LESSONS FROM THE OSTRICH
Sitting By The Sea

Most every tour of Israel includes time to experience the Sea of Galilee. The guides will inevitably help the tourists to imagine Jesus intimately talking to His disciples along the shore. It’s nearly impossible to be there and resist pondering what subjects were talked about and what casual conversations may have transpired at that special location. We wonder … how vital was this time and these discussions in developing the Apostles’ boldness and courage later in their ministries? What role did these intimate conversations play in the transformation of these men into the new creatures who literally turned the world upside down (Acts 17:6)?

Small talk, discussion, chats by fireside or in coffee shops – interchanges such as these, some brief, some lasting for hours, some scratching the surface, others much deeper represent the life-changing power of conversation. I have great memories of both observing and participating in conversations with great men. I wish I could relive those moments. I’d like to hear them again, to glean the wisdom, profound inspiration, and historical context they were so casually pouring out. Ahh, to hear them again. It is interesting how we gain inspiration and strength during these moments, and it is often mysterious how those conversations come back to us and encourage us, bringing to mind a word, a phrase, or quote spoken to us at just the right time. Through laughter and sometimes tears, specific conversations change us forever and create memories we can never forget.

My parents’ lives were accented with endless visitors in our home and car drives to visit with others. The list would include many well-known ministers, gospel singers, and even some notorious characters of their era. They loved to talk scriptures while wolfing down cold cuts on homemade bread and drinking very hot coffee. In a certain way, listening to those conversations was as important to my own spiritual life as was the preaching and Bible teaching I heard.

Working with young men and women for more than three decades in an educational setting, I have noticed a desire for conversation, especially at this present moment. There is a craving for personal and intimate exchange about what really matters. It’s a dual challenge. On one side, the grey-haired among us must re-engage, enter again the coffee shops, sit at the dining room tables, and the spry young minds have to recognize the relevance of these interactions.

In honesty, I don’t think we can survive without it. We cannot teach this generation to live solely fueled upon the emotion that comes from experiencing only spiritual mountaintops. We must commit ourselves to the discussions, to the study, to the exchanges that will ultimately lead to transference of the whole Gospel that we are committed to as Oneness believers. There is a need for resolute affirmation of the Apostolic doctrine and dedication to the unrelenting defense against all compromise.

Preaching is indispensable. But, in contrast, intimate, personal conversation brings a unique closeness beyond preaching. It opens a path to explore one another’s ideas and thinking. It exposes the weaknesses in our human logic and reasoning. It reveals the heart: “For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7). The times when we are the most likely to feel safe, to feel unity and togetherness are when our hearts come together. And, when we are assured that our hearts are together we can accomplish great things. It requires closeness, vulnerability and honesty. Are we really on the same page? Are we still walking together? Is there genuine agreement? What constitutes true revival? Are we becoming too reliant upon our human abilities and talents? How much is too much human exaltation among ourselves? These are real questions, with real endpoints. They deserve real reflection and sincere candor.

We must be assured that we are moving in the same direction, advocating the same doctrine, holding to the same Great Commission, affirming our passion for the truth, and listening carefully to the needs and heartbeat of the saints of God who are walking in holiness and free from the love of the world. This will require that we listen and be willing to hear one another’s hearts.

Perhaps the best way, or at least one way, to assure our unity in these perilous times is for my generation to sit unhurried at the table detailing the past with genuine hearts. And … the young generation needs to receive an invitation to that table that they might listen and hear the incredible stories of the fathers and mothers who established the foundations, raised millions of dollars, turned on the lights of Apostolic churches coast to coast and around the world, who fought the good fight, and who are still preaching holiness and the Apostles’ Acts 2:38 message without compromise, without fear or favor, and without self-agrandizement.

Bring the youth to the conversation. Sit with them by the sea. Let them hear the old tales, the victories and the defeats. Tell them about the unique men and women who performed exploits. Be real. Recall your losses, your disappointments, the empty wallets, and the persecution. But, don’t forget the divine provision, the miracles, and the keeping power of the Name. And, above all else, let them know that you are with them, beside them as together we walk through the opening days of the greatest moment in human history! Command them (Genesis 18:19)! Keep the faith!

“Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses” (1 Timothy 6:12).
Guest Pulpit:
Lessons From The Ostrich
-Pastor Aaron Batchelor

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“UPCLLF has been an answer to our prayers. This ministry has made it possible for a young assembly to move forward in the Kingdom. Thank you to the wonderful staff and all the investors! We are excited for what God has planned in Inverness, Florida.”

PASTOR KEVIN & FIRST LADY LAURA MCGEE

Living Waters UPC closed a loan with UPCLLF in November 2017 to provide financing for a Student Center for their quickly growing congregation. After being rejected by three traditional financial institutions, they were able to apply and receive the funds to complete plans and purchase the materials for the new building in two months’ time from the UPCLLF. Their new 5,600 square foot center will include a fellowship hall, three classrooms, two offices, and an entire upper floor dedicated to their youth department.

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For more information go to www.upciloanfund.org/investment-opportunities
Opinions

The Importance of the KJV

Interviews by Gregg Stone

Note: The opinions on this page are entirely those of the individual and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of Indiana Bible College.

Kenneth Carpenter, Maryville, TN - I believe the King James Version of the Bible is without error. The so-called "revisions" of the King James Bible prior to 1800 were to correct typographical errors, add notes, and omit the Apocrypha from between the Testaments. There were no changes in the actual text of the King James Bible. The REAL changes (over 36,000 of them) didn't start until the modern revisionists came on the scene. Through the over-shadowing, God placed Himself in the virgin Mary, the word was made flesh, the perfect lamb of God, and the word made flesh was sufficient for God. Psalm 68:11 testifies that God saw it published and called the company of publishers great.

Brandon Nero, Mobile, AL - I would consider many English translations, in particular the King James version of the Bible, to accurately reflect the inspiration of the original writers. The inspiration seen in many English versions accurately relates the thoughts, ideas, and transcendent statements of eternal truth that it reveals. The inspiration of any English translation of the Bible will only hold as much inerrancy as the translation accurately reflects the original autographs. Currently, the scholarly world has about 120 papyrus manuscripts, the majority of which are in fragment form. According to Westcott and Hort, only one-sixtieth of the differences present variant readings, which would amount to 99.75 percent accuracy. That being said, even with quantitative textual criticism, our English Bible communicates revelation without error, and can be completely depended upon for doctrine and instruction for the Apostolic believer's life.

Jonathan Sanders, San Francisco, CA - While we understand the impossibility of a "word for word" translation from one language to another due to grammar and language constraints, we can have perfect confidence that God has preserved His Word for us as He promised. The English Bible clearly reveals to us all that we must know of God, His Kingdom, the saving Gospel and eternity. It is God's Word to us in our tongue. As such, I read, preach and believe it with earnest expectation of receiving its promises.

John Scheel, Beebe, AR - The words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. They are inspired and given to us by a God who has protected them for all these years. The KJV has stood the test for over 400 years. The KJV is under attack! The traditional text is authenticated by the sheer volume of historical use. This is what God chose to use, and the volumes of history verifies it.

