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A CHURCH BUILT ON THE ROCK
I asked my daughter, Jaye Rodenbush, if I could share her article with you this month. This article speaks directly to the cultural war we are facing. Let us think on these things. Jaye teaches at IBC, is an anointed speaker and writes about current cultural and moral issues that affect Christian women and families on her blog entitled “Her Candle Goeth Not Out By Night” at www.jayerodenbush.com.

Raising Counter-Cultural Kids
By: Jaye M. Rodenbush, B.A., M.S. Ed.

Youth culture is incredibly fast moving. The news, trends, fashion and the digital media that accompanies it all are purposely fluid and difficult to track. Even the most dutiful researchers, parents and pastors are behind before they even realize it. It is a moving target of influence that is molding and shaping the minds and hearts of our children and young adults.

Discussing current events can be difficult as the 24-hour news cycle and a content-obessed society moves from one crisis to the next so quickly that it makes events seemingly irrelevant before they can even be properly processed. For example, in January of 2018, six teenagers took their own lives in one small rural school district in Ohio. It has been labeled “suicide contagion,” and the phenomenon is a growing concern. It seems we are witnessing the act of suicide becoming contagious among young people. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that since 2007 the rate of suicide has doubled among children ages 10 to 14. The CDC also states that overdose deaths among teens doubled between 1999-2015, and this number is only predicted to rise. But... the news cycle passed, America shed a collective tear and moved on.

In response, they quote Theodore Roosevelt, “We want to make our children feel that the mere fact of being Americans makes them better off... this is not to blind us at all to our own shortcomings; we ought steadily to try to correct them; but we have absolutely no grounds to work on if we don’t have a firm and ardent Americanism at the bottom of everything” (Random House, 2007). Similarly, our kids must have a firm and ardent Apostolic Pentecostalism at the core of everything if we have a hope of making them want to continue to live an Apostolic life.

We have got to work every day to educate our children’s minds against the deluge of anti-Christian indoctrination that they are facing. The enemy has come in like a flood, and it is our job as parents to start bailing the water from out of the minds and hearts of our kids. Nearly everything about living a Christian life goes against the politically correct mindset of America today. We are asking our kids to live completely counter-culturally. This is no easy task. It means they have to reject most of the ideology that comes with public education. It means they have to reject the immorality and depravity of media and entertainment. It means they will not fit in. It means they will stand out. They will be different. They will be targeted for ridicule. They will face opposition. It’s a complete war for their mind. They need support and guidance.

We cannot wait until we are brought to our knees to get on our knees and pray. We’ve got to pray for our families, our children, and our nation. Pray a hedge of protection around them physically and mentally. Pray they can walk in peace, not in trepidation. Pray that they receive spiritual discernment, that they may see for themselves what is good and what is evil. Pray that they have the courage to reject the enemy’s attempt to define decency, modesty, morality completely downward until there is no decency, modesty, or morality at all. We must pray that they have a boldness of heart and passionate spirits that help them to indeed live counter-culturally, without embarrassment or shame. Pray they learn to love the Oneness doctrine, to love scripture, to develop their own commitment to holiness and separation from the world. This will not be accomplished without great diligence. It will require us to guard our homes from carnality and worldliness. It will require that we put them into a church environment that allows them to really feel and be touched by the Holy Spirit. They need the power and anointing that comes with a true infilling of the Holy Ghost – this essential experience cannot be substituted for emotionalism. It cannot be manufactured or imitated. It cannot be fabricated by worship that glorifies personalities rather than Christ. It cannot be carnally replicated or contrived without repentance, conviction and conversion. That is our job: to teach, love, train, talk and to be sure we take them to where we know they can be spiritually fed, nurtured and led by spiritual authority. But, ultimately, we must remember it is their walk with God and we must yield our desires for their lives and their accomplishments to His direction and His calling.

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Mission Statement

* To promote revival and growth among Apostolic churches and pastors by encouraging unity and cooperation among those of like faith and by providing a forum for the sharing of new ideas, ministries and programs.
* To report on those trends and events which directly affect the work of the church.
* To promote and enhance the ongoing ministry of Indiana Bible College.

NOTE: Indiana Bible College does not endorse or recommend any advertiser or product advertised in this publication.

If you would like to receive the IBC Perspectives each month, simply provide us with your mailing address and we will send it to you free of charge. Each year we will contact you by mail to insure your address is still current. At that time you will be given the opportunity to give an offering to help support this publication. Recommended offering: $20.00

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FEATURE: A CHURCH BUILT ON THE ROCK
(JAMES FIELDER)
The United Pentecostal Church Loan Fund is a financial ministry that benefits individuals, churches, and ministries of The United Pentecostal Church. We offer certificates with competitive fixed rates of interest and use investment proceeds to make loans to churches and ministries of the United Pentecostal Church.

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The United Pentecostal Church Loan Fund offers financing opportunities to churches, districts, and endorsed projects. Loans are for new construction, capital expansion projects, renovation, refinancing, and building and property acquisitions.

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The table below shows the investment rates for different maturity periods:

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<thead>
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<th>Minimum Investment</th>
<th>Fixed Interest Rate</th>
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*Not FDIC or SIPC insured. Not a Bank Deposit.*

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Kevin Pace, Fond du Lac, WI -- Like Elijah and the nation of Israel, only a bold demonstration of the power of God will reach this generation. Pray someone through in Walmart, pull someone out of his or her wheelchair, use the unlimited power that God has given you -- or this generation will be lost.

The largest threat to the millennial generation is distraction. With the technology we now have, we can win a soul on the other end of the globe. However, most millennials have had more social media accounts than Bible studies and are keeping up with the Kardashians more than their prayer lives. We won’t miss the newest episode of our favorite show, but we’ll miss the will of God. We can’t hear God’s voice because we won’t take our earbuds out. If we would look away from our screen perhaps we could see the harvest.

Andrew Herbst, Indianapolis, IN -- Revival can only come with a full and complete dependence on God’s Spirit. Reliance on God is easy to talk and write about but not as easy to actually live. Self-image and talent are in the prime spotlight in this day and age. Speaking as a millennial, the sooner we get our self-image out of the way and stop trying to be cool, the sooner we can begin to live a “dependent lifestyle” wholly on God. The cyber arena, without a doubt, is one of the most negative forces with which we millennials fight.

This battlefield lies in pornography, binge-watching and the continual checking of Instagram and other social sites. These distractions accumulate hours and steal our time that could be spent in growing spiritually and building the Kingdom of God. Although the battle is difficult, many are choosing this “Holy Way” and seeking to be Biblical and not caught up in mainstream Christianity.

Benjamin Ikerd, Indianapolis, IN -- Revival will not be handed to us through our heritage, a new program or special speaker. It is something between us and God. Something we ourselves must seek out. There are plenty of fakes our generation has experienced, and we are no longer looking for a superstar in their technique, style of dress or social standing, because social media can tell us all that we want to know, and more.

What millennials do hunger for is a genuine relationship with God and to be led by someone like this. Revival in this generation will come from a developed burden focused on God, and prayer over lost souls.

Jordan Simmons, Columbia, MS -- “Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways,...”, and see, and ask for the old paths..."

As a member of the next generation, I am asking for the old paths. The old path contains prayer, fasting, the Word of God and anointing. If we desire to partake in soul winning, the gifts of the Spirit, walking deeper in God, witnessing miracles take place, and finding true rest for our souls, we must pick up the torch from our elders and continue in this marvelous truth.

The word millennials might have a negative connotation now, but the millennials of the church can change that. Take a stand, walk in the old paths, and be a light to a world nearly consumed in darkness. The best days of the church have yet to come.

Ayanna Turner, Izmir, Turkey -- Once the millennial generation sees the simplicity of applying God’s principles into the lives of others, it will quickly spread like wildfire. This generation only needs to be shown first-hand that the Gospel is still applicable to every situation.

