COMMUNITY, TRUTH AND LOVE
Driving to Copper Harbor, the peak point of the Michigan's Upper Peninsula, is a commitment. It is 50 miles or so from any amenities other than a few cabins, small motels, a café, and a few small gift shops that serve great ice cream and fudge. Most all who travel there ultimately say it was worth the trip. The long winding road through mysteriously thick forest intrigues and the steady cadence of water splashing upon the shore mesmerizes visitors.

However, it's not a place where you want to have car trouble – even if you are handy and have the right tools; it's just not some place you want to be stuck. Just a few days ago, there we were at Copper Harbor with car trouble, cold weather, rain, gift shops closing, night falling in five hours, and . . . I am not handy nor did I have the necessary tools.

Amazingly, a mechanic with his tow truck had driven to the small village, on call, but he could not find the woman who had called for help. The assistant pastor of the local Lutheran church stopped to help. Calls were made, we tracked down the tow truck, and the mechanic promised to come and help. Thank-you fully, after several hours he arrived.

We had exhausted all our resources for “killing time” and for staying warm so went into the nearby motel to see if we could wait it out in their lobby. There was no lobby, but the motel proprietor, Mary, graciously allowed us to stay in her small, cramped office space. Mary then proceeded to tell us she had some chores to do elsewhere and asked my wife, Micki, if she would “run” the motel in her absence. This was Micki’s first time to run a motel, but she took on the task with her good nature and sense of humor. I think we were relieved that only one family showed up, and Micki sent them to find Mary.

There is much more to our story, of course. But we were deep in appreciation of the good folks in the Upper Peninsula, Yoopers, who helped us get back on the road. Joe the mechanic used some extreme ability to get things re-wired, and we made it home.

"As willing as we both were to fix the car and get it moving, neither of us had the answer or technical ability to make it happen. We needed a mechanic in much the same way as the spiritual condition of our present world needs the truth."

"One can go to church long after the doctrinal passion has dried up and real conviction has ceased to continue, which leaves a moral and intellectual emptiness" (Quote Unknown).

The pastor and I quickly agreed that Christians need to hold on to the Word of God as the absolute truth. Churches can and often do degenerate into a social family, or denominationalism. Common to our era is the danger of falling away from doctrinal conviction, and without passion for doctrine, everything becomes empty. This state creates a vacuum to which false doctrines rush in and fill. The Pentecostal Acts 2:38 message is the answer – standing in the cold rain wishing for an alternate solution is foolishness. We have no choice but to yield to truth.

Before Joe arrived, my new pastor friend and I were doing everything we could to repair the problem. We pulled wires, cleaned up the cables and connections, all to no avail. None of our efforts, however sincere or well intentioned, solved the problem. We were merely applying ignorance to the problem – no real experience, knowledge or expertise. In reality we were in a dangerous situation. We had fallen into despair, and we were ready for someone to step into our situation.

Thankfully, ol' Joe the mechanic found us. He graciously pushed us aside and tore into the problem with confidence, knowledge and experience. He kept saying, “It’s okay! I can fix it. Don’t worry! I’ll getcha going, and I will follow you back to the city.” Reflecting upon the situation, Joe, the man who saved us, was a man with confidence in what he knew – he had truth. We had rushed to the problem, cited the condition, but we came to the situation with no real solution, because we lacked truth. Remember, it’s possible that churches may dry up and lose passion and confidence for the doctrine – consider then what answer we have to bring to the problems of today’s world.

"Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 1:2-4).
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**The Stewardship Group**

**Stephen M. Drury**

SMDRURY@UPC1.ORG

636.229.7976
Opinions

You cannot impart what you do not possess.

Doug Rice, Sparta, IL - This subject is very important because I’ve seen several young men that are infatuated with the pulpit but aren’t necessarily called to ministry, and they become frustrated in their walk with God and even destroyed spiritually. Mentoring young ministers takes time, and what I mean is that it’s not always easy to tell immediately if a young minister is following a true calling or just got back from a convention and is on a spiritual high. We must look for consistency and faithfulness in their walk more than how well they can speak before an audience. If the call is real, it will keep them working for the Lord even when they are not behind a pulpit or have a position. You simply cannot and will not last in ministry if you are not willing to roll up your sleeves and get your hands dirty. I try my best to lead by example in this area. There is no job that I am unwilling to do for the Lord if I am physically able to do so.

