest is a weapon. When I rest, I'm not being lazy. I'm trusting Him. When I pause, I make space for His voice to speak again. Busyness can become a counterfeit for purpose if we're not careful.

God doesn't bless exhaustion. He blesses alignment.

Now I guard my rest as fiercely as I guard my calling. Because when your soul is full, you minister from overflow, not depletion. And the people around you don't just get your effort. They get your essence.

REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Individual Reflection Questions:

1. **What specific practices help you stay spiritually full, and how consistent are you with them?**
2. **How can you begin to rest without feeling guilty about it?**
3. **What relationships or responsibilities could benefit from a healthier soul within you?**

Group Discussion Questions:

1. **What do you think Jesus meant when He said, "gain the whole world and forfeit your soul"?**
2. **Why do people often focus on their outer life more than their inner life?**
3. **What are some warning signs that your soul might be running on empty?**

Application Questions:

- 1. What boundary do you need to set this week to protect your soul from depletion?**
- 2. Are you currently serving from overflow or from leftovers? What needs to change?**

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YOUR WEEKLY ACTION STEPS

1. **Sabbath Practice:** Schedule one full day this week with no ministry, work emails, or productivity demands
2. **Soul Inventory:** Assess which area needs attention: spiritual, emotional, physical, and relational.
3. **Boundary Setting:** Identify one commitment you need to remove or reduce to protect your soul
4. **Worship Reset:** Spend 20 minutes in worship music daily without multitasking

THOUGHT TO CARRY

You cannot pour from what you do not have. Let God fill your cup until you are living from overflow instead of exhaustion.

WEEK 4: LIVING OUT YOUR VISION

You can't build God's future on yesterday's foundation. Real vision is built on faith that lasts through storms. Building on the Right Foundation
"Where Am I Going?" | Duration: 1 Hour

MAIN SCRIPTURE: Habakkuk 2:2-3 (ESV)

"And the Lord answered me: 'Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it. For still the vision awaits its appointed time; it hastens to the end, it will not lie. If it seems slow, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay.'"

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND

Habakkuk prophesied during Judah's spiritual decline. He questioned God about injustice and received an answer that tested his faith. God would use the Babylonians to judge His people. In chapter 2, God instructs Habakkuk to write down the vision because it will surely come to pass, even if delayed. This teaches us that God's timeline is never rushed, and waiting is preparation, not punishment.

TODAY'S BIG IDEA

You can't build God's future on yesterday's foundation. Real vision is built on faith that lasts through storms.

LINE BY LINE SCRIPTURE BREAKDOWN

"Write the vision"

- "Write" - Turn inspiration into intention. God doesn't want your dreams just in your head.
- Writing tells heaven you're ready to take the dream seriously.
- What's written can be reviewed, shared, and measured.

"make it plain on tablets"

- "plain" - Clear enough to explain in a few sentences. If you can't describe it simply, you won't live it fully.
- "tablets" - Permanent record, not temporary thoughts.
- A real vision is specific, not vague spiritual language.

"so he may run who reads it"

- "run" - Move to action. Vision should set you in motion, not leave you paralyzed.
- The vision isn't meant to sit in a notebook. It's meant to propel you forward.

"For still the vision awaits its appointed time"

- "appointed time" - God's timeline, not your preference.
- What He promises will come to pass, but it will come when you're ready for it.
- Delays are not denials. They're development periods.

"it will surely come; it will not delay"

- "surely come" - Guaranteed arrival, not maybe or possibly.
- "not delay" - From God's perspective, it's right on time even when it feels late to you.

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

Proverbs 29:18: "Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he." (KJV)

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES

Hebrews 12:1-2: Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Vision gives steady direction and keeps you from drifting spiritually, anchoring you when life becomes chaotic or distracting. Hebrews 12:1-2 urges us to run with endurance, letting go of every weight that slows us down and fixing our attention on Jesus, who leads and strengthens our faith. Real vision grows through consistency rather than speed, because God is shaping long-distance runners who stay faithful over time. When you release everything that pulls you away from God's best and keep your focus on Christ rather than on people or outcomes, your path becomes clearer and your purpose becomes firmer.

KEY CONCEPTS TO REMEMBER

Wishing is vague, but vision is clear and grounded. Wishing says, "I want to do something for God," while vision offers a picture that is specific, practical, and tied to real steps, such as leading a small group with a set purpose and schedule. God's instruction to Habakkuk to write the vision plainly shows that clarity matters, because a vision that others can easily understand is a vision they can act on. If it can't be expressed simply and fully, it may still be forming rather than ready.

Three Tests of Real Vision:

- 1. The Writing Test – A true vision can be written in clear language that identifies goals, timing, and direction. When you commit it to writing, you give it structure and life.**
- 2. The Waiting Test – A God-given vision remains steady even when progress seems slow, because its fulfillment follows God's timing, not personal deadlines.**
- 3. The Storm Test – A vision built on Christ stands firm when challenges arise, while visions built on momentum, popularity, or self-effort quickly weaken under pressure.**

BUILDING ON THE RIGHT FOUNDATION

Seasons of struggle reveal the real strength of what your life is built on. Many pursue vision through unstable sources such as approval, wealth, or personal ability, but only Christ provides a foundation that remains steady when everything else becomes uncertain. Before you shape your vision for 2026, make sure your daily habits anchor you—steady time in Scripture, consistent prayer, connection with community, and a lifestyle of obedience that roots your vision in something unshakable.

MY PERSONAL STORY: THE FLOOD AND THE FOUNDATION

When a hurricane hit Florida, our church suffered deep water damage for days as we fought to protect what we could. Once the storm settled, I walked into the sanctuary and saw pools of water scattered across the floor, and the weight of the moment revealed how deeply a strong foundation matters.

But then something remarkable happened. The Spirit of God whispered, "The water may rise, but the foundation is still standing."

We rebuilt, we fixed what was broken, replaced what was ruined, and the church came back stronger than before. But this time, I understood something deeper. God was showing me that vision isn't about avoiding storms. It's about surviving them with faith intact.

REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Questions:

1. **What specific goal has God been prompting you to write down and act on?**
2. **How can you make your vision clearer and more practical for the next season of your life?**
3. **What storms have tried to shake your foundation, and how did God sustain you?**

1. **What does it mean to "write the vision" in your own life, and why is writing it down important?**
2. **Why do you think God asks us to wait for the appointed time instead of giving us immediate results?**
3. **How can storms reveal the strength or weakness of your foundation?**

1. What will you write as your vision for 2026 before this week ends?
2. How will you know if your foundation is strong enough to withstand the next storm?

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YOUR WEEKLY ACTION STEPS

1. **Vision Writing:** Write your vision for 2026 in 3–5 clear sentences. What does God want to accomplish through you?
2. **Foundation Check:** Identify one area where your foundation needs strengthening
3. **Action Plan:** Break your vision into quarterly goals with specific action steps
4. **Accountability Partner:** Share your written vision with someone who will check on your progress

THOUGHT TO CARRY

Storms may shake the walls, but they can't move the foundation. Keep building where God has planted you, and the vision will come to pass.

FINAL REFLECTION FOR ENTIRE SERIES

What's the most important insight you've gained from these four weeks?

How will you apply what you've learned in your daily life moving forward?

CLOSING COMMITMENT

"Lord, thank You for these four weeks of learning to create Your vision for our lives. Help us to be honest about where we are, renew our minds daily, protect our souls from depletion, and build our futures on the solid foundation of Christ. Give us clarity to write the vision, courage to pursue it, and endurance to see it through. In Jesus's name, Amen."