T. L. Craft, Terry, MS - God has supernaturally preserved His Bible. Why should I quit trusting the King James version after all these years? Wicked men and Satan have attempted to destroy it, but God has kept it whole and without error. Businesses will tell you any organization whose founding documents are in question, the entire organization is in question. The Bible is the Church's founding document. Everything we believe comes from there. If it's in question, it seems like just another trick for Satan to bring the whole Church and what we know is true into question. Saying there is an unknown number of errors in the Bible leads to chaos, confusion, and eventually destruction. I think God preserved His Word in the KJV and the Textus Receptus, and it is perfect and without any error.

Steve Waldron, Leesburg, GA - Jesus said His words would not pass away. They are divinely preserved, according to Psalm 12:6, 7, God's Word is forever settled. The most ancient manuscripts and witnesses testify to the veracity of the KJV. We cannot become judges of God's Word; we must allow it to judge us. If Jesus said man shall live by every word of God, every word is important. Even a single letter can have a vast import. Who is to say it doesn't affect doctrine? This does not mean that printer errors cannot occur, and it doesn't mean that words could not have been translated differently. But the translations found in the KJV are perfectly acceptable for the contexts used.

O. C. Marler, Gray Court, SC - I'm 82 years old and have read the Bible all of my life, and I have never found a reason to doubt it. I've never felt like I should try to add to or take from it. I've always felt inspiration and anointing from it. I disagree that the King James Version has been translated into error, and I wonder about the motive of anyone bringing up the question after all of the years it has proven so faithful. I asked a scholar just the other day, "Why do people reject the King James version?" He said they studied just deep enough to become confused but not deep enough to find the truth. To them it's about marketing and not truth.

Stephen E. Smart, Alexandria, LA - Serious problems arise when you inject the possibility of error into the Bible, even minor errors. In the KJV, we have the exact replica in the most elegant and refined English language ever conceived. God has proved this by an innumerable cloud of witnesses in the form of existing manuscripts, 99 percent of which agree with each other, traced back to the first century. Charges against the KJV have been adequately refuted for many years but keep coming anyway. This is not surprising considering it is God's word (Genesis 3:1) and our faith (Romans 10:17) that is under attack! The traditional text is authenticated by the sheer volume of historical use. This is what God chose to use, and the volumes of history verifies it.
Experience life now. Those three words tell the story of New Life Church in Bridgeton, Missouri, a bustling suburb of greater St. Louis. With a history as rich as the city itself, New Life was established in 1948 in the home of Bro. and Sis. Guy Roam and is currently housed in a 64,000 square feet facility. Though the times have changed, the mission remains the same: to help people EXPERIENCE the love of God, find LIFE in Jesus, and serve others NOW.

“Those three words in our vision statement tell the story of how we are endeavoring to make disciples of Jesus Christ,” said Bishop Garry Tracy. “God has an amazing purpose for your life. You were intended to have a place now in His kingdom. It doesn’t matter your race, age, pedigree or spiritual experience. He has given each of us gifts to be used for His purpose. Once you connect with your passion and purpose, you will find out how significant you really are.”

Growing up in the small town of McAdam in New Brunswick, Canada, Bro. Tracy was third generation Pentecost and raised in the Apostolic faith. His ministry has led him to be a missionary, regional director and director for AIM/Education (Global Missions), and he currently serves as bishop at New Life St Louis and is the presbyter of Section One UPCI Missouri District.

After receiving the Holy Ghost and being baptized at the age of 10, Bro. Tracy’s call to ministry was a gradual process. “I served in every possible capacity in a small church as I pursued a career in engineering,” he said. “I served as a Sunday school worker, youth leader, assisted a home missionary pastor plant a church and, at age 30, I became a full-time assistant pastor. My family and I were appointed as missionaries to Pakistan in 1978 and served for 10 years. My wife, Susan, and I were chosen as regional director for the Asian region and served for seven years before becoming the director of AIM and Education for The Global Mission Division. I served there for three years before being elected to be lead pastor at New Life Center in Bridgeton in 1999. I was lead pastor for 16 years. I’m thankful for the honor to lead a church that was well established. Bro. and Sis. Aaron Batchelor were elected my successor in 2015, and I became bishop. We are now mid-way through a five-year transition period that will culminate in Pastor Batchelor assuming all leadership responsibility.”

Principles of Growth and Revival

The majority of the lead pastor’s time must be given to developing other leaders and keeping the church and its ministries on track with his vision for the church. He must have time to model the kind of Christian he wants his followers to become. This is essential to growth and revival. “Spiritual health is essential for sustained church growth,” said Bishop Tracy. “This requires a balanced spiritual diet and exercise. Having everyone involved (from new people to mature saints) in serving others is a key to church growth. A church culture of love and acceptance is essential to church growth. Leaders and members making disciples are essential for church growth.”

New Life St. Louis has 3-4 major events each year designed to bring new people into their building. Detailed follow-up is required to encourage the guests to return, get them into a “First Steps” class and become part of a small group. “Small groups have become effective in bringing new people in, making disciples and caring for them,” said Bishop Tracy. “Our goal is to expand small groups for a total of 68 by end of 2018. Our most effective method for growth has been developing personal relationships that results in spiritual formation.”

Organization & Management

With 40 percent of members involved in some form of ministry and 23 percent involved in evangelism and 40-plus active ministry departments in the church, organization and management are critical to keeping things moving in the right direction. “We meet with our leaders monthly for prayer, training and accountability,” explained Bishop Tracy. “Monthly reports are submitted electronically for most ministries and weekly reports for small groups that meet weekly. All leaders agree to a written signed job description. These are reviewed annually. Training takes place during the monthly leadership meetings, and we periodically bring in a guest speaker and/or take our leaders to a training seminar. We also have an annual staff planning retreat (three days) in October to establish our vision, plan events and our calendar, and discuss the process to accomplish those things. This is followed with a planning session with all ministry/small group leaders.”

Involvement
is the life of a church and the process is important; getting the right people in the right place at the right time. “All new people who become part of our church family take a ‘gifting assessment’ and are encouraged to participate in a ministry,” said Bishop Tracy. “We periodically have a ministry focus event, speak on the subject of involvement and give opportunity for all to sign up for service. Ministry leaders are encouraged to meet first-time guests at the ‘Meet and Greet’ function after each Sunday morning service to get acquainted, find people’s interest and explain their respective ministry or small group.”

Special Miracles

If the definition of a miracle is “a surprising and welcome event that is not explicable by natural or scientific laws and is therefore considered to be the work of a divine agency,” New Life St. Louis has seen its share. “John was attending our church regularly but was an alcoholic for 30 years,” shared Bishop Tracy. “A mix of alcohol and prescription drugs resulted in him going into a coma, during which he was kept alive by a machine. The doctor said if he ever regained consciousness he most likely would never be able to function normally. Prayer was offered for his healing and deliverance. After eight days he regained consciousness, his vitals returned to normal and after a time of rehabilitation he went back to work. His job as a mechanical expert on Boeing fighter aircrafts is physically and mentally challenging. John was also delivered from alcoholism and lives a victorious life today.”

Church History/Current Facility

New Life was planted in the home of Bro. and Sis. Guy Roam in 1948, but the church soon outgrew that structure. “As the congregation grew, they moved to a small church near their home,” said Bishop Tracy. “Continued growth required the purchase of a brick building in University City (St Louis suburb). The church continued to grow, and new property was purchased on the west side of St Louis. A new building was erected in 1968. We are currently in that expanded facility. Our present facility is made up of 64,000 square feet (most of it is two story) with a gymnasium and classrooms. The main building was constructed under the leadership of pioneer pastor Guy Roam in 1968 and the gymnasium and more classrooms added in 1999. Seating capacity is 600. We are currently doing a study to determine the feasibility of relocating to find a facility that would better serve our new pastor’s (Aaron Batchelor) vision for the future.”

