

T H E
COLLECTIVE

DAWN



WINTER 2021



"Let us know; let us press on to know the LORD;
his going out is sure as the dawn; he will come to us as
the showers, as the spring rains that water the earth."

HOSEA 6:3, ESV

Beautiful friends,

WELCOME.

Settle into your seat, take a deep, long, full breath.
The kind that goes all the way down to your bones.

YOU DID IT.

You have made it through what in many ways
has felt like the longest year of our lives.

But, like the turning of a season, the ringing
in of a new year, and the dawn of a new day, we
are together tonight to remind ourselves that our
mighty God is on His throne. His mercies are new
Every. Single. Morning. GREAT is His faithfulness.

Tonight, we celebrate the dawn of a new year. Though
the effects of a difficult 2020 might still ring in our
hearts, and the horizon of 2021 looms just as uncertain,
we can focus on the foundation of our faith – the One
who has been certain since the beginning of time.

He wants to do a new thing in you. Now it springs
up, do you not perceive it? He is making a way in the
desert, and streams in the wasteland (Isaiah 43:19).

Welcome to a New Dawn,

The Collective Leadership Team





REDEEMED FOR LIFE

REBECCA IBARRA

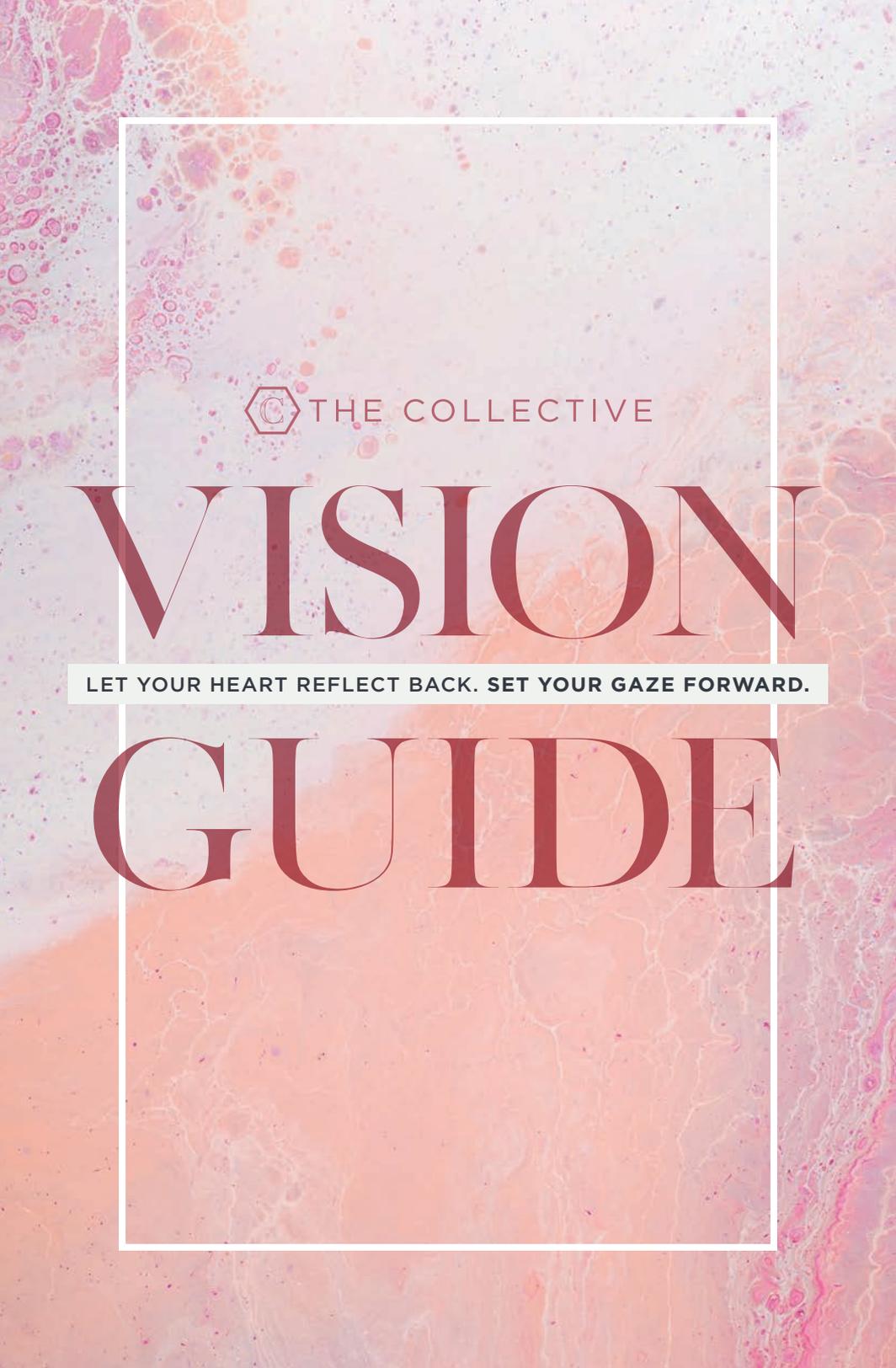


Although I was raised in a Christian church, I didn't live like I knew Christ. I started looking for approval in relationships and found myself unexpectedly pregnant when I was 18. In one year, I graduated high school, got married, and had a child. When my marriage ended in divorce after we both admitted to having affairs, my two-year struggle with alcohol and drugs began. I felt like such a failure.

"I became unexpectedly pregnant again, and after searching for free clinics online, I found Thrive Women's Clinic. At a doctor's appointment, I felt like God was trying to remind me that He was still growing me. As my boyfriend and I started to spend time learning God's Word, I was reminded that I could trust God with my life. Although labels like *adulterer*, *liar*, and *drug abuser* were true of my actions, I began to learn they were not true of my identity. God sees me as redeemed, and regardless of my wavering faithfulness, God is consistently faithful to me.

"One day, when I read Psalm 139:13, 'For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb,' my experiences felt like they came full circle; I knew I wanted to help women with unexpected pregnancies.