Ecclesiastes 1:9 rings true in that there is nothing new under the sun. The biggest struggle that this new generation faces is the fear of inadequacy and rejection. Technology is fighting to create avatar worlds where everyone is perfect, but true perfection can only be acquired through Jesus Christ. Only when we grow in our walk with God and have a holy boldness and confidence in Him will we truly overcome this generation’s greatest hurdle.

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Brett Potts, Circleville, OH -- To bring revival to this generation will take faith. Faith that not only can God perform a work but trusting that He will! Depression and doubt are two of our most destructive forces. Regardless of the fact that many young people are very gifted, we lack confidence through God in our abilities.

Many of us think that we fall short of being used of God because of our own abilities or past failures. It is vital that we remember that it is God who is calling us. Despite these challenges, there is an ever-growing number of young people who are becoming more and more ministry-minded and, ultimately, missions-minded. We desire to return to the “Holy Way.” We yearn to see the Holy Ghost poured out like in the book of Acts.
“We are committed to magnifying the Lord through Spirit-filled worship, godly lifestyle, consistent prayer life, and generous giving. It is our endeavor to proclaim the gospel to our community and to equip others to be disciples of Jesus Christ.”

This is the mission statement for the United Pentecostal Church of Portage, Ind. The church, pastored by Bro. James Fielder, has been a mainstay in the community for more than 60 years. It has been a refuge for the hurting, a church built on the rock.

Bro. Fielder and his wife, Wanda, are blessed to pastor this thriving church in Portage. They have two sons, Brent and Bryan. Brent and his wife, Angie, have two children and serve as the church’s youth directors. Bro. Fielder is currently on the Indiana District Board serving as presbyter of Section One. Various positions he has formerly filled are Ohio Youth Secretary, Indiana Evangelists’ Director, Section One Sunday School Director and Home Missions Director.

First-time Guests

Guests and visitors are pleasantly surprised at the quality care they receive upon visiting Portage UPC for the first time. Upon arrival, guests will be greeted by a welcoming hostess team. Ushering staff will be standing by with umbrellas in case it is raining. The team of greeters is readily available to assist at the Guest Services desk. Here guests will be given an opportunity to complete an information card. All personal information is kept confidential. However, the church may use that information to express thanks for first-time guests, and it will be used to inform the visitor of upcoming events. First-time guests will be visited by a member of the Outreach team and will receive a small gift from the church.

Principles of Growth and Revival

“The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light” Romans 13:12.

The church in Portage utilizes several powerful tools for evangelism and reaching the community. “In years past, bus ministry played a vital part of church growth, and we continue to reap the benefits of that ministry,” said Pastor Fielder. “We currently do not use buses, but we run church vans weekly. However, we find that personal evangelism is our best method of growth. We encourage the teaching of home Bible studies and one-on-one witnessing. Another powerful tool for our church growth has been an outstanding Children’s Ministry and a thriving Youth Ministry. We feel that we have much to offer our community in these ministries, and it promises a strong church of the future as well as today.”

Organization and Management

Portage UPC enjoys a variety of ministries under Pastor Fielder’s leadership, consisting of the following departments: Sunday School, Men, Ladies, Senior Singles, Youth (ages 12-18) which consists of various activities for an active youth group that loves God and loves having fun! The Children’s Ministry (ages 4-11) offers exciting, fun-filled activities such as choir, drama, kids’ church and a variety of other activities just for children. Single young adults are encouraged to join Hyphen. “Our anointed Music Ministry is designed to bring glory to our God,” said Pastor Fielder. “We strongly encourage worship, for He deserves all of our praise at every opportunity we have.”

The pastor meets with department heads on a monthly basis. They also have a yearly planning meeting to form a calendar of events and discuss new ideas or situations which need attention. This method of operation has proved to be beneficial to each ministry by combining the creativity of others.

Personal Ministry

The philosophy of Pastor Fielder has always been that “the pastor needs a pastor.” He feels “it is vital to have this influence in one’s life. Although both of my former pastors are deceased, I keep close contact with influential voices in my life. I also provide mentorship to many ministers who have been a part of our assembly. We currently have nine couples in ministry that formerly sat under our leadership who are now serving as pastors or assistants in other cities. We also have four ministers working along with me in our local church. We
have an awesome assistant pastor, Bro. Michael McFarland.”

**Current Facility**

The current sanctuary of the Portage United Pentecostal Church was built in 1983 on the 12 acres previously purchased just four years after the Fielders took over the pastorate. It has a seating capacity of 800, including the balcony. “We recently redecorated this facility,” explained Pastor Fielder. “We also have a separate Family Center that has been a blessing to our congregation by providing a wonderful facility for many church events. One other building on our property is a large bus garage. We have plenty of room to expand, and that is our desire and goal. We currently average a little over 200 in attendance.”

**Personal History**

Pastor Fielder said he was not blessed to be raised in a Pentecostal home but was raised as a Catholic, which included attending Catholic school and being an altar boy. “I was marvelously brought to truth at the age of 15 by the witness of a friend in high school,” he explained. “I actually had to be baptized in secret due to the disapproval of family.

“...and upon this Rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” Matthew 16:18.

The Portage United Pentecostal Church had its beginning in the spring of 1956 with prayer meetings and Bible studies in various homes. It began under the leadership of Bro. G. T. Grinder and was called the Garyton United Pentecostal Church. The church purchased the property at the corner of Mulberry and Russell Streets and a church building was erected there that same year. The church name was changed in 1959 due to the name change of the community. Bro. Paul Upton served as interim pastor for three months when Bro. Grinder resigned in November 1962. Bro. W. C. Matlock became pastor in 1963 and served for five years. A fellowship hall was built during this time.

Bro. Robert E. Henson was elected pastor in 1968, and he served in this capacity for 11 years. During his leadership in 1973, the church was remodeled and 12 acres of land were purchased where the church building now exists. In 1983, the new church building was constructed at the present location on Willowdale Road, and a Family Center was built in 1988.

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**Human Interest**

Although Pastor Fielder doesn’t find much time to indulge, golfing is a favorite leisure activity. “However, my wife and I most enjoy spending time with our wonderful family,” he said. “We cherish every moment with them. We live close to Chicago, and we like to take the train into the city and enjoy the many wonderful sites and activities there.

“We love to travel the world, and we have a wonderful group of ministry friends with whom we vacation yearly. Quite often that has been cruising, which we love.

“I have always enjoyed the writings of revivalists Charles Spurgeon and D. L. Moody and have a small collection of their publications. I have read most of the books written by my friend, Mark Jordan, and always find great inspiration in his prolific writing. My desire is to mentor those following in my leadership and to enjoy watching their ministries flourish.”
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Pray for CSI’s mission to help those devastated by natural disasters and other causes of human suffering

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Online donations can be made quickly and securely at www.compassionservices.org/donate.
Puerto Rico Relief Effort Continues

Life has not yet returned to normal in Puerto Rico. As of the writing of this article, some reports indicate that up to 45% of residences are still without power. “Blue tarp villages” cover the landscape. Lack of power and tarp-covered homes are two of the more visible effects, while a bruised economy and a population outflow are less visible long-term concerns. The population of Puerto Rico dropped by 100,000 people in the months following Hurricane Maria, and the Centre for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College in New York estimates that number may double.

In late December, in partnership with two other non-profit groups, United for Puerto Rico (UPPR) and LIFT Non-Profit Disaster Logistics (LIFT) joined forces to deliver needed supplies. Rev. Mark Hattabaugh of Cooper City, Florida, Compassion Services International (CSI) distributed more than four containers of donated goods to communities throughout Puerto Rico. CSI President Rob Rodenbush was on-site in Puerto Rico in December to meet with those involved with this project including representatives of UPPR, Mr. Michael Rettig, president of LIFT and many other outstanding individuals, who assisted with transportation and distribution of the contents of the containers. UPPR, an initiative started by the Office of the First Lady of Puerto Rico in response to the recent hurricane disaster, oversaw the collection of items that filled the containers, which was made possible due to the assistance and help of an outstanding group of individuals from the state of Maryland.

