

## **Pastoral Implications of a Theology of Vision – Ian Horner**

### **Abstract**

The purpose of this research is to identify the nature and content of 'vision', the role it should play in the church and the pastoral implications of this. This study attempts to understand the underlying principles of vision for the world-wide church in general and for the Church of Ireland in particular. A very evident tension between vision based on models of thinking from the business world and vision based on theological ideas provides the central element of the discussion.

The research considers literature from both secular and Christian sources in order to discern the nature and source of vision, methods of communicating vision, and the consequences of vision. It discusses vision in relation to the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion in an attempt to articulate theological vision from the Church of Ireland's perspective. It then surveys Luke and Acts in order to understand vision in the ministry of Jesus and his disciples. Finally, it examines data collected through interviews with seven Church of Ireland clergy persons in the Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough in order to glean an understanding of vision in everyday parish ministry.

The research concludes that a theological vision of who God is must be the central expression of vision in the church in order for the worship and works of the church to have appropriate motivations and for the pastoral care to have suitable aims. All strategic visions of the church must be born out of theological vision and ultimately aim to further reveal the theological vision of God to the congregation and the wider community.