"Now I serve with The Life Initiative, and get to meet women in one of the most precarious and sensitive times in their lives. At one point, I too was scared and unsure what the future held for me because of an unexpected pregnancy. Now, I can see the Lord has faithfully walked alongside of me so I can turn and walk faithfully next to a woman in a similar circumstance to point her towards Jesus. God has placed in me a strong passion for the physical and spiritual care of women. When I trusted in Christ, He was able to grow that passion and put it to action."

The background of the entire page is a microscopic image, likely of biological tissue, showing various cellular structures and colors in shades of pink, red, and white. A white rectangular frame is superimposed over the center of the image, containing the text and logo.

 THE COLLECTIVE

VISION

LET YOUR HEART REFLECT BACK. SET YOUR GAZE FORWARD.

GUIDE

HILLS & VALLEYS

Take time to reflect over this past year as a whole. What were some of the highs and lows? Once you have pinpointed those specific moments, take time to reflect on what God taught you through them.

HILLS

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VALLEYS

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Sit with the Lord. What was He teaching you through your Hills and Valleys from this past year?

LOOKING BACK

Spend time reflecting on 2020 and consider what you learned and how you grew in the areas mentioned.

RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

- What are 3 themes that stand out to you from your time in God's Word and prayer?
- **2020 was hard.** How did you fight to take your eyes off yourself and put them on the Lord and His people? Psalm 121:1-2
- How did you pour out your heart to God in personal grief or lament? If you haven't, what are some things you need to grieve from 2020?

RELATIONSHIP WITH SELF

- **Physical Health** | Did you see yourself as the Lord sees you in 2020? Reflect and remember Psalm 139.
- **Emotional Health** | What are thought patterns you see in your life? For example, fear, anxiety, anger, joy, etc.
- **Rhythms of Rest** | Did you plan adequate spaces for rest and Sabbath in your life this year?

RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS

- **Read the following verses:** Romans 12:10, Philippians 2, 1 Thessalonians 5:14, James 5:16
- Use the above verses to reflect on these relationships in your life:
 - Family
 - Community/Friends/Significant Other
 - Discipling Others

LOOKING FORWARD

Dreaming of the year to come. Consider your dreams, goals, and aspirations as you step into a new year. Keep in mind James 4:13-15 and Romans 8:31-32 as you plan and dream.

RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

- Time in His Word and Prayer
- Commitment to His church and serving others
- Sabbath

RELATIONSHIP WITH SELF

- **Physical Health** (*exercise, food, etc.*) | Set goals that will challenge you while also leading you to a greater dependence on the Lord.
- **Emotional Health** | What truths in scripture will help you fight negative thought patterns?
- **Rhythms of Rest** | How do you plan to do what Rick Warren encourages and “divert daily, withdraw weekly, and abandon annually?”

RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS

Take some time to set some goals in these relational areas. They don't have to be big, but make them specific.

- Family
- Community/Friends/Significant Other
- Discipling Others

Pray expectantly and with hope. Ask God to impress upon your heart a word that you can cling to for this next year.

WORD OF THE YEAR

MY WORD FOR 2021 IS:

MY VERSE FOR THE YEAR IS:



SESSION NOTES

CHALLENGE

Find a two-hour block of time to get away and intentionally pursue the refreshment of your faith in Christ.

faith
over
fear

Virginia Prodan

"The Lord of the Universe had an amazing plan to bring me to Him"

As a kid growing up in Romania, I saw adults who knew the truth about the communist government and society, but they were afraid to speak it. That created in me both an insecurity and a passion to find and fight for truth," said Virginia Prodan. "I thought my way to find, learn, and speak truth was to go to law school and become a lawyer like the men in my family.

"When I found success as an attorney after law school, I had everything I wanted. I had a nanny for my kids, custom furniture, and money to buy nice things, but inside I was the poorest person in the world. I still hadn't found the truth I was looking for.



"One day I went to my office very discouraged. I met with one of my clients, but he was different than any of my clients. While he seemed joyful and hopeful, I thought he was a little crazy when he invited me to his church the next Sunday.

"I followed through with the invitation and at the service, I heard the pastor say, 'Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.' The lady sitting next to me showed me it was so clearly written in John 14:6. That day I realized God put it on my heart to find the truth all those years ago so that I could find Him. I thought the truth to life and freedom was in my law textbooks, but here it was, in Jesus. I was looking in the wrong place.

"The Lord of the universe had an amazing plan to bring me to Him and would give me an amazing job



to show the world what He is capable of. After trusting and surrendering my life to Christ, I learned that to suffer for Christ is an honor and a privilege, and I took that with me into every courtroom as a human rights attorney.

“I was interrogated and tortured daily – and I didn’t impress anyone with my size – but Christ in me was the power that kept me moving and taught me to love my enemies.

“God also empowered me to face my assassin – sent to my office by the government to kill me because I defended Christians. At only 82 pounds and under five feet, I was not a match. I should be dead, but God had other plans. I was covered in blood, pushed against the wall, and even in that moment, I knew the Lord was there. I heard people giving him orders, but I had a job too: I knew the Lord wanted me to love him. As I shared the gospel with my assassin, he accepted Christ. Only God’s power in me did that.

“As my cruel interrogators pushed me into the walls, they had no idea they were pushing me into the loving arms of God. I didn’t have anyone there with me, but I felt God’s presence and love. I was just a tool in His hands.

“I want people to remember that we might be small, but we are strong and powerful with and in God. I am an extension of Christ to others and I want to love the unlovable. When people see that you love them, they will listen to your message about Christ. Now, as a speaker, author, attorney, and consultant, I motivate, equip, and train people to also be tools in God’s hands.”

RESOURCES

- *The Collective Podcast* – In season 2 we tackle topics such as suicide and depression, pride, Sabbath, and so much more! Find us on all platforms.
- Want to dwell on the themes of tonight? We've created a playlist just for you - search *The Collective Dawn* on Spotify.
- Join us Monday nights at **re:generation** to work through the steps of healing from hurts, habits, and hang-ups through biblical recovery. Find out more information at regenerationrecovery.org.
- **Watermark Women's Bible Study** – Join us online or in person, as we study the books of Judges & Ruth. Register at watermark.org/women.
- **Made for This: 40 Days to Living Your Purpose** or **Get Out of Your Head** by Jennie Allen
- **Elimination of Hurry** by John Mark Comer

WHAT'S NEXT:

- **Loved the truth you heard tonight?** Save the date for the future Collective events: **JUNE 5TH** and **OCTOBER 16TH**
- **Interested in joining our team? Is there a way we might serve you?** Email us at collective@watermark.org
- Stay tuned for details of some Covid-friendly connection coming your way – our very own **Collective Continued** Events!