It’s my observation that the hungry young minister always has an eye open to his spiritual leader and walks in the same path as the one he is trying to follow. Not everything you will face as a minister can be solved by earthly wisdom or good counsel, but a disciplined prayer life will keep yousolidly rooted when things don’t go as planned. Enjoy the small, seemingly insignificant parts of ministry because they are building you. The simple things are the testing grounds for the greater things.

Max Smith, Florence, MS - In my years of training, I observed my elders giving love more than correction. I tend to remember that I was shown mercy and grace in the past and typically will lead my congregation in this manner. I feel that part of discipleship is mentoring the younger ministry team in leading them by example. In this day and time, the word discipline (correction) is not a very common word to be used among most churches. I tend to be more of a “discipleship” teacher rather than a disciplinarian. It works well with my ministry team and congregation to lead in such a way as to establish a desire to emulate my actions. My advice would be to always be open to accept discipline in your ministry, which can help establish a healthy and cohesive ministry relationship.

James Manning, Fenton, MO - I teach our ministers in an Undershepherds class that deals with conduct, lifestyle and commitment to the ministry. This seems to help ward off a lot of problems with the ministry team. Discipline is taught by action and teaching that will turn them into well-balanced disciples. In order for those working under you to be disciplined, you need to be an example.

Jesse Starr, Minot, ND - Your life as a pastor or minister will influence young ministers. Spend time with them. I try and set out a training path. I’m a strong believer that a call to ministry is foundational, and as they develop I try to provide ministry opportunities for them. I strongly stress that a good work ethic is critical. They must pray, study and fast. The way a man does anything is the way a man does everything. If a young minister isn’t disciplined in regular life, he or she won’t be disciplined in the spiritual life. When people turn toward performance, you must address it. There is a lack of discipline in the church today, but there is also a passion and that’s a very good thing. I firmly believe in evangelism but sometimes we can over-balance. I see evangelism has become the “answer-all” and because of this discipleship is critical. Remember that your ministry is an outgrowth of your personal relationship with God. Keep it strong, no matter what. Trying to define success causes some ministers to make wrong decisions. Success is simply fulfilling the will of God in your life, and as long as you’re doing what He called you to do, you’re successful.

Jason Donaldson, Lawrenceville, IL - One thing I do at my church is hold ministerial meetings on preaching etiquette. This is a meeting that I feel might help eliminate the chance of a minister saying something out of turn or making a mistake. We need to mentor our young ministers before they speak, not wait until after the fact. I also encourage my young ministers not to teach on controversial issues behind the pulpit; this is something I will take care of myself as the pastor. No one is perfect. Somewhere along the way, we must be prepared for the young ministers in our church to make mistakes. You have to give them room to make mistakes, then help them through the hurdles that they can face as a result. I wouldn’t let nervousness or fear of using young ministers keep you from allowing them to be used. Be patient and have trust in their calling. Help them develop their ministry. A lot of discipline comes before discipline. Discipling, preparing and training the young minister can eliminate some of the future corrections.

Danny Robbins, Tupelo, MS - When disciplining a minister, you should always approach the situation with love. Let the minister know the severity of the situation that is at hand and work it out together. Love is key. When handling a disciplinary action, I feel that the pastor should be the only one to discipline. Allowing other ministers to handle it for you might break confidences. We have to encourage, teach and motivate. As pastors, we can’t make anyone have a burden. Try to set the stage to create a structure for the young men to follow. You have to give young ministers a model to go by. Building discipline in young ministers’ lives is a great part of discipleship.
If your church closed its doors, would the community miss you? This question haunts many pastors who wonder, “Does my church have an impact on the community?” At First Apostolic Church (FAC) of Steger, Illinois, the main vision is community. “Community, truth and love” is the motto that they teach and apply to every aspect of the church, including outreach, ministry and discipleship.

“I think the church has to be like a big brother to the community,” said Pastor Jason Cox. “We must have a relationship with the family of the community; that way we can share our influence with the community.” FAC has been established in the Chicago suburbs for 63 years.

Pastor Cox (43) and his wife, Alyssa, have four children: Camden (14), Cadence (13), Carigan (11), and Caelson (7). They currently serve as the Section 10 North American Missions district directors of Illinois, and he formerly served as the Illinois youth president and youth secretary.

Principles of Growth & Revival
Pastor Cox said his main priority for the church is having a mind of God for the congregation. This includes having a specific evangelist come or teaching specific messages, so that one of the five-fold ministries can be represented. In one aspect, Pastor Cox views growth in the church as influence in the town. This helps the church deepen its connection with the community.