In total, 115 pallets of basic necessities such as non-perishable food items, cleaning supplies, childcare products, basic medical supplies, and more were delivered. These supplies arrived in San Juan on December 19 and were transported inland to the UPC of Puerto Rico Campground, which functioned as a staging area and distribution center. Missionaries to Puerto Rico, Rev. Gary and Kristi Landaw, Rev. Paul and Stephanie Rivero, Rev. Joseph and Cassandra Landaw, and other pastors, churches and leaders from the UPC of Puerto Rico were instrumental in coordinating and overseeing these efforts. Volunteers worked for weeks to ensure supplies were delivered to those in need. Destinations included individuals who were homebound, elderly care facilities, families, and children’s homes. One particular example was a long-term nursing care facility called “Hogar Esperanza” or “House of Hope” located in the northeastern area of Puerto Rico. Another was a home for mistreated children in Vega Alta.

As supplies were distributed through UPCi churches on the way to those in need, local churches gained a positive and more visible position within their communities. While the population decrease following Maria has affected church attendance, relief supplies have provided encouragement, as well as evangelism opportunities to local churches. “It has given us an open door in areas we didn’t have an open door before,” said Rev. Landaw, who also reported new church visitors from contacts made during the distribution process.

Basic necessities are a welcome relief to immediate needs, but the long-term recovery efforts in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean requires further work and support. Many churches have suffered structural damage and have lost seating, sound equipment, and musical instruments due to water damage. Churches are inhibited in their ability to fix and replace damaged materials due to the decline in church attendance. Continued support is needed for our church family and all people across the Caribbean. If you would like to unite with us in supporting relief and reconstruction in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, please first pray about your involvement, then help spread awareness about the needs, and consider partnering with us financially.

Visit www.compassionservices.org/donate to learn more about contributing. We also encourage pastors and churches to participate in Compassion Sunday on February 25, 2018, a special day designated by the UPCi Global Missions to shape the need and mission of CSI with your congregation.

“CSI has been our lifeline and a special assistance in this time of need,” said Rev. Landaw. “We want all the donors, leaders, and whomever else is involved with CSI to know that we express our gratitude.”
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Educating, Encouraging, and Equipping Student Ministry Workers

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tom Foster

August 16-17, 2018

The Apostolic Sanctuary
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Silvis, Illinois 61282
Phone: (309) 792 - 0414


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Plainly Speaking

The Journey of a Disciple Maker

STAN GLEASON, KANSAS CITY, MO

Interviewed by Gregg Stone

Bro. Stan Gleason
Kansas City, MO

Bro. Stan Gleason, tell us a little about yourself and your ministry.

I have held a license with the UPC International since 1978. I married Marlene in that same year and launched full-time ministry in February of 1979. Over the last 40 years, we have evangelized twice, served as assistant pastor for three years, served our first pastorate for five years, and have served The Life Church in Kansas City, Mo., as senior pastor since July of 1988. I have enjoyed the opportunity to be involved in the UPC International structure as sectional youth director, district youth secretary, district Global Mission director, presbyter, executive regional presbyter, Missouri district superintendent, and currently serve as Assistant General Superintendent UPC Western Zone.

Jesus commanded us to “go make disciples.” What did Jesus mean by this?

When Jesus said, “Go make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:19), He intended for us to live our lives intentionally for the spiritual development and maturity of others around us. A disciple, according to the first century view, is a committed follower of Jesus who obeyed His command by making his/her own disciples.

Some see this as only applying to “new convert care.” While that is certainly part of it, isn’t it much broader than this?

Jesus did not have a compartmentalized view of reaching the world such as outreach, evangelism, assimilation, discipleship, etc. He saw reaching the world all under the command to make disciples. Making disciples is not merely a department in your local church, but it is the mission of the local church. Every born-again believer is called to make disciples. The gospel came to us on its way to someone else; let’s not become a dead end for the gospel.

Many feel we are falling short in this area of ministry. Do you feel we lack in the “discipleship making” mandate?

Our movement has historically embraced the “soul-winning” model of reaching the world. This is unfortunate as Jesus never called us to win souls. There is a major difference between disciple making and soul winning. Soul winning is an Old Testament phrase; it is an event, it is unnatural, involves very few in the local church, fosters competition, tends to let newborns fend for themselves, and has not yet reached the world.

What can we do as a church to improve in this area?

Disciple making is for everyone (if you can make a friend you can make a disciple), is never over, develops spiritual maturity in others, is organic, and engages the law of compound interest (disciples who make disciples). If every Oneness Apostolic (22 million) would truly live his or her life intentionally and make one disciple annually (who then makes a disciple), we theoretically would reach the entire world in nine years.

What are the key elements a church should consider implementing to effectively “make disciples”?

Like any vision, the pastor must model the behavior desired to be reproduced within the congregation. The pastor should also teach/train and require every member of the paid or volunteer staff to model disciple making. People do not do what we say but what they see. There should be a disciple-making testimony every Sunday which inspires others to become involved in changing lives. Training sessions should be offered regularly to equip those who desire to make disciples. Every person who receives the Holy Ghost or is baptized should be sent home with a disciple maker or invited into a disciple-making small group.

How do I know if I am a good disciple?

You will ultimately know if you are a disciple or not by answering one question: “Who is your disciple?” When a disciple maker walks in a room, their attitude is “there you are,” not “here I am.” Jesus continually demonstrated this relational profile (John 1:47).

What skills would a disciple possess?

Disciple makers understand the power of having spiritual conversations, how to share their story, teaching and applying the Word of God, but also requiring their disciple to spend time in the Word and share what they are learning. We need to change the definition of spiritual maturity from coming to church, paying tithes and singing in the choir to actually producing fruit (a disciple).

What are you doing in your own church to make disciples in a practical sense?

We have on-going Bible study training, we have over 80 disciple-making groups consisting of 1-2 disciple makers and 3-5 disciples. Disciples are best made in groups, not one-on-one. We endeavor to send every person who has been baptized home (to speak) with a mature disciple who can develop spiritual maturity in them. We offer two levels of discipleship classes on Sunday mornings (these alone do not make disciples but it does inform and equip new believers concerning local church culture and dynamics). We also have hosts in every section of the sanctuary whose ministry is to connect with guests. One powerful way to do this is at some point during the service (usually the altar call) ask them if God was to do a miracle in their life, what would that look like? This is an emotionally charged question. Then prayer is offered over this situation. God always shows up, and this is an effective basis upon which to foster a future friendship.

You recently wrote a book on disciple making. What motivated you to write this book?

I wrote Follow to Lead: The Journey of a Disciple Maker because I was asked to do so by our Publishing House. In September of 2012, I was praying and asking God for direction for the coming year for our church. The Lord clearly spoke to me: “Go make disciples.” Up until this time I thought I had been doing that. Little did I realize at the time I had much to learn about what Jesus meant when He gave us that command. The book is a recap of an odyssey that unfolded for me and our congregation over the next few years (and yet is).

How to order, cost, etc.