Bishop Tracy enjoys many extracurricular activities outside of ministry. He and his wife, Susan [who passed away in March of 2015] have three children: Jeffrey, Judy and Joy, and he enjoys spending time with them. In October of 2017, Bishop Tracy married Victoria, and they are enjoying life and ministry together. “I also enjoy yard work, cycling, construction work, reading and hiking,” he said. “Also, the one thing people would be surprised to learn about me is that I am afraid of crowds and don’t like to stand before people!”

The Future of New Life

Entering the third year of a five-year pastoral transition, the vision for New Life St. Louis is greatly influenced by the pastor elect, Aaron Batchelor. “We are excited about our future,” said Bishop Tracy. “Our vision for New Life includes completion of the pastoral transition, implementation of a growth plan to double all aspects of the church in 24 months (attendance, finances, volunteers, leaders, ministries, small groups), increase our involvement in mission work at home and abroad, and either improve our present facility or relocate our main campus and start other campuses of New Life in surrounding areas of metro St Louis.”
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The goal of Zion Church Builders has always been to provide our clients with the best professional services available. We are dedicated to the belief that every church deserves its own original concept to design and function. This policy eliminates stock or off-the-shelf type plans, which seldom provide adequate solutions to the individual needs of every church. No church is too small or too large to fit into our program. We have worked with groups ranging from 18 to 3500. We pledge to commit our combined expertise and personnel in order to help you design and build your new facility.

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“Moved With Compassion” -- A Short History of CSI

Adapted from Bro. Daniel Scott’s manuscript

In 1984, the famine in Ethiopia reached a terrible climax with hundreds of thousands of lives claimed by starvation and malnutrition-related illnesses. As the missions reach of the United Pentecostal Church International spread farther around the world, so did their exposure to the suffering and needs of people. What had been little known or little seen in North American churches now were personal stories from missionaries and other field workers. And the people suffering were also the church family in those countries... with names and faces.

When the Foreign Missions board of the UPCI met in January of 1985, they devised and approved a plan to address these needs.

In an article published in the Pentecostal Herald in February of 1985, Bro. Edwin Judd, then general secretary of the Foreign Missions Division, introduced CSI to the North American UPCI pastors and congregations. COMPASSION SERVICES is a program within the structure of the Foreign Missions Division “to provide relief from human suffering resulting from famine, disaster and disease overseas where the spiritual ministry of the church can be enhanced by providing food, clothing, medical services, aid to orphans and assistance with education, agrarian reform and sanitation.”

Later in that same year, Bro. Judd further defined the mission of CSI and the responsibility of the Church: “My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue: but in deed and in truth” (I John 3:18). When Jesus saw human need, He was ‘moved with compassion’ and deliberately took action to meet the need of the hour. By instituting our new department of COMPASSION SERVICES... we hope to enhance the message we preach by demonstrating the love of God ‘in deed,’ by doing what we can to help relieve human suffering...

Bro. Robert K. Rodenbush was elected as the first director of CSI in 1986 and served through 1990. As a former missionary to Ghana, West Africa, he understood and had firsthand experience of the desperate needs that affect parts of our world.

In 2008, CSI became a standalone 501(c)(3) for tax purposes and legal needs but remains endorsed and affiliated with the UPCI. What Bro. Scism explained in 1988 still lies at the heart of CSI’s work: “The ministry of COMPASSION SERVICES and Foreign Missions go hand in hand. As we reach forth in love to help those who are needy and suffering, we also take to them the message of the love of Jesus Christ and this beautiful apostolic plan of salvation. This is yet another avenue of bringing to thousands the message of the gospel.”

We thank Bro. Daniel Scott for his efforts to research and compile the rich history of CSI. This column is only a short excerpt from his detailed work-in-progress that is intended for publication: “The ministry of COMPASSION must be ongoing. Let us love ‘in deed’.”


CSI needs your funding, support, and prayers to continue our work. To donate, please visit www.compassion-services.org. Donations, contributions, and offerings made to CSI’s international relief efforts can also qualify for direct offering credit through the UPCI Global Missions.

New Survey Explores Why People Choose Not to Attend Church

By Michael Faust, ChristianHeadlines.com contributor

A 2014 poll found that roughly one-third of Americans seldom or never attend religious services in churches, mosques or other “houses of worship.” A new survey explores all the reasons why they stay at home.

A recent Pew Research Center survey found that among adults who seldom or never attend services, 37 percent say the most important reason they skip services is because they practice their faith “in other ways.”

The other reasons are varied:

- 28 percent – “I am not a believer.”
- 23 percent – “I haven’t found a church or other house of worship I like.”
- 18 percent – “I don’t like the sermons.”
- 14 percent – “I don’t feel welcome.”
- 12 percent – “I don’t have the time.”
- 9 percent – “I’m in poor health or find it difficult to get around.”
- 7 percent – “There isn’t a church or other house of worship for my religion in my area.”

The 2014 survey found that 30 percent of Americans seldom or never attend religious services.

Meanwhile, among Americans who attend services at least once a month, the new poll found that 81 percent do so to become closer to God, 69 percent so their children will have a moral foundation, 68 percent to make them a “better person,” and 66 percent to give them comfort in troubled times.

The new poll was conducted among 4,729 adults in December.
Christmas for Christ is an annual offering for North American Missionaries. This special offering is received during the Christmas season and is used to enlist, train, and financially support missionaries who are called to establish churches in unevangelized areas in North America.

Videos & Resources
Find your 2018 Christmas Stories & Resources at www.christmasforchrist.faith
Bro. Anthony LoCascio, tell us a little about yourself and your ministry.

I am currently a church planter 20 minutes outside of Chicago’s North Shore, pastoring The Life Church of Glenview, with a daughter work and thrift store in Arlington Heights. I have three wonderful children and a beautiful wife. I also own a printing and promotional marketing distributorship.

Why should churches be involved in marketing? What makes this an important topic?

We live in a digital age. People look up churches online first before they ever step foot in the building. If you have an effective marketing campaign/strategy, you will raise your chances of having more first-time visitors, which means you can connect with more people and hopefully turn them into permanent members.

You often hear the word “branding” when speaking of marketing. What does this mean and how does this translate into reaching your community?

Branding is more than just specific colors and a logo. Entrepreneur.com defines branding as “the marketing practice of creating a name, symbol or design that identifies and differentiates a product from other products.” What this boils down to for a church is that they need to create a symbol that is eye-catching and helps define their church and their purpose so that people in the community can recognize who that church is and what they’re all about. Think of your brand as the nature or climate of your church displayed on marketing materials.

Pastors usually understand the need to have effective promotions for their church’s events and ministries. But how are promotions and marketing different?

Marketing is your overall strategy to reach people with your product or service. Promotion is the act of reaching those people. Marketing includes the product, pricing, placement, and promotion and should be executed with a planned strategy. If a church wants to promote a particular event, such as a youth event, then they would begin by defining the product (the youth event), then determine the price (free admission or price for food afterward), the placement (target teens and young adults), determine which platforms to use to promote the event, i.e. social media, posters and handing out flyers), and then the actual promotion (creating the image for the event, paying for flyers and posters, boosting posts on Facebook, organizing times for the youth group to hand out flyers in different areas, etc.). You can’t have promotion without marketing. Both are needed.

