



# Vision Series #1

## The Speed of Love

***Kick-off: before jumping into God's WORD, it's worth taking a few minutes to reflect on your own thoughts and attitudes and on the thoughts and attitudes you encounter in the WORLD...***

1. What is something you love? What do you love about it?
2. What does 'unlucky in love' mean? Do you know anyone who has experienced it?

***Discover: the "D" in DNA stands for DISCOVER. It's now time to read God's word and discover what God wants to teach us and why it matters...***

Corinth was a city built for speed. It's geographical position on a narrow neck of land between the Corinthian gulf and the Saronic gulf guaranteed its commercial prosperity. Merchants and sailors sent goods across this land rather than risk the long voyage around the rocky, storm-tossed capes to the south of the city. Even though Corinth was destroyed by a Roman leader in 146BC. By the time the church was established in the city, this now Roman colony had speedily regained much of its former greatness. Corinth was now a very cosmopolitan place. An important city, intellectually alert, materially prosperous, but morally corrupt and lacking love. The ideal of the Corinthian was the reckless development of the individual. The merchant who made their gain by all and every means, the person of pleasure surrendering themselves to every lust, the athlete steeled to every bodily exercise and proud in their physical strength, are the true Corinthian types: in a word, the person who recognised no superior or no law but their own desires. (Adapted from Leon Morris)

3. How do you think love would have been defined in Corinth from the above description of the city? What would love have looked like in the city?

**Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-13**

4. What might we lose if all we desire to gain is knowledge?
5. How can love of the poor, amazingly lack love?
6. What is love?
7. When will love in all its beauty be revealed?

***Nurture & Apply: the “NA” in DNA stands for Nurture & Apply. These questions are designed to help us care for each other and live out God’s word...***

8. How does the city of Lismore compare to Corinth? What would it mean to love more in Lismore?

9. What sort of speed do you think loving hospitality calls for? Read this probing excerpt from Tim Chester and discuss:

“Hospitality involves welcoming, creating space, listening, paying attention and providing. Meals slow things down. Some of us don’t like that. We like to get things done. But meals force you to be people orientated instead of task orientated. Sharing a meal is not the only way to build relationships, but it is number one on the list”.

10. Do you have to change speeds to love? Why/Why not? Discuss.

Further reading:

- J. K. Smith, Desiring the kingdom
- T. Chester A meal with Jesus
- T. Chester Stott on the Christian Life

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# Vision Series #2

## The Road to Joy

***Kick-off: before jumping into God's WORD, it's worth taking a few minutes to reflect on your own thoughts and attitudes and on the thoughts and attitudes you encounter in the WORLD...***

1. When do you feel anxious?
2. When do you feel your humanness acutely? How does it make you feel?

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Read Philippians 4:4-5

4. Where is the Lord?

Read Psalm 103:13-19

5. What is the life of mortals?

6. Is there anything that is eternal?

Read Philippians 4:6-7

7. What promises are available to those in Christ?

## Read Matthew 6:25-34

7. How can a kingdom orientation lower worry in our lives?

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8. Do you revel in the strength of your physique, or mind, or abilities? What is fragile about those features?

9. Is there anxiety and worry that marks your life, created by overstressing your creaturely makeup? i.e. are you susceptible to over-working or pushing yourself relentlessly to achieve personal goals?

10. What would it mean for your life to have peace? Does your mind and heart and life have enough ‘margin’ to allow Christ to guard it?

Further reading:

A. Hart, *The Anxiety Cure*

C. Ash, *Zeal without Burnout*

K. De Young *Crazy Busy*

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# Vision Series #3 The Pursuit of Contentment

***Kick-off: before jumping into God's WORD, it's worth taking a few minutes to reflect on your own thoughts and attitudes and on the thoughts and attitudes you encounter in the WORLD...***

1. Why is wealth so alluring?
2. If you asked those across the road from you, "How much is enough?" what would they say?

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Read 1 Timothy 6:6-10

4. Why is contentment so desirable?

5. What is some of the fruit of the love of money?

Read Psalm 115

6. How helpful are idols? Why is trust in the Lord so crucial?

## Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19

7. Where must our hope lie? Why?

8. What deposit is grown through gospel generosity?

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9. When are you most tempted to put your hope in wealth?

10. Could a love of money steal the love of others in your life? Discuss.

11. The reformer, Martin Luther, provided tips on dealing with greed and generosity. Which one stands out to you?

- Recognise the seriousness of the sin of greed – it is a form of idol worship that arouses God’s jealousy.
- Resist the urge to immoderate the accumulation of wealth that grows out of a lack of trust in God.
- Seek contentment and be generous and willing to share – in order to deal with greed that consists of both unrestrained grasping and selfish hoarding?
- Appreciate the natural world – greed arises when we forget that God is our creator and sustainer. Go bird watching, hiking, gaze at a sunset, grow vegetables, keep chickens.
- Wait expectantly for the resurrection – we put too much stock in material things when we think they are all that exists. Keep a loose grip on this world, for this world in its present form is passing away.
- Aim to get really rich – God has many new and marvellous things to engross those who know him and are known by him.

Further reading:

B. Rosner, Beyond Greed

A. Cameron & B. Rosner, Still deadly: Ancient cures for the 7 sins

K. De Young Crazy Busy

T. Chalmers, (Foreword by John Piper) The Expulsive Power of a New Affection

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