The book is offered through PPH or is available on Amazon. The Life Church will be offering a disciple makers conference June 29-30. More information can be found soon on lackmo.com.
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<td>FEB 22-24</td>
<td>WinterFire 2018</td>
<td>First Cathedral 1151 Blue Hills Ave, Bloomfield, CT 06002</td>
<td>Sam Emory, Janice Sjostrand, Ron Libby, Kenneth Carpenter, Mark Morgan, Josh Carson, 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>
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<td>FEB 22-24</td>
<td>Indiana Bible College CONNECT 2018</td>
<td>Indiana Bible College 1502 Summer Ave, Indianapolis, IN 46227</td>
<td>Paul Mooney, Rob Rodenburg, 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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<td>FEB 25</td>
<td>Compassion Sunday 2018</td>
<td>Contact your local church for details.</td>
<td>For more info: visit <a href="http://www.compassionservices.org">www.compassionservices.org</a></td>
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<td>APRIL 3-5</td>
<td>Indiana Bible College THEOLOGY CONFERENCE</td>
<td>Indiana Bible College 1502 Summer Ave, Indianapolis, IN 46227</td>
<td>Paul Mooney, Rob Rodenburg, Jason Gallion, Bobby Killmon, Lindel Anderson, others.</td>
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<td>Indiana Bible College MUSIC FEST 2018</td>
<td>Calvary Tabernacle 902 Fletcher Ave, Indianapolis, IN</td>
<td>Paul Mooney, Rob Rodenburg, Lindel Anderson, IBC Choir, IBC Chorale, IBC Praise, others.</td>
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<td>APRIL 23-27</td>
<td>Ascend Student Convention 2018</td>
<td>Carlinville, IL</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ascendsc.org">www.ascendsc.org</a> <a href="mailto:ascendstudentsconvention@gmail.com">ascendstudentsconvention@gmail.com</a> (317) 789-8710 ext. 194</td>
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<td>JUNE 6-8</td>
<td>Power Conference 2018</td>
<td>Crossroads Arena 2800 S. Harper Rd, Corinth, MS 38834</td>
<td>Jerry Dean and Scott Graham</td>
<td>For more info, call Josh Hodum (662) 287-4118 or (662) 872-9999</td>
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<td>AUG 1-3</td>
<td>The Apostolic Conference</td>
<td>Parkway Pentecostal Church, 601 Reunion Parkway, Madison, MS 39110</td>
<td>J.W. Dillon, Wayne Huntley, Chester Wright, David Shatwell, Raymond Woodward, and Mark Morgan</td>
<td>(601) 853-2607 <a href="http://www.parkwaychurch.net">www.parkwaychurch.net</a> ParkwayChurch.net/NAMRegistration</td>
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<td>AUG 2018</td>
<td>Mile High Revival 2018</td>
<td>Calvary Apostolic Church Of Denver, 5900 E. Yale Ave, Denver, CO 80222</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
<td>(303) 758-5900 <a href="http://www.cadencenver.org">www.cadencenver.org</a> milehighrevival.org</td>
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<td>AUG 3-7</td>
<td>Arkansas International Campmeeting - North Little Rock, AR</td>
<td>First Pentecostal Church of North Little Rock 1401 Calvary Dr., 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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<td>To be announced</td>
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<td>SEPT. 2018</td>
<td>Mid-America Renewal Conference (MARC)</td>
<td>Calvary Tabernacle 902 Fletcher Ave, Indianapolis, IN</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEPT 2018</td>
<td>93rd Annual UPCI General Conference</td>
<td>Calvary Tabernacle 902 Fletcher Ave, Indianapolis, IN</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
<td>Online registration, hotel reservations and exhibit registration available at <a href="http://www.upcigc.com">www.upcigc.com</a></td>
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<td>OCT 2018</td>
<td>MidAmerica Conference</td>
<td>First Pentecostal Church of Jesus Christ, 1401 Calvary Rd., N. Little Rock, AR 72116</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
<td>For more information visit midamericaconf.com</td>
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<td>NOV 2018</td>
<td>West Coast Conference - Fresno, CA</td>
<td>Fresno Convention Center, 848 M Street, Fresno, CA</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
<td>For more information call: (559) 225-1622 <a href="http://www.truthtabfresno.org">www.truthtabfresno.org</a></td>
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<td>FEB 2019</td>
<td>Indiana Bible College LIVE RECORDING</td>
<td>Calvary Tabernacle 902 Fletcher Ave, Indianapolis, IN</td>
<td>Paul Mooney, Rob Rodenburg, Lindel Anderson, IBC Choir, IBC Chorale, IBC Praise, others.</td>
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Church Today: The Trajectory of “Better”

The Trajectory of “Better”

In Crisis Magazine, a Catholic publication, author and priest George Rutler laments the lack of strong church leaders in the Catholic faith. He quotes an English bishop that stated: “Wherever St. Paul went, there was a riot. Wherever I go, they serve tea.” Rutler’s concern over the loss of spiritual boldness and trajectory of the future warns against what should be avoided in our own ranks as Apostolics.

Our world has changed dramatically. A generation ago, pastors were expected to preach absolutes, express strong opinions, and offer moral standards for daily living. The world looked to the church for answers, and while they may not have liked or lived up to them, there was a certain comfort in knowing where to go to find the truth taught and preached. Today, the expectation has changed. Church seeking has taken on a new level of meaning.

No longer do people look to a church or denomination that corresponds to specific doctrines and tenets of faith, but they go from church to church looking for an experience that suits every family member. Is the Sunday school program exciting? Do they provide enough youth events? Is the pastor engaging, interesting and time conscious? So to meet these expectations churches today respond with “better” marketing, websites, social media and events focused primarily on time efficiency and catch-all theology. It’s not to say we shouldn’t focus on areas that can benefit from improvement, but we must make certain that the time and energy placed on becoming “better” does not restrict our spiritual effectiveness and anointing, or water down our commitment to our core doctrines.

Mainline Christianity has taken “better” to mean speaking in generalities, sticking to sermonic encouragement rather than conversion and a moral relativism that doesn’t intrude on lifestyle choices. If Apostolics head too far down this path, we will lose our purpose altogether. This generation is surrounded by relativism – our clarity, strength in doctrine and our reliance upon scriptural absolutes and the Holy Spirit to guide our lives, our churches and our services is what will set us apart from the noise of everything else. Why do they need to come to a 60-minute church service if they can watch a TED talk, or listen to a motivational podcast for the same effect?

The world needs preachers to fill its pulpits and young people unafraid to reach those around them with a dynamic, powerful and anointed Apostolic message. “Where there are bishops of moral absolutes and the Holy Spirit to guide our lives, our churches and our services is what will set us apart from the noise of everything else. Why do they need to come to a 60-minute church service if they can watch a TED talk, or listen to a motivational podcast for the same effect?”

Church History. There is always a faithful remnant somewhere, even if it got down to just eight souls in Noah’s day. It really is true that other man-made doctrines came later and are not original to the Bible (the trinity, being saved at repentance only, infant baptism, sprinkling as opposed to immersion, praying to Mary, communion as necessary for salvation, etc.). Many have rejected salvation which God gave us on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) and “do church” in a way foreign to the way the Apostles did. This is why we define ourselves as Apostolic Pentecostals. It simply means we are biblical Christians. There are others who reject reading and implementing the Bible in a way that’s true to Jesus and the Apostles, and even their name gives this away (Baptists, Methodists, Catholics, Presbyterians, etc.).