What have YOU found to be your best tools of promotions and marketing?

Statistically, and in my experience, nothing compares to the effectiveness of genuine word-of-mouth. That used to be enough to get people in the door. However, it’s becoming more and more necessary to have a strong web presence and good content online to help confirm the face-to-face witness. Without the online presence, the face-to-face loses credibility. I encourage my congregation to intentionally promote our church in person, but it is very necessary to couple a personal witness with strong, targeted marketing. Consistent social media engagement along with boosted posts on Facebook or paid Facebook advertising have been hugely successful for big events. Door hangers, flyers passed out around the community, and postcards have also been very effective in getting people in the door.

If a church has a limited budget, what should they focus upon first?

The first thing a church needs is a well-designed, engaging website. Eighty percent of all first-time guests already visited your website first. Next, a church needs to have a plan to spread excitement to a multi-channel approach. Excitement about your involvement in a church can be contagious and easily spread through social media. It’s also a good idea to have simple invitations like business cards in every member’s pockets while out at work or school. A church can post on its Facebook page and have its members “share” it on their own Facebook pages for a more organic and free promotion. Facebook loves to see daily posts with images and engagement. Video is king in social media. I recommend using Facebook schedulers, Facebook Live videos, share and commenting on every post as well as checking in while at church as ways to reach more people. You can “boost” a post on Facebook for relatively cheap and still reach hundreds, if not thousands (depending on how much money you put into the promotion). After covering the online traffic, I suggest door hanger invitations or “we prayed for you” messages, as they are a very inexpensive and effective way to create community awareness.

What is your company, how did you get started in this, and what does your company offer?

L&L Graphic Solutions is a single source solution for all marketing needs. We serve churches with design, printing and promotional product distributorship. We offer design and web development, online marketing, apparel, signage, and capabilities to print a logo or a message on over 850,000 products.

Any success stories? Who is successfully using your products?

Using Facebook marketing for The Life Church of Glenview’s Multi-Cultural Family Fest in the summer of 2017, we attracted more than 300 guests and had at least five families, including a family from Indiana, come back to a service. My company was grateful to have helped nine Kraft Foods bakeries across America rebrand their building, signage, and uniforms into Mondelez’ International, a successful two-year, several hundred thousand dollar project. We do most of the promotional products and apparel work for the Special Olympics of Illinois. Our big event Facebook promotion was successful in launching a local thrift store’s big one-day event and increase their revenue by 200%. Additionally, many camps, retreats, and youth convention committees have called on us for t-shirt printing and signage.

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<td>MidAmerica Conference</td>
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<td>Steven Jones, Andrew Bentley, Boston &amp; Haley Young, Jon &amp; Julie Hair, Jason &amp; Dina Calhoun, Joel McCoy</td>
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<td>WinterFire 2019</td>
<td>First Cathedral 1151 Blue Hills Ave. Bloomfield, CT 06002</td>
<td>Jon Petoskey, Sam Emory, Sean Libby, Janice Sipstand, Kenneth Carpenter, Mark Morgan, Scott Sistrunk, Elias Limones and Jerry Jones</td>
<td>For more info: visit <a href="http://www.winterfire.org">www.winterfire.org</a> or visit Instagram/Twitter/Facebook @winterfireconf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb 2019</td>
<td>Compassion Sunday 2019</td>
<td>Contact your local church for details.</td>
<td>Robert L. Rodenbush, director</td>
<td>For more info: visit <a href="http://www.compassionservices.org">www.compassionservices.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2019</td>
<td>Indiana Bible College THEOLOGY CONFERENCE</td>
<td>Indiana Bible College 1502 Sumner Ave. Indianapolis, IN 46227</td>
<td>Paul Mooney, Rob Rodenbush, Jason Gallion, Bobby Killmon, Lindel Anderson, others.</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ibc@apostolic.edu">ibc@apostolic.edu</a> <a href="http://www.go2ibc.com">www.go2ibc.com</a> or call (317) 262-4030 or (317) 554-8069</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 29- May 3</td>
<td>Ascend Student Convention 2019</td>
<td>Carlinville, IL</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ascendsc.org">www.ascendsc.org</a> <a href="mailto:ascendstudentconvention@gmail.com">ascendstudentconvention@gmail.com</a> (317) 789-8710 ext. 194</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 2019</td>
<td>Power Conference 2019</td>
<td>Crossroads Arena 2800 S. Harper Rd. Corinth, MS 38834</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
<td>For more info, call Josh Hodum (662) 287-4118 or (662) 872-9999</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 31-Aug 2</td>
<td>North American Youth Congress 2019</td>
<td>The Dome at America’s Center  St. Louis, MO</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
<td><a href="http://www.northamericanyouthcongress.com">www.northamericanyouthcongress.com</a></td>
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<td>July 2019</td>
<td>Mile High Revival 2019</td>
<td>Calvary Apostolic Church Of Denver, 5900 E. Yale Ave. Denver, CO 80222 Pastor Don Haymon II</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
<td>(303) 758-5900 milehighrevival.org</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 2019</td>
<td>The Apostolic Conference</td>
<td>Parkway Pentecostal Church, 601 Reunion Parkway, Madison, MS 39110. Host Pastors: Jerry and Jason Dillon</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
<td>(601) 853-2607 <a href="http://www.parkwaychurch.net/NAMRegistration">www.parkwaychurch.net/NAMRegistration</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 2-6</td>
<td>Arkansas International Campmeeting - North Little Rock, AR</td>
<td>First Pentecostal Church of North Little Rock 1401 Calvary Rd., North Little Rock, AR Joel &amp; Nathan Holmes</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
<td>For more info visit aricm.net</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 2019</td>
<td>Mid-America Renewal Conference (MARC)</td>
<td>Calvary Tabernacle 902 Fletcher Ave. Indianapolis, IN Host: Paul D. Mooney</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ibc@apostolic.edu">ibc@apostolic.edu</a> <a href="http://www.go2ibc.com">www.go2ibc.com</a> or call (317) 262-4030 or (317) 554-8069</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 2019</td>
<td>UPCJ General Conference</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
<td>Online registration, hotel reservations and exhibit registration available at <a href="http://www.upcjc.org">www.upcjc.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 10-11</td>
<td>Investing in Futures</td>
<td>Apostolic Sanctuary 1501 John Deere Pkwy Silvis, IL 61282 Hosts: Gary Randol and Scott Graham</td>
<td>Gary Randol, Scott Graham, David Brown, Nathan Scoggins and Stan Gleason</td>
<td>For more info: visit invest-in-futures.com (309) 792-0414</td>
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Church Growth: Making Sunday School More Evangelistic

The Last Free Generation

Julian Assange, the Australian computer programmer of WikiLeaks notoriety, gave an interview to the World Ethical Data Forum where he gives chilling details of the world’s future as it relates to personal privacy. His consensus is that global surveillance of individuals is inevitable and completely “unavoidable” (www.rt.com).

The rapid technologization of the world is changing everything. It has revolutionized every aspect of our lives. Grocery shopping, banking, communication, education, entertainment and similar basic activities are completely different than what they were even just a year ago. It’s nearly impossible to consider any area of life that has not been significantly impacted by technology and what is now being called “surveillance capitalism.”