“We were told by the mayor that they consider us the most influential church in town, which was quite an honor,” Pastor Cox said. “We have been able to speak into our community through the village hall meetings. We feel that being involved in our community, as a church, is very helpful. We don’t agree with everything our community does, but being there, having those conversations, and praying for others helps us to deepen our connection. People are won to God with this type of relational approach.”

One of the church’s newest outreach methods is a “park and pray” radio station. The concept is simple: pull into the church parking lot, turn your radio to 99.1 FM (a low-amp signal originating from a computer in the building and extending only about a block from the church) and listen. The radio often features Indiana Bible College and other Christian music, as well as sermon clips, prayer devotions, Bible readings, and prayers over the community and its families.

“We’re really excited because we are always thinking of how we can get outside (the walls) of our church,” explained Pastor Cox. “We are believing that the “park and pray” is going to grow in our assembly. We already see people parking and praying. It is good for those going to and from work that can listen to music or do a prayer devotional. This is a way for us to make our parking lot a prayer lot.”

When the weather warms up, the church also plans to utilize the “park and pray” for drive-thru prayer, a method of outreach in which visitors pull into the church parking lot and members pray for them.

Pastor Cox’s vision for FAC is for their church community to be evangelistic, relational, strategic and reproducible. For example, the discipleship aspect will focus on prayer, peace and purpose. “We believe that everyone has a purpose, so we are raising up prayer mentors, peacemakers and purpose mentors,” he said. “People need to see, very early on in their discipleship, that there is a God of peace that they can connect with in prayer, that there is a purpose for their life, and that He can give them something worth living for.”

Organization & Management
Pastor Cox meets with his staff about once a month. He has used leadership material such as the “Passing the Mantle” series, David Bernard, John Maxwell, and Ken Blanchard books. Also, Pastor Cox has asked each of his leaders to share their insights in a new book entitled Vision of the House, which is scheduled to be published soon.
to be released in 2020. It is geared to “take a new person from visitor to leadership.” Vision of the House will cover a variety of leadership concepts.

“The leaders we have on our team may not always be able to be on our team,” he said. “This is one way to let their ideas live on. We train everybody in this church; we will use it to train our leaders.”

Special Miracles

Pastor Cox mentioned three prominent examples of when God healed members of the church. When one of FAC’s newer converts first started to come, she was expecting a baby. The doctors ran tests on her baby and determined that it would be in her best interest to abort. The baby was going to be born with a lot of difficulties, and it could negatively affect the mother’s health.

“These new converts started to come to church, and we prayed for them on numerous occasions throughout the pregnancy,” said Pastor Cox. “God gave them a healthy baby and mother. That was a real miracle.

Another testimony Pastor Cox shared concerned one of their older saints who recently had a heart attack. The doctors revealed that a portion of her heart had died and was going to remain dead. But the church prayed, and the last time she had her heart examined, that dead portion had come back alive. The Lord had healed that section of her heart!

A few years ago, one of the church’s saints was diagnosed with stage two colon cancer, and God touched her. In one of her most recent follow-up visits, one of her doctors said, “If I didn’t know that you had previously had cancer, looking at your test results, I would say that you have never had cancer before.” God removed every trace of the cancer and any evidence that she ever had it!

Personal Ministry

With different churches comes different philosophies of ministry, which includes the principles that gives one’s ministry purpose and direction.

“I want to be speaking a word in season,” said Pastor Cox. “One thing that I am always after is hearing what the spirit is saying to the church. It is important to be able to share what the spirit is saying to the church, which would require that I be in the spirit and that I stay in tune myself with the spirit. But that all comes forth from staying sensitive to God.”

Personal History

Pastor Cox and his wife have pastored First Apostolic Church of Steger since June 2002. This would make them the fifth pastors of the church since it was established in 1955. In January 2002, the current pastor Rev. Rae Kidder invited the Cox’s to become the assistant pastors of the church. Unfortunately, the Lord had other plans for Pastor Kidder, as he was called to his eternal reward just a few months later.

“I became pastor because of the vacancy left by Rev. Kidder,” explained Bro. Cox. “The church was in a time of sorrow and grief for about two to three years, so there wasn’t a lot of joy. It was a bittersweet time for my wife and me, as we were grieving along with the church. Transitions are very hard on churches. That’s why it’s not very healthy to have pastoral changes all the time.