The term Christian is so widely used today; even other groups define themselves by other terms. It helps identify what’s important to them, and this enables us to state beliefs clearly when we share our beliefs with friends. Even non-denominational means something as a term. There is a criteria test of spiritual and physical vigor, there will be an abundance of young men willing to take up the call of priestly service. Where the spirit is tepid and refreshes itself on the thin broth of a domesticated and politically correct Gospel, seminaries will be vacant. As C.S. Lewis gave account: “We make men without chests and expect from them virtue and perseverance in the face of the things hurt worse than death. We hold fatuous programs that you anticipate unfolding as revival and growth come through a renewed emphasis on prayer and evangelism. Evangelism and lots of new converts. Nothing brings renewed life and excitement to a church like the joy of new babes in Christ. Plan a number of prayer events and evangelism activities with the focus being on souls. Place an emphasis on home Bible studies, bringing visitors, effective visitor follow-up, personal witnessing (consider launching a CCC ministry) and Sunday school growth. Launching a bus or car ministry can fill vacant seats and bring many new faces to God’s house. Strive to see increased attendance by planning special programs on Easter, Pentecost Sunday, Back-To-School Sunday (Block Party?) and Christmas. Print up free tickets to the church call yourself that. So, invite people to each fun program. Divide the church into teams and create some friendly competition and prizes. Make each event exciting. How does one recover from a church split? By speaking words of faith and backing up those words with positive, revival-inspiring actions. Without exception, when we do our part, God always does His.
A conference designed for the North American Missionary and Church Planter

August 1-3, 2018

Jerry W. Dillon
Host Pastor

Jason W. Dillon
Host Pastor

SCHEDULE

Wednesday
7:00 PM
Rev. J.W. Dillon
Rev. Wayne Huntley

Thursday
9:30 AM
Rev. Chester Wright
Rev. David Shatwell

7:00 PM
Rev. Raymond Woodward

Friday
9:30 AM
Rev. Chester Wright
Rev. David Shatwell

7:00 PM
Rev. Mark Morgan

Kids: Rev. Phil Wagoner

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Spiritual Growth

Do We Treasure God’s Word?

Do we treasure God’s Word? Do we feed on God’s Word daily? Pastors, do you teach your people how to study the Word of God? In my counseling (nationwide) for 25+ years, I find a dearth of knowing God’s Word with the people.

I’ve had more than one pastor tell me, “I do not study the Bible unless I’m going to preach.” Their confession exposed their spiritual weakness. God’s Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path! We all must feed on God’s Word daily. The Bible is God-breathed! To know His perfect will is to know His Word. Our purpose in life is found in 1 Corinthians 6:18-20.

God’s Word has the answers to heal broken hearts. The Bible holds the keys to becoming healthy spiritually, emotionally and relationally. All of my counseling comes from the Word of God. We in ministry must be teaching how to apply the Fruit of the Spirit to everyday life! We must be teaching how to love others as God loves (Galatians 5 & 1 Corinthians 13).

God’s Word teaches how to deal with anger (do not sin – be Holy Ghost-controlled). God’s Word instructs us in many places to put off sin and put on the Lord Jesus Christ. God’s Word is the basis for my counseling porn addiction recovery. God’s Word has the blueprint for a God-centered marriage. My book, God’s Design for Marriage, came out of God’s Word teaching marriage seminars – order: www.caroleclemans.org for soft cover or eBook: amazon.com. Pastors/ministers will be accountable to God regarding their feeding their sheep the Word.

Jesus sat on hillsides and taught thousands of people for many hours His truth. Those people had no entertainment. Are we emphasizing physical demonstration worship instead of emphasizing God’s Word? True worship is presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice unto the Lord in our daily activities (Romans 12:1 & 2 AMP). Can we say, “Follow me as I follow Christ” through His Word?

Carol Clemans

The WOW Factor

The Power of One

This column is an attempt to explain the phenomenon I call “WOW!” It’s impossible to define it. You can’t put it in a box or sum it up neatly in a definition. But we all know when we see it, feel it, or sense it. Every month I want to provide insights into why some leaders and churches have the “WOW” and some don’t. Why some had it but lost it and how you can get it and keep it.

Let’s start this first article with the WOW Factor of One.

The WOW Factor is all about the power of one. Not just the number but the potential it represents. One idea or one moment or one person can have such a terrific influence that can shape futures, change lives, impact people and make an eternal difference.

One single person has the potential to affect everyone he or she meets in such a way that their lives are affected in a positive way that creates unbelievable growth.

I know you have heard of the following WOW Factor people:

- George Washington
- Abraham Lincoln
- George Washington Carver
- Jesus Christ

One person with an attitude that is positive and upbeat can have such influence on others that it goes high above all boundaries, whether they are racial, social, cultural, or even geographic.

Don’t sell yourself short that you can’t make a difference. You have within you the innate possibilities to have an inconsiderable positive influence on others. Your impact can outline you and last long after you have ceased to exist.

A WOW Factor person understands that what a person is will leave a far greater impact on others than what a person does. You may not be able to change your past, but you can change your future. Let’s look for the WOW in our days and nights. Believe that you have within you the God-given potential and awesome power to influence others in such a way that you make in them a life-changing difference.

I am determined to leave behind the greatest legacy I possibly can. Won’t you join me in the pursuit of the “WOW!”

Tom Foster is the Bishop of Dallas First Church in Dallas, TX. He is the Presbyter of the SE Section of the North Texas District and the Church Growth Director for the UPC. You can follow him: (tomfoster54 or email him: foster@dallasfirstchurch.com)

Don’t Quit on a Good Concept!

Home Bible Studies are still an effective tool for evangelism. For many years, I struggled effectively teaching chart-based Home Bible Studies. My challenge was condensing the amount of material. I’m sure the failure was mine. Many are effective teaching a “Genesis through Revelation” study.

It was also less than effective for me to teach a lesson or two focused only on salvation. Again, I’m sure the lacking is in me. The shorter lesson seemed to allow too little time for relationship building or questions.

Churches are being grown using both of these approaches.

Trying to teach a Home Bible Study that did not use either of the two approaches began decades ago. Several things did not work.

What the Bible Says . . . evolved. What the Bible Says . . . is topical. The lessons were first used as mid-week Bible lessons. The lessons were adapted to teach to the unsaved. For me, What the Bible Says . . . worked better than anything I’d tried. The seven lessons covered the Word of God, salvation, repentance, baptism, the Holy Ghost, speaking in tongues and the nature of God. A student handout and worksheet for homework eventually became part of my teaching process. The existence of What the Bible Says . . . is a lesson in not quitting on a good concept.

In time, I realized a few others also struggled What the Bible Says . . . was published in the late 1990s. For 15 years, What the Bible Says . . . was out of print. When life took me to North American Missions, there was no staff or time to compile the three-ring binders – which was the way the lessons were provided.

After several requests, What the Bible Says . . . will be re-released on March 15. The current version is updated and is no longer in a three-ring binder. Student handouts and worksheets remain. A discount is available for anyone who pre-purchase What the Bible Says . . . The discount coupon code Perspec offers an added 5% discount for those who read Perspectives.

Carlton L. Coon Sr. pastors SpringfieldCalvarychurch (Springfield, Missouri). Past director of North American Missions. Author of 23 books. Blog and posts are at carltoncoons.com. On the last Tuesday of each month at 7:30 CST join a Facebook Live Webinar at Carlton Coon Sr.

Carlton L. Coon Sr.

Accounting & Tax

2018 Mileage Rates and Tax Law Changes

The IRS has released the new mileage reimbursement rates for 2018. For business-related travel, the new rate is $0.545 per mile. Driving for medical may be deducted at $0.18/mile and mileage for service to a charitable organization is unchanged at $0.14/mile. Mileage for moving expenses is no longer deductible.

In last month’s article, we recommended that the pastor get reimbursed for all church-related mileage and business expenses, rather than deducting them on their personal tax return. Under the new tax law, miscellaneous deductions (which includes unreimbursed employee expenses and home office deductions) are no longer deductible. This lost deduction begins for the 2018 tax year.

If, however, you file a schedule C, you can still deduct the mileage and home office deductions. This would apply to evangelists and guest speakers, not to church employees who receive form W-2.

Charitable donations are now deductible up to 60% of adjusted gross income (prior limit was 50%).

Finally, the 2018 HSA contribution limits increased to $3,450 for an individual and $6,900 for a family. Those over 55 can contribute an additional $1,000.