The collection of personal data is a major concern. Who knows who is gathering, storing, researching and analyzing all the interworking of our daily lives. And this is not being done solely en masse (although this is powerful information as well), or in some way where the data are lumped together and not traceable to the individuals themselves. This is much more intense than that. The details of our lives are being recorded in such a way that it is possible for groups, governments, good guys and bad guys to pinpoint each person—their spending habits, eating habits, medical predispositions, likes, dislikes, and so much more.

We have long heard the argument, “Well, if you have nothing to hide, it shouldn’t be a problem!” The optimist in me would like to believe that is true. But, does it really matter whether it causes you a problem? Isn’t there an ethical issue that is much bigger than that?

In the interview, Assange speaks of some of the consequences of our new society. “This generation being born now... is the last free generation. You are born and either immediately or within a year you are known globally. Your identity in one form or another — coming as a result of your idiotic parents plastering your name and photos all over Facebook or as a result of insurance applications or passport applications— is known to all major world powers,” Assange warns. “A small child now in some sense has to negotiate its relationship with all the major world powers... It puts us in a very different position. Very few technically capable people are able to live apart, to choose to live apart, to choose to go their own way. It smells a bit like totalitarianism — in some ways. I believe it is our duty to consider the cyber footprint we are creating, not only for ourselves but for our children. In addition, as pastors and church leaders we have the ethical responsibility to consider our church’s relationship to cyber data collection, and work to provide protection of personal data, financial and other information that is entrusted to us. The use of the Internet to promote the Gospel, to simplify church management, and to ease communication is nothing short of miraculous. However, it will come with its own set of challenges. Freedom and privacy are uniquely bound; once severed, I pray the other can survive.

Church Today

Church Growth

How can I make our Sunday school more evangelistic?

The primary responsibility of the Sunday school is to reach children. But the children of unsaved parents reach their teen years and still have not made a decision to live for the Lord, it becomes increasingly more difficult to reach them. It is no longer “cool” to go to Sunday school or ride the church bus. Now they are “grown up” and “grown-ups” don’t go to Sunday school (just look at dad!). The opportunity to give their hearts to the Lord and receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost needs to be offered on a regular basis while they are still young. One suggestion is the concept of a monthly “Holy Ghost Sunday.”

This idea was first conceived out of one teacher’s frustration at the traditional “Baptist” method of having Sunday school (pre-session time followed by worship, the lesson, craft, a snack and going home). The teacher noticed that something was often lost during “craft” time. After the snack, the feeling often totally died.

So this teacher decided to switch things a bit. That next Sunday, he skipped his pre-session time and had a quick craft. Then he went directly into an extended time of worship and singing. After this, he taught his lesson under the burden of the Holy Ghost. It was a short lesson and at the end he gave a simple altar call. Several received the Holy Ghost that Sunday morning. He followed the same pattern the next several weeks, and over 40 received the Holy Ghost. They had, in essence, a Sunday school revival - but without an evangelist.

He realized, of course, that this could not go on indefinitely. After a while the altar call becomes “old hat.” But it could be done very effectively once a month - and effectively! This concept is simple, but the results are consistent. For more information, request file SSCE-04.TXT from Apostolic Information Services.

Theology

How has the idea of social aid so pervasively replaced salvation in some people’s minds today?

There was a cultural revolution in the 19th century with our society turning from God’s revelation to humanism skepticism. In places like France, there was a growing optimism that modern man could transform modern society. They replaced revelation with man’s reason suggesting that there were no constants of existence defined by God and the Bible; therefore, reality could be shaped by humans, once we reject these false parameters.

Out of this claim, a “new priesthood” or set of new experts on society emerged. The argument was that if modernism produced the new age, only modern ideas could find or have the necessary answers. So, secular sociology and the secular sociologist preaching “liberty, equality and fraternity” as defined and achieved by human effort displaced theology and the Church.

This utopian view of human progress and its ability to bring change or positive results put human interests as always paramount. In conjunction with this, it rejected the supernatural. So the “premodern” (or biblical views) were replaced by modernism (with its rejection of the supernatural and irrelevant revelation). For example, ideas such as the belief that family is a God-given unit were downplayed or rejected, and religious thinking lost any social acceptability.

But the results have been only partly catastrophic. For instance, when man is in complete control without any accountability or has “un-checked” power, the fallen nature of humanity seizes secular sociology’s utopian ideas about anthropology and dashes them on the rocks of reality. Communist governments have murdered more than 94 million people. When secular sociology is our theology, or when humans try to be God and order society alone, the results are always devastating.

However, when theology is our lived sociology, or humanity operates within the irrevocable laws of existence laid out in God’s revelation, we find results that lead to utopianism (as shown by Dena Freeman, a European anthropologist and economist from the London School of Economics. She argues that Pentecostalism has done more for Africa than all humanitarian aid organizations combined.

She poignantly states, “Pentecostals focus on some key aspects of change that secular NGOs continue to ignore – they are exceptionally effective at bringing about personal transformation and empowerment, they provide the moral legitimacy for a set of behaviour changes that would otherwise clash with local values, and they radically reconstruct families and communities to support these new values and new behaviours. Without these types of social change, I argue, it is difficult for economic change and development to take place.”

Notice, societal change can only occur from personal change. That’s the power Apostolics have, not the Social Gospel. Our missionaries have ALWAYS done more for Africa than all humanitarian aid! Knowing how we got here as a society through secular ideas is needed to protect our thinking. Further, we can demonstrate that only God orders society well, and the admission to that truth, even by those outside the faith, is staggering today.
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JANE BUFORD | LADIES MINISTRIES SECRETARY | UPCI

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SOCIAL MEDIA

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**Columnist Forum**

**Spiritual Growth**

Carol Clemans

**Healthy Marriages Are the Heart of the Church**

In the beginning, God created marriage. God made Adam from the dust of the earth. He made Eve from Adam’s rib. God said, “The husband is to leave his father and mother and cleave (be glued together) to his wife.” Adam was given authority. Eve was given influence. Who had the most power? In their marriage, under Eve’s power of influence, Adam abdicated his authority and chose to disobey God with Eve. This first marriage set the dysfunctional pattern of marriages down through the ages.

Paul, writing to the Ephesus church, laid out God’s perfect design for marriage, comparing earthly marriage to the relationship between Christ and the church. Christ is the head of the husband. The husband is the head of the wife/family. Wife is to arrange herself under her own husband for protection, provision and guidance as she does to Christ. Husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church and sacrificially gave Himself for the church.

The simple truth of Ephesians 5:21 is submitting one to another in the fear of the Lord. Husband is to love as Christ loves – gentle, patient, kind, good, faithful with self-control. This produces love, joy and peace in a marriage. When the wife is loved with Christ’s love by her husband, she will happily be drawn to him to fulfill all of his needs.

My book, God’s Design for Marriage, was birthed from many years teaching marriage seminars/parenting issues and counseling 26 years. I taught six years at Christian Life College under Dr. Daniel Segraves; one subject of six was marriage/christian life counseling 26 years. I taught six years at Christian Life College under Dr. Daniel Segraves; one subject of six was marriage/family.

My marriage book is a great resource for pre-marital counseling, to heal a broken marriage or make a good marriage a radiant marriage – order through my website: www.carolclemans.org.

**The WOW Factor**

Tom Foster

**Leaders Must Lead**

The story of Nehemiah is a great example of a leader who led the people to accomplish a great task. He had to be precise and direct to pull together a team of people who would buy into the vision and then be willing to work the vision. Nehemiah had a vision that could rally the people.