During these times of grief and sorrow, Pastor Cox believed it was imperative to preach about God’s sovereignty to the congregation. “I continually taught about the sovereignty of God,” he said. “I preached often about how God is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, and God is love. I hammered that every way possible, because I wanted people to realize that even though Rev. Kidder was not healed, God is still all-powerful. If God is all of these things, He was there through it all, and it was the will of God that this happened.”

Human Interest

One of Pastor Cox’s favorite outdoor activities is fishing. “During the season, I have some lakes that are a short distance from me,” he said. “I usually will get out once every week if I can during the spring, summer and fall. I am ever on a quest to catch bigger fish.”

Pastor Cox’s biggest fish was caught this past February. He caught a largemouth bass that weighed 7 lbs. He has also caught a 35-pound king salmon in the Kenai River in Alaska.

When it comes to family activities, they enjoy traveling to the Smoky Mountains in Tennessee. “We love the area -- the natural and the touristy area. We usually rent a cabin and have several days as a family together.”

The exterior of First Apostolic Church of Steger, Illinois
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Why Medical Missions?

By Camra Faulkner, MD

Compassion Services International (CSI) is partnering with Global Missions this summer to send a team of Apostolic medical professionals to South Asia. The CSI medical team will work together with our UPCI missionaries and trainees who are also on site with the Next Steps Program to provide outreach into the community. Health fair screenings, health education sessions and the distribution of medical literature are planned for multiple cities with the focus on prevention and awareness of common health issues. Supplies, such as eyeglasses and multivitamins, have been collected and will be distributed to those in need.

Medical missions is one of the core elements of CSI. Medical humanitarian work provides a unique gateway to offer both physical care and to demonstrate compassion in areas of disaster or in parts of the world where there is a lack of health care resources. The work of Compassion Services International allows the opportunity for Apostolic health care workers and other volunteers to put their faith in action, combining their professional training to help missionaries and local pastors reach their fields of labor. Addressing people’s physical needs often provides a gateway to address the spiritual needs of the individual as well. This process allows connections to be built with new people and at the same time broadens the ministry outreach of the local churches.

From the Old Testament to the New Testament, we are instructed to care and provide for those in need. Protect the widows and orphans. Don’t glean the corners of your fields; leave the extra for someone else. Love the stranger. Feed the hungry. Be kind. Then Jesus came and set the ultimate example. He cared for the suffering, the sick, the hurt, and the broken-hearted. Matthew records He was “moved with compassion” toward them, and was moved with compassion toward them, and was moved with compassion toward them, coming and set the ultimate example. He cared for the medical teams.

http://www.compassionservices.org/

Please join Compassion Services International in these efforts. Your urgent help is needed. Donate funds to purchase the supplies distributed. Share news of CSI trips on social media. Pray for the CSI medical teams. http://www.compassionservices.org/donate.

5 Popular American Perspectives of Jesus

Jesus Christ remains a central figure in the American religious landscape. But what do Americans believe about Jesus? Who do they say he is? Here are five widespread American perceptions of Jesus, based on recent Barna Group research.

1. The vast majority of Americans believe Jesus was a real person. More than nine out of 10 adults say Jesus Christ was a real person who actually lived (92%). While the percentages dip slightly among younger generations—only 87 percent of Millennials agree Jesus actually existed—Americans are still very likely to believe the man, Jesus Christ, once walked the earth.

2. Some increasingly less likely to believe Jesus was God. The historicity of Jesus may not be in question for most Americans, but people are much less confident in the divinity of Jesus. Most adults—not quite six in 10—believe Jesus was God (56%), while about one-quarter say he was only a religious or spiritual leader like Mohammed or Buddha (26%). The remaining one in six say they aren’t sure whether Jesus was divine (18%).

3. Americans are divided on whether Jesus was sinless. About half of Americans agree that while he lived on earth, Jesus Christ was human and committed sins like other people (52%). Just less than half disagree, either strongly or somewhat, that Jesus committed sins while on earth (46%), and 2 percent aren’t sure.

4. Most Americans say they have made a commitment to Jesus Christ, although the numbers vary with ethnicity and income levels. On the whole, America is still committed to Jesus. The act of making a personal commitment to Jesus is a step that more than six in 10 Americans say they have taken. White Americans are the least likely ethnic group to have committed to Jesus: Only six in 10 white Americans report having done so (60%), compared to eight in 10 black Americans (80%) and nearly two-thirds of all non-white Americans (65%). The more money people make, the less likely they are to have committed to Jesus: Those making more than $100K per year are significantly less likely (53%) to have made such a commitment than those making between $50K and $100K (63%) or those making less than