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@dsacpinc.com Website: www.dSacpinc.com

Delano Sherley is a CPA and president of Delano Sherley & Associates, Inc. He can be reached at 513-737-1314.
**Report: 40 Percent of Births in U.S. Occur Out of Wedlock**

A surprising new report from the Senate showed that about 40 percent of births in the U.S. happen out of wedlock. The hike in non-marital births is likely a result of "moral, behavioral, and social changes" since the "sexual revolution" overhauled the American landscape," said Robert Verbruggen, deputy managing editor at the National Review.

The Senate report, "Love, Marriage, and the Baby Carriage: The Rise in Unwed Childbearing," was released in December. The report found that "shotgun" marriages have fallen in the early 1960s, 43% of unwed pregnancies led to "shotgun" marriages. Today, that number is 9 percent.

"We ridicule this norm, because we forget it had the benefit of protecting the interests of children in having relationships with both parents," said Jennifer Roback Morse, president of Ruth Institute.

"The most just solution for the child is for the parents to marry each other, and work together for a lifetime for the good of the child and their whole family. We accept injustice to children as the price we are willing to pay for adult sexual freedom and 'gender equality.'"

**Facebook Removes Christian Page**

Facebook has removed the Christian ministry "Warriors for Christ" page, saying the page violated community standards on bullying and hate speech.

"Warriors for Christ," a West Virginia-based ministry, is a group that opposes any sinful behavior. Its Facebook page had more than 225,000 followers. Its administrators often post memes that criticize LGBT rights and abortions, among other topics. Videos from Pastor Rich Penkoski are also posted on the page.

The page was first taken down Dec. 29. It was reinstated after an online petition called for Facebook to reverse its decision. But the page was removed again recently.

Penkoski told The Christian Post that the group’s Christian beliefs are being censored. “We can’t even use the term ‘LGBT’ in any context whatsoever or it immediately gets flagged and banned.” He said only 3 percent of their posts referred to LGBT issues.

**What Church Leaders Need to Know About the New Tax Bill**

In December, the Republican bill overhauling the tax code passed a final vote in Congress and was signed by President Trump. What implications does the new bill have for churches and church leaders? Pastors will benefit, along with 80.4 percent of other Americans. There are new tax brackets with lower tax rates. This will likely mean that many pastors will see a reduction in their taxable income even if nothing else changes.

For pastors that have significant mortgage interest, charitable contributions, state and local taxes, and medical expenses, the doubling of the standard deduction may have little impact. Although the new $10,000 cap on deducting the combined state and local property taxes and income taxes may impact some, the doubling of the standard deduction should be a significant benefit if you don’t itemize deductions. If, in prior years, their personal exemptions plus their itemized deductions were less than the new $24,000 standard deduction, they will see an immediate benefit.

For families with children under age 16, the increase in the child tax credit to $2,000 will produce a new benefit. Moreover, for some, the increase of the refundable amount of the credit to $1,400 may increase the tax benefit the pastor receives.

Since most of the church members will receive an increase in their take-home pay starting in February 2018, members will have a greater capacity to give in 2018. But it is likely the increased standard deduction and increased exclusion from estate taxes will impact giving at churches. More likely, the tax decrease for members will benefit charitable giving.

Finally, the expansion of Section 529 plans to private K-12 schools will present a new opportunity for those churches that operate Christian schools. This greatly expands the funding options available to parents and grandparents.

Probably the most significant thing for pastors is what isn’t in the bill. It makes no mention of the clergy housing allowance, the biggest tax break for pastors. Therefore, you can rest easy knowing that your housing allowance will not be taken away from you or change in any form.

**NEWS IN BRIEF**

- A new survey shows that in a number of Western nations, the population no longer believes in Heaven or Hell, even if they also claim to believe in God. The global survey from Ipsos included interviews in 38 countries. Only 19% of the Japanese population said they believe in Heaven. The same percentage of Spaniards believe in Hell. It was quite the opposite in South Africa, where about 84% believe in Heaven.
- President Trump’s biggest religious freedom policy promise to evangelicals—repealing the Johnson Amendment—was stripped from the final Republican tax reform. It was announced that the repeal included in the House version of the tax bill, which would allow churches and other nonprofits to endorse candidates without losing their tax-exempt status, was removed during the reconciliation process with the Senate version. Because of a requirement called the Byrd Rule, reconciliation bills—which are passed through a simple Senate majority—cannot contain "extraneous" provisions that don’t primarily deal with fiscal policy.

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**What Church Leaders Need to Know About the New Tax Bill**

In December, the Republican bill overhauling the tax code passed a final vote in Congress and was signed by President Trump. What implications does the new bill have for churches and church leaders? Pastors will benefit, along with 80.4 percent of other Americans. There are new tax brackets with lower tax rates. This will likely mean that many pastors will see a reduction in their taxable income even if nothing else changes.

For pastors that have significant mortgage interest, charitable contributions, state and local taxes, and medical expenses, the doubling of the standard deduction may have little impact. Although the new $10,000 cap on deducting the combined state and local property taxes and income taxes may impact some, the doubling of the standard deduction should be a significant benefit if you don’t itemize deductions. If, in prior years, their personal exemptions plus their itemized deductions were less than the new $24,000 standard deduction, they will see an immediate benefit.

For families with children under age 16, the increase in the child tax credit to $2,000 will produce a new benefit. Moreover, for some, the increase of the refundable amount of the credit to $1,400 may increase the tax benefit the pastor receives.

Since most of the church members will receive an increase in their take-home pay starting in February 2018, members will have a greater capacity to give in 2018. But it is likely the increased standard deduction and increased exclusion from estate taxes will impact giving at churches. More likely, the tax decrease for members will benefit charitable giving.

Finally, the expansion of Section 529 plans to private K-12 schools will present a new opportunity for those churches that operate Christian schools. This greatly expands the funding options available to parents and grandparents.

Probably the most significant thing for pastors is what isn’t in the bill. It makes no mention of the clergy housing allowance, the biggest tax break for pastors. Therefore, you can rest easy knowing that your housing allowance will not be taken away from you or change in any form.

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**NEWS IN BRIEF**

- A new survey shows that in a number of Western nations, the population no longer believes in Heaven or Hell, even if they also claim to believe in God. The global survey from Ipsos included interviews in 38 countries. Only 19% of the Japanese population said they believe in Heaven. The same percentage of Spaniards believe in Hell. It was quite the opposite in South Africa, where about 84% believe in Heaven.
- President Trump’s biggest religious freedom policy promise to evangelicals—repealing the Johnson Amendment—was stripped from the final Republican tax reform. It was announced that the repeal included in the House version of the tax bill, which would allow churches and other nonprofits to endorse candidates without losing their tax-exempt status, was removed during the reconciliation process with the Senate version. Because of a requirement called the Byrd Rule, reconciliation bills—which are passed through a simple Senate majority—cannot contain "extraneous" provisions that don’t primarily deal with fiscal policy.

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GROUP SEATING (25+) 501-758-3090
A group of IBC students and alums were invited to the Philippines in November 2017 to participate in a music conference and crusade. Senior Jonathan Schellhardt was able to attend; here is his story:

To say that the city of Manila is an overpopulated city is an understatement. The driving is terrifying; streets are crammed yet move fast pace. Rules of the road are more like “guidelines.” I do not recommend riding in the front seat of any cabs. Yet from the moment we touched down in the Philippines, I could feel God’s hand of protection and anointing on our group so strongly. It was like we had entered a different reality, a spiritual level I had never experienced before. God had something powerful He desired to do.

The Filipino people are such a warm, loving and giving group. During the crusade and all of the workshops, every member of the Filipino team worked tirelessly to meet every need! It was eye-opening to see how vibrantly and exuberantly they worshipped despite their financial situations. It's much more difficult to be comfortable when you are stripped of the luxuries we possess in the states. When you see people willing to worship with their whole hearts even when it’s 90 degrees outside and 100% humidity, you know they are serious about their love for God. There were services where the air was so moist, condensation began to collect over the entire surface of my bass. I was afraid something might short circuit and render it unusable for the rest of our time there. What an adventure!