As we read through this great book, we can find seven principles that Nehemiah used to bring the people together to accomplish the purpose he had been given.

- **Simplicity** – The vision was simple: build the wall (Neh. 2:5).
- **Participation** – Nehemiah included as many people as possible in the process (Neh. 2:18).
- **Delegation** – He matched the task with the workers. Leaders planning, the work team and the war team (Neh. 3, 4:16).
- **Motivation** – He brought people into the vision and encouraged them (Neh. 4:14).
- **Preparation** – There were many dangers to face to reach Jerusalem, but he prepared by requesting the king provide protection on their journey. Without walls around the city there was no protection, but he had prepared by setting a watch on the city (Neh. 2:9).
- **Cooperation** – He instructed the people to work together: he charged them to stop the abuse of the leaders over the people and that they were to restore the land of their brothers (Neh. 5).
- **Celebration** – After the people had worked and endured much temptation and struggle, they celebrated the completion of the wall with a great feast (Neh. 8).

Nehemiah declared the people had a mind to work, so they built the wall. The bearers of burden strengthened that which was decayed. The leader recognized the distraction of their enemies and led the people to a resolution to overcome the enemy.

No great task is every accomplished without people to do the work and a leader to guide the way. With a leader that leads, the impossible becomes possible.

**Christian Living**

Jennifer Mast

**The Importance of Healthy Communication**

Effective communication is the key to building interpersonal relationships, imparting the Gospel, and transmitting knowledge from one to another. So, it’s no surprise the Bible contains a wealth of information on the importance of communication.

James, in his epistle to the church, deals extensively with the subject of communication. In fact, he touches on the subject of speech in every chapter of the book. And, in James 1:19, he offers succinct instructions that remain applicable to everyone, regardless of the situation.

He starts with the imperative, “Be swift to hear.” In today’s fast-paced world, the art of listening is often lost. To truly listen is to enter the conversation fully engaged. It requires the listener to reject the notion that silence and an occasional nod of the head are sufficient. To listen is to remain aware and responsive to verbal and non-verbal cues (mannerisms, emotions, voice inflection, facial expressions, etc.).

Next, he instructs the reader to be “slow to speak.” The temptation is to rush headlong to a conclusion. Human nature demands problems are fixed, words of wisdom shared, and platitudes dispensed. But real communication requires submission to Godly wisdom. It often demands a pause and a prayer, before words are offered.

Finally, James insists the Christian must be “slow to wrath.” Words spoken in the heat of the moment are ineffective and are responsible for incalculable damage. There is never justification for words fueled by wrath. Words, once loosed, can’t be recalled. The injured may forgive the offender, but forgiveness doesn’t instantaneously remove the effect of the words on the heart and soul. Therefore, it is imperative the Christian learn self-control in communication.

In summary, James’ words compel the readers to temper their speech, communicate effectively and empathize. In one simple verse, the writer presents an excellent pattern for prayer. May every Christian seek God’s help and “be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.”

Jennifer Mast works as registrar for Indiana Bible College and instructor for the Biblical Studies Department. Sis. Mast is also a licensed minister/evangelist. Follow @jen_1335.

**Accounting & Tax**

Delano Sherley

**Credit Freeze Update**

Last November, we reported on the need to protect your identity by putting a freeze on your credit. Beginning September 21, 2018, there is no longer a fee to do so. A freeze stops someone from getting a loan or opening a credit card in your name (it does not restrict your ability to use your credit cards).

Once a request is made, it must be completed no longer than the next business day. When you request a freeze, you will receive a PIN. The PIN is used to unfreeze your account when you need to apply for a new loan or credit card. Keep the PIN in a safe place. When you request the freeze to be lifted (which is also now free), the credit agency must comply within one business day. When you request a freeze, be completed no longer than the next business day.

Insurers, employers, existing creditors and debt collectors can still access your credit report after a freeze is in place. You can request a freeze by phone or online at all three of the major reporting agencies (Equifax, Experian and TransUnion). We recommend that you do so with all three. You can also place a freeze on your children’s account, which is also recommended.

Delano Sherley is a CPA and president of Delano Sherley & Associates, Inc. He can be reached at 513-737-1314. Delano Sherley & Associates, Inc. 8240 Beckett Park Dr., Suite A, West Chester, OH 45069. Email: Delano@dsacpainc.com. Website: www.dsacpainc.com
**NEWS IN BRIEF**

- Australia’s newest prime minister is a church-going evangelical Christian who isn’t afraid to stand up for his faith in a country largely viewed as secular. Scott Morrison became prime minister recently when the Liberal Party voted him in as its leader after ousting Malcolm Turnbull, the former prime minister. Morrison is the leader of the Liberal Party, a member of Horizon Church, a Pentecostal congregation in Sydney where he and his family are involved in ministries. When Morrison was elected to the Australian House of Representatives in 2008, he referenced his Christian faith in his victory speech. “For me, faith is personal, but the implications are social – as personal and social responsibility are at the heart of the Christian message.”

- In a move that sparked division on social media, President Trump opened his cabinet meeting August 16 by asking Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to pray. Pompeo reportedly used a “Cabinet Prayer” booklet from his days at West Point. “O God, our Father, Thou Searcher of men’s hearts, help us to draw near to Thee in sincerity and truth. May our religion be filled with gladness and may our worship of Thee be natural,” Pompeo prayed. “Strengthen and increase our admiration for honest dealing and clean thinking, and suffer not our hatred of hypocrisy and pretense ever to diminish. Make us to choose the harder right instead of the easier wrong, and never be content with a half truth when the whole can be won ...” C-SPAN posted the prayer on Twitter. Some applauded it, some criticized it. President George W. Bush, too, often began his cabinet meetings with prayer, according to U.S. News & World Report.

**EDUCATIONAL TRENDS**

**NJ Teacher Suspended For Calling Homosexuality a Sin**

A high school teacher in New Jersey has been suspended for three years after she called homosexuality a sin on her personal Facebook page. LifeSiteNews.com reports that Jenye “Viki” Knox taught at Union High School since 2000. Knox, who is an ordained minister, was also a teacher and faculty advisor for a student-led Bible study at the school.

Back in 2011, Knox criticized the school’s promotion of the LGBTQ lifestyle. “Why parade your unnatural immoral behaviors before the rest of us?” Knox posted. “Homosexuality is a perverted spirit ... I know sin and it breeds like cancer.” Knox was suspended without pay for her social media remarks.

**SOCIAL TRENDS**

**American Biking Couple Who Believe “Humans Are Kind” Killed by ISIS Group**

The Pluralist reports that a young American couple was killed recently in Tajikistan by Islamic-State terrorists. Jay Austen and Lauren Geoghegan tragically lost their lives on July 29 when they, along with two other bicyclists, were struck by a car and then stabbed to death by the car’s occupants. ISIS later claimed responsibility for the murders.

Austin and Geoghean, both 29, had embarked upon a world bicycle trip when they decided to bike in an area with reportedly high volumes of terrorist activity. The couple seemed to suggest they chose this route to show that people are not evil, as “the narrative” suggests. Austin blogged, “You watch the news and you’re led to believe the world is a big, scary place. People, the narrative goes, are not to be trusted. You fill your days with the murders and monsters. I don’t buy it. Evil is a make-believe concept we’ve invented to deal with the complexities of fellow humans holding values and beliefs and perspectives different than our own.”