During the crusade, things did not quite go as planned. It seemed like the devil was pinpointing every disadvantage we had, specifically having to run with a minimal musical set up. If there’s anything I’ve learned from the experience, it is that God can still move with strength beyond our understanding despite our glaring inability to execute plans flawlessly. Even in the midst of difficulties communicating on platform and issues with our tracks, problems with personal monitoring, in spite of all the things that didn’t go as planned, God still moved.

IBC Senior Jonathan Schellhardt shares his testimony of God’s deliverance.

First counts of the night put the number of people that received the Holy Ghost at 1,000 out of 15,000 or so in attendance.

Our trip coordinator, Bro. Tim Marshall, asked another gentleman and me to share our testimonies with the congregation. This is what I shared. I was raised in an Apostolic home and attended an Apostolic church; however, I had never truly committed to a real relationship with God. I attended a private school operated out of the basement of the church I attended. In the 6th grade, my parents decided to enroll me in a public school in our city. I was not prepared for how different it would be in a secular setting. The most significant change happened when I was introduced to the idea that, perhaps, what I’d been taught all my life was wrong. I had never questioned my upbringing. I struggled with that thought for a long time. Most of the four years I spent out of the church, I was caught up in drugs. I tried everything the world had to offer to try to find the answer. Facing four to seven years in prison for a drug situation, I remember lying on a bench all night in a holding cell. Unaware of the crimes committed by others in the room, I was afraid to cry. I thought about how all my bad decisions led me from where I started, in a good home with a good family attending a good church, to where I was, facing a prison sentence. Inside I was telling God that if He was there, I needed Him to be God. I was tired of coming home drunk and sitting in my car knowing that my life was empty. I was tired of having to constantly ‘self-medicate’ with marijuana because I was psychologically addicted to it.

I was blessed to share my testimony of God’s grace in a place where the driving is terrifying. A place where luxuries afforded to us are not present. A place where from the moment we touched down, I could feel God’s hand of protection and anointing on our group. The Philippines are currently in the middle of a “shoot on site” war against drugs. A war that says, “I’m more concerned with the populous than your individual mistake, or your life.” I am thankful that I was able to share the strength of God in my life.

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"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, sayeth the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty" (Revelation 1:8).

The Almighty
In the Word of God, we are introduced to the One who was, and we are urged to serve the One who is, and we await the One who is to come. While all three of these may be different aspects, they all speak of the same One who is the Alpha, the Omega, the first and the last and God sums it all up and says “I am the Almighty.” Jesus Christ is God, no matter what the world says about Him. Jesus Christ is our God, no matter how you slice it.

The One Who Was
I believe that the One who was is referring to His first coming. If you read Micah 5:2, it says something very explicit beyond His birth location concerning His eternal identity to Israel. It says “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.” So it talks not only about the place this One is going to be born but signifies something about His eternal identity.

Isaiah 9:6 says, “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” It not only reveals to us that it is a child that is going to be born, but there’s something eternal about this One that is coming. He is the mighty God and He is the father of all eternity. Only our God who dwells and lives in eternity and who possesses life can offer us eternal life. Only He has it, so only He can give it.

Gabriel told Joseph, “You’re going to call his name Yeshua.” This means Jehovah-Saviour. Jehovah, who has become our salvation and our Saviour. It shows His purpose: salvation. And it shows His eternal identity: Jehovah.

Isaiah prophesied His name would be Immanuel. Well, we know they didn’t call His name Immanuel, they called His name Jesus. Matthew added to this prophecy. It is a
statement that gives the full impact of the eternal identity of this Child. He is “God with us.”

2 Corinthians 5:19 says He came for the express purpose of reconciling and restoring a broken, shattered, sin-scarred life and humanity back into a right relationship with its Creator. Only God could do that.

The Purchase Price

Acts 20:28 says that God has purchased the Church “with his own blood.” God paid the purchase price. When Jesus Christ came as a man, He laid down His life, and He paid the price. The Bible says you were purchased with the precious blood as of a lamb slain without spot and without blemish. So how did God do it? The Bible says that He humbled Himself and became like a servant. He humbled Himself and took on the form of man, the form of humanity. Jesus Christ died. He was buried. He bled. He prayed. He cried. He grew. He suffered. He was tempted in every point like as we are. He lived among us and He died, but He had power over death, hell and the grave and rose up triumphant. 1 John 1:1-3 tells us that “the life was manifested.” It was made visible. People actually had a conversational relationship with Him. They touched Him. They handled the very Word of life. You see, Jesus is the eternal God who came to us. He is the sole possessor of eternity who humbled Himself and became flesh to die for our sins so that you and I could be partners in eternal life. Eternal life was the promise that He gave us from the beginning.

Deity and Sacrifice

Hebrews 9:15-17 talks about God’s will, and it talks about the testator. It says for “where there is a testament,” or a will, “there must of necessity be the death of the testator.” The power of the testament, or the will, is after the man is dead. Otherwise, it will have no strength while the testator lives. And you can only inherit what the testator possesses. Our inheritance is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Only He possesses it, so only He can give it. This is why God—the possessor of eternal life and the Testator of the will—came to us as a man and died at Calvary, so that you and I could be partners of eternal life.

Deity and Sacrifice

Jesus didn’t just robe Himself in flesh; He became flesh. He was manifest in the flesh. He came to us bodily. We also see Jesus Christ was the fulfillment of the Tabernacle. Jewish scholars tell us that the Tabernacle centered on two things: deity and sacrifice. They might not believe it, being Jews, but Jesus Christ is the perfect blend of deity and sacrifice. He is the mighty God, and He is the Lamb of God.

John the Baptist shows us this. He said, “I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness preparing the way of Jehovah making straight in the desert a highway for our God.” John knew who he was preparing the way for—Jehovah. But when he saw Jesus, he didn’t say “behold Jehovah.” He said, “Behold the Lamb of God.” Jesus Christ perfectly fulfilled the Tabernacle plan of salvation that focused on deity and sacrifice. Deity fused itself with sacrifice, in Jesus Christ, for the express purpose of our salvation.

Years later, when John was in prison, the disciples came and asked Jesus, “John wants to know if you are truly the one that he was preparing the way for or should we continue to search for another?” John understood his mission: he was preparing the path for Jehovah. Notice what Jesus replies, “Go and tell John the things which you do hear and see. Tell him the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the dead ears hear, the dead are raised, and the gospel is preached to the poor.” That might not mean a whole lot to you, but it did to John. Jesus was actually referring to a scripture in Isaiah 35:3-6 that declared miraculous things that would take place when Jehovah came to save us. When that message came back to John, he could say, “Mission accomplished. I prepared the way for Jehovah who would come and save us.”

When he saw the resurrected Christ, what does Thomas say? You are the Lord of me and the God of me. When Thomas saw the visible scars and the resurrected Christ’s hands, he said, “You are my Lord and you are my God.” There’s something eternal about this One who was.

The Self-Existant One

One day Jesus was talking to the Sadducees, scribes and the Pharisees. Jesus says, you know Abraham was glad to see my day. They discounted him as being a little bit off and crazy, and said, “You’re not even 50 years old.” But then he said, “Before Abraham was I am.” That turned them. That caught their attention. Because when Jesus said, “I am,” He was claiming to be the God of the Shema. He was claiming to be the God that spoke to Moses. He was claiming to be the God of Jacob, the God of Isaac, the God of Abraham, the God of the Law, and the God of the prophets. The term I am means the one who exists or the self-existent one. This, I believe, is the greatest text concerning His deity. He is claiming to be the sole possessor of all things eternal. This statement is not just saying that Jesus Christ is God, but it also excludes anybody else, or anything else, from having the potential or the capacity of being God.

The One Who is

The One who is, is presently our God. He is currently the absolute ruler of the universe. He is the prayer answerer. He is the deliverer. He is counselor. He is sovereign King over the universe. He is sin cleanser. He is the eternal life possessor, and the eternal life giver. He is the root and the offspring of David. He is the Lamb and the High Priest. He is the advocate and the judge. In Him we live, we move, we have our being. Basically He is our all in all, and we find our completeness in Jesus Christ.

In Colossians 2:9, Paul writes, “For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” The word dwelleth is present tense, continual. It was written years after His ascension. Yet, Paul says the fullness still dwells bodily. This same Jesus who left and went into the clouds, you shall see Him ascend from Heaven with a voice, with a shout, with a trumpet, and with His angels and with ten thousands of His saints. He is our God!

The One Who is to Come

And, finally, the One who is to come. It’s the most important world event that is yet to take place. The second coming reveals His oneness. It reveals Him as the Almighty, one true God of the universe. Jesus said a time will come when “I will show you plainly of the Father.” Jesus said there’s going to be a time coming when He won’t tell things any longer. He won’t speak to you in parables. He will express and show forth so everybody understands and is in full understanding of who He is.

Paul writes to Timothy about a time that is coming when God will reveal plainly His identity. It is at Christ’s second coming,... until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality...” 1 Timothy 6:14-16. His second coming reveals His oneness!

Rev. 19:16 says, “And he hath on his vesture and his thigh a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords.” When He returns there will be no confusion. Every knee will bow, every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. The One who is coming is almighty God. Jesus Christ is God, no matter how you slice it!

The signs of the times reveal to us that the One who is to come, the first and the last, the beginning and the ending, the Almighty, is coming. He’s coming. The question is, are you ready for the return of Jesus Christ?

Bio: John Jacobs is a gifted teacher and preacher of the gospel who works closely with Pastor Jerry Holt in Lewiston, Idaho.
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Pastors Desperately Needed in Alaska
Alaska-Yukon District Has Five Buildings in Five Communities Without a Pastor
By Gregg Stone

Alaska is a vast state with a land mass that covers the equivalent of 20 percent of the continental United States. Slightly over one-half of Alaska’s population lives on the road system, but the remainder live in areas that can be reached only by air and water. This makes Alaska very unique and very challenging for ministry. “The majority of the state is without a road system connecting towns and villages,” explained Bro. Lorin Bradbury, who is the secretary of the Alaska District and North American Missions Northwest Regional Representative.

“Southeast Alaska is an archipelago, with the cities on fiords squeezed between the sea and mountains rising nearly straight up to 3,800 feet. The North Slope is a vast, treeless plain sloping toward the Arctic Ocean. Southwest Alaska has the largest concentration of villages in any of the rural areas of Alaska. Scattered across an area approximately the size of the state of Oregon are 28,000 souls living in 48 towns and villages. The Aleutian chain stretches one thousand miles from the Alaskan mainland toward the Asian continent. This region is home to the thriving city of Uralak at Dutch Harbor, the busiest seaport in the entire United States, processing more than half of all seafood processed in the United States. It is a city begging for an Apostolic witness.”

Dr. Carolyn Simoneaux—Florissant, Mo.

Dr. Simoneaux feels the greatest need is the mission of a former missionary, who now offers training and help for teachers and students.

Dr. Carolyn Simoneaux and her husband served as Apostolic missionaries in Africa for 30 years. During that time, they founded an international Christian school. Because of working with that school, Dr. Simoneaux decided to complete her education. She received a master’s degree in 2008 at Liberty University in Virginia, then her Ed.S. degree in 2010 and doctorate degree in 2015. She graduated from Urshan Graduate School of Theology (UGST) with a master’s degree in Christian Ministry and now serves as an associate professor at Urshan College. She and her husband attend The Sanctuary in Hazelwood, Mo.

Dr. Simoneaux’s CPS Educational Consulting Firm offers teacher training and workshops that encourage motivational skills and anything a Christian school would need for teachers and staff. CPS also offers educational therapy, academic tutoring, achievement and cognitive testing, homeschool assistance and leadership training. She explained, “I also do consulting from the outside. Our staff was then better motivated, equipped and inspired to meet the challenges in today’s complex educational arena. Meeting those needs is the mission of a former missionary, who now offers training and help for teachers and students.

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I work with students who need help academically, preparing students with skills that will last a lifetime. I give training to teachers on the best way to teach age-appropriate material and to motivate their students and update practices for today.”

The topics she teaches are Leadership and Developmental Child Psychology, providing teaching skills from childhood through adolescence. “Involvement in Christian schooling can be tedious and stressful,” said Dr. Simoneaux. “Teachers need motivation and encouragement. We learned from experience in Botswana, using a trimester system. In between semesters I always tried to bring in someone from the outside. Our staff was then better motivated and equipped in the classroom.”

Dr. Simoneaux feels the greatest need for churches to utilize this training would be to become knowledgeable of updated training and networking. She can be reached through her website, www.cpsconsultingeducation.com.

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The Voice of the Elders

WISDOM

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Joel Holmes • Johnny Godair • Cody Marks

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SUMMIT
2018
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Word To The Wise:

“If all your problems are behind you, you might be a school bus driver.”

* * * * * * *

New Year’s Resolutions
2014: I will get my weight down below 180 pounds.
2015: I will follow my new diet religiously until I get below 200 pounds.
2016: I will develop a realistic attitude about my weight.
2017: I will work out 3 days a week.
2018: I will try to drive past a gym at least once a week.

* * * * * * *

It had been snowing in Iowa for hours when an announcement came over the university’s intercom: “Will the students who are parked on University Drive please move their cars so that we may begin plowing?”

Twenty minutes later there was another announcement: “Will the twelve hundred students who went to move 26 cars please return to class?”

“Pastor keeps talking about his ‘text.’ But for some reason I can’t find it in my text messages!”

* * * * * * *

This last Christmas, Grandpa was feeling his age and found that shopping for Christmas gifts had become too difficult. So he decided to send checks to everyone instead.

In each card he wrote, “Buy your own present!” and mailed them early.

He enjoyed the usual flurry of holiday festivities, and it was only after the holiday that he noticed that he had received very few cards in return.

Puzzled over this, he went into his study, intending to write a couple of his relatives and ask what had happened. It was then, as he cleared off his cluttered desk, that he got his answer. Under a stack of papers, he was horrified to find the gift checks that he had forgotten to enclose with the cards.

* * * * * * *

A guy goes into a fancy restaurant wearing a shirt open at the collar, but the maître d’ tells him he needs a necktie to get in.

The guy doesn’t have a necktie handy, so he goes out to his car and gets his jumper cables. He ties these around his neck, manages to fashion a fairly acceptable-looking knot, and lets the ends dangle free.

He goes back to the restaurant. The maître d’ looks him up and down and then says, “Well, okay, I guess you can come in. Just don’t start anything.”

Thoughts For the Day . . .

1. I changed my car horn to gunshot sounds. People move out of the way much faster now.
2. I didn’t make it to the gym today. That makes five years in a row.
3. I stopped calling the bathroom the John and renamed it the Jim. I feel so much better saying I went to the Jim this morning.
4. Last year I joined a support group for procrastinators. We haven’t met yet.
5. When I was a child I thought nap time was a punishment. Now it feels like a mini-vacation.
6. If God had wanted me to touch my toes, He would have put them on my knees.
7. The kids text me “plz” which is shorter than please. I text back “no” which is shorter than yes.
8. I’m going to retire and live off my savings. I don’t know what I will do the second week.
9. Even duct tape can’t fix stupid, but it can muffle the sound.
10. Why do I have to press one for English when you’re just going to transfer me to someone I can’t understand anyway?

“Yes, I did help out in the nursery today. How did you know?”

“Just think, Mom. If I hadn’t put my marbles in the dryer, you wouldn’t have gotten a chance to witness to the repairman.”
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