On July 25, Austin shared on Instagram that the couple had just reached the one-year mark of their journey. Sadly, their journey ended only a few days later.

**RELIGIOUS TRENDS**

**Billboards Removed After Image of Pastor Holding a Bible was Called Offensive**

Pastor Greg Laurie of Harvest Christian Fellowship in Southern California was forced to remove his billboard ads at local malls, because he was shown holding a Bible.

Each year, for nearly 30 years, SoCal Harvest hosts a “9/11” crusade. The ads were up for about two weeks when the billboard company asked Pastor Laurie to revise them. The billboard company reportedly received multiple complaints and one “libelous threat” from folks finding the Bible “offensive.”

The church agreed to remove the Bible from the picture and simplify the billboards. However, the complaints continued. The company removed the billboards completely and gave a refund.

Instead of getting angry, the church started a campaign with a hashtag #StandForTheBible and reminded guests to be sure to bring their Bibles to the event. According to The Harvest website, 100,000 attendees turned up at the Anaheim Stadium for the crusade.

**THAT’S OUTRAGEOUS**

**Shocking TEDx Talk Videos Try to Normalize Pedophilia**

A number of TEDx Talk videos have been shocking people around the world. It seems that the current conversation in the culture wars centers around redefining and accepting pedophilia. Mirjam Heine, a medical student, presented a TEDx Talk at the University of Wurzburg in Germany in May. She said, “Pedophilia is an unchangeable sexual orientation. Just like, for example, heterosexuality, no one can cease being one.”

“Just like pedophiles, we are not responsible for our feelings. We do not choose them, but we are responsible for our actions, and we must make a decision. We should accept that pedophiles are people who have not chosen their sexuality.”

“We must accept that pedophilia is a sexual preference.” She did draw a clear line for her opinion, saying that abusing children is wrong. She also stated that a pedophile who has not acted on their preference has done nothing wrong.

One pastor later remarked, “The culture wars are in full swing. It seems that a vocal liberal minority is trying to normalize the abnormal, celebrating the bizarre. However, if we are hearing that we must accept pedophilia repeatedly, more people will accept it. But then in time the message will be about accepting child sexual abuse. And we cannot tolerate that. The church must speak biblical truth in love.”

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Hear the Word of the Lord from Job 39. The Lord is speaking to Job out of a whirlwind, saying, “The wings of the ostrich wave proudly, but are they the pinions and plumage of love? For she leaves her eggs to the earth and lets them be warmed on the ground, forgetting that a foot may crush them, and that the wild beast may trample them. She deals cruelly with her young, as if they were not hers; though her labor be in vain, yet she has no fear, because God has made her forget wisdom and given her no share in understanding. When she rouses herself to flee, she laughs at the horse and his rider.” Job 39:13-18 ESV

Job is offered up as a test.

The Lord didn’t leave out any of the human details of Job’s situation. Job was a righteous man who prayed and offered up sacrifices. The Lord had blessed him with houses, servants, cattle and all the things that attributed to wealth in that generation.

One day, Satan, running to and fro, came before the Lord. The Lord asked, “Where have you been?” Satan answered, “I’ve been running around looking at the people.” And the Lord asked, “Have you considered my servant Job?” So, don’t be mad if God suddenly puts you on the chopping block! Just know He has faith in you.

Satan replied, “Yes, I saw your servant Job. You’ve blessed him and have a hedge around him. If you remove his blessings, he’ll curse you!” God said, “Take his blessings.” If God allowed your family, possessions, health and finances to be taken away from you, how many would still say, “The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord”? There were attacks from Satan until everything Job had was gone, and although Job doubted, he did not sin against God.

Satan came to the Lord again for permission to touch Job’s body. The Lord gave permission, and boils appeared all over Job until he was scraping boils with pieces of potsherd. When one of my kids start throwing up, I get queasy, but Job endured the anguish and pain. His wife had compassion on him and said, “Job, just curse God and die!” But Job refused to curse God. I know spouses who would say, “Yeah, I knew you should have taken out the trash and treated me better. Look at you now.”

Job’s friends come to judge him.

Your emotions, your spirit and your body get out of whack when you are really sick and need comfort. Job’s three friends only pointed to his failures. “You’ve messed up, buddy. God must be judging you, because you’ve sinned!” They had no idea what was going on, while the poor guy had to lie there with boils under his armpits, on his nose, legs, feet and toes.

God brought judgment upon the three friends. We don’t always know what God is up to. Be careful in your treatment of brothers and sisters struggling with pain. If you give a word to somebody, make sure you’re tapped into the Spirit. God may be raising them to another level, because He trusts them. Unless Job prayed for them, God would come down. “Forget about Satan messing with you. I’ll mess with you, because you messed with one of mine.”

The younger man there kept his mouth shut while the three elders spoke. Our generation needs to keep our mouths shut and honor our elders while they speak. This young man waited, but his anger was bubbling inside. We young men get passionate about stuff, but the young man did speak wisely. “Who are we to speak against God? Who are we to judge God?” In his judgment of the three, God didn’t mention the young man.

The voice of God speaks to Job.

Then, God showed up in a whirlwind, looking for Job. “Job, stand up and dress yourself for action like a man and answer some questions.” God’s voice shakes not only mountains but heaven and earth! My voice barely gets my kids to clean their rooms, but the mere whisper of God can shake us to our core.

God addressed His righteous servant that He loved so much, “Where were you, Job, when I created the heavens and the earth? Did you fling the stars into the sky? Did you create the burning ball of fire in the sky? Did you tell the rivers and water where to go? Have you been to the depths of the ocean? I’ve been there, Job. I walked it. Where were you, Job, when I created the leviathan, with fire in his breath and scales like iron?”

Job, as humble as pie, says, “Behold, I’m of a small account. What shall I answer you? I lay my hand on my mouth. I’ve spoken once. I will not answer twice, but I will proceed no further.”

If you, good parents, after a tongue-lashing to your children, heard them say, “You’re right. I was wrong. I’m sorry. I’m not going to talk anymore,” you would say, “All right, you’ve learned your lesson. You can go now.” But God said, “I’m not halfway finished with you, Job. I will question...”
We’re too casual in approaching God.

We’re too casual in our hearts with God. Do we fear our spouse, the boss, etc. more than we fear God? We misconceive the fear of the Lord as dread and never being able to approach Him, but the fear of the Lord is an awe and respect for Him. My children know I love them, yet they fear me as their daddy. They fear me more than they do you, and you make it known to me.” God pursued him to his core! He didn’t let Job off because of his humility.

What’s your motive for all that you do?

What’s your motive for being here? Are we more concerned with how we look than making disciples? Is our focus on the babies that walk in to feel the love of God, when we smile and talk to them? The Sadducees and Pharisees’ deeds were to be seen. The Sadducees and Pharisees wanted all to see they were followers of Jehovah. They could easily have sung, “There is no God like Jehovah.” They could walk to the temple on bridges without walking below where the peasants were. Some people come to church just so the pastor will see them. I love to see you, but that can’t be your motive. What’s your motive?

Are we laboring and toiling in vain?

What a waste it would be to come week after week, laboring and putting all of this together and forget about the people that were supposed to be here.

I know you’re strong and know how to pray when St. Louis is going nuts. You know how to guard yourself, but there are people that are new to this and are terrified when trouble comes. They need help. They’re not strong enough yet. They don’t know as much scripture as you. They don’t know how to come to church just so the pastor will see them. Offer to stand with them and pray and battle together. “Oh, God, help us to be open to speaking into people’s lives. The truth is not okay for the church! God requires repentance first, period.

What is okay for the ostrich is not okay for the church.

Ostriches, the tallest and heaviest of all birds, do not fly. They can cover 16 feet in one stride and run over 40 miles per hour with skinny legs that can kill a lion, and there’s no record of an ostrich ever burying its head in the sand. Female ostriches lay 40-100 eggs a year. During the incubation period of 35-45 days, the nests are raided by predators, and only ten percent of the eggs survive. The Lord said, “She deals cruelly with her young as if they were not even hers.” She doesn’t care. She has no fear!

I put my Bible down and wept! The church is the bride of Christ, the mother to bring in children, raise sons and daughters and make disciples. We so quickly forget the church was put here by Jesus Christ himself for only one purpose, “Go and make disciples.” Everything we do should point to making disciples. What is okay for the ostrich is not okay for the church!
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MK Ministries
Apostolic Pen Pals and Prayer Pals Wanted For Missionary Kids
By Linda Schreckenberg

MK Ministries is a ministry under the umbrella of Global Missions and the UPCI. The ministry helps missionary kids (MKS) navigate the tides of change, transition, and day-to-day life. Those near the same age are matched, like Sunday school kids with elementary-aged MKs, for example. There is a screening process involving questions and references; however, most importantly, all correspondence goes through the ministry or missionary parents.

When asked about her personal experience as a missionary kid, Sis. Poitras said, “As an MK, I was privileged to travel and experience the world. However, with that wonderful exposure came trials, change and a host of hardships. Had it not been for the steadying hand of MK Ministries, I would not be in the church today. Honestly, I’m not sure I would be here at all.”

MKs have other needs as well as communication with someone their age. Care packages are always a great way to show support and love and are always welcome. MK Ministries has a Pinterest page with great gift ideas. MK ministries are always in need of gift cards to be used for birthday and Christmas gifts. MK Retreat sponsorship is a blessing, as it allows MKs to return from the field and be ministered to in an environment tailored specifically for them. Sis. Poitras explained, “We use excess funding to make sure a team member is present for major life events when family and friends can’t be there. We provide counseling wherever needed and reach out to MKs who are struggling on site, by going directly to where they are in person.”

When people get in contact with MK Ministries regarding giving and how to give, they are connected to a specific family and their own unique needs. For more information, contact Sis. Poitras by email at Melindanicity@gmail.com.

MK Ministries
Apostolic Book Emphasizes God’s Mercy, Despite Our Failures, Inconsistencies
By Susan Thomas


The Blood of God, which is Bro. Bowler’s sixth and latest book, is mostly centered on the continuing role that the blood of Jesus plays in our lives even after we are saved. “Many times we (Christians) have the faith and confidence that God can save anyone and forgive them of anything,” explained Bro. Bowler. “But for some reason, after we have repented we often feel like, from now on, we are on the ‘thin ice’ of salvation, so to speak.

“We have to be reminded and assured often that the same blood that cleansed us before we were saved is the same blood that continues to cleanse us after we have become saved. Many times we feel guilty and struggle with mistakes that we have made, things that we have said or done, and we begin to feel that surely we have exhausted God’s grace.”

He said the book uses much Scripture to show the continuing love and mercy of God that is always available to us in spite of our failures, sins and inconsistencies.

“In all of my writings I like to use different entertaining stories and anecdotes (sometimes even humorous examples) to help make a point more clear,” said Bro. Bowler. “This helps to keep the reading alive and more interesting. It’s not like reading an encyclopedia but more like having a fun and engaging conversation with a friend.”

The target audience is not necessarily those who are merely curious or who are exploring the basic tenets and fundamentals of the Christian religion. The Blood of God is more likely for those who already have a faith in Jesus and the Word of God, who struggle with guilt and self-condemnation. It’s for those who desire to better understand and appreciate the crucifixion and the love and mercies of God that are so essential in our spiritual survival.

Bro. Bowler is author of six fascinating books. He currently holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theology from Christian Life College in Stockton, Calif. He is also readily available for preaching and speaking engagements and/or seminars centered on the various core aspects and doctrines of original Apostolic Christianity. All of Bro. Bowler’s books are available through Pentecostal Publishing House or from online booksellers. You can contact him at eagle95240@hotmail.com.
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“We have held two Harvest Conferences at our church. Since having Bro. Norman come in we have gone from averaging around 40 to now moving into a new building that will accommodate 400 people. Much of that growth, numerically and financially, can be attributed to Bro. Norman and his ministry.”
Pastor Robert Axton
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“Within 6 months of hosting a Harvest Conference our church’s average attendance had gone from 250 to 300.”
Pastor Bill McGraw,
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*A * * * * *

A traveler got to the airline counter and presented her ticket to New York. As she gave the agent her luggage she asked, “I’d like you to send my green suitcase to Hawaii and my red suitcase to London.”

The confused agent said, “I’m sorry, we can’t do that.”

“Really? I am so relieved to hear you say that because that’s exactly what you did to my luggage last year!”

*A * * * * *

While leading a tour of kindergarten students through our hospital, I overheard a conversation between one little girl and an x-ray technician.

“Have you ever broken a bone?” he asked.

“Yes,” the girl replied.

“Did it hurt?”

“No.”

“Really? Which bone did you break?”

“My sister’s arm.”

YOU KNOW YOU’RE A BAD COOK WHEN...
- You use the smoke alarm as a cooking timer.
- You consider it a culinary success if the pop-tart stays in one piece.
- Your dog goes to the neighbors’ house to eat.
- When you barbecue, two of your kids hold water guns and the third stands ready by the phone with 911 on speed-dial.
- You make tuna noodle surprise and the surprise is that it glows in the dark and melts the silverware.
- Your family automatically heads for the dinner table every time they hear a fire truck siren.
- Your two best recipes are meatloaf and apple pie, but your dinner guests can’t tell which is which.
- You’ve used three boxes of scouring pads, a bottle of Drano and a crowbar, and that macaroni and cheese still won’t let go of the pan.

*A * * * * *

Wife: Who was that at the door, dear?
Husband: It was that new minister. He has been by four times this week.
Wife: What is his name?
Husband: I think it’s Pester Smith.

*I * * * * *

A man was walking through the desert, desperate for water, when he saw something far off in the distance. Hoping to find water, he walked toward the image, only to find a little old woman sitting at a card table with a bunch of neckties laid out on it.

The thirsty man asked, “Please, I’m dying of thirst, can I have some water?”

The woman replied, “I don’t have any water, but why don’t you buy a tie? Here’s one that goes nicely with your outfit.”

The man shouted, “I don’t want a tie; I need water!”

“Oh, great... Candace and her holy rollers.”

“I know, right? The only thing weirder than being swallowed by a whale is being swallowed by a whale with Wi-Fi.”

*I * * * * *

While leading a tour of kindergarten students through our hospital, I overheard a conversation between one little girl and an x-ray technician.

“Have you ever broken a bone?” he asked.

“Yes,” the girl replied.

“Did it hurt?”

“No.”

“Really? Which bone did you break?”

“My sister’s arm.”

“I’m sorry you didn’t like my sermon Sunday, but I really didn’t care for your snoring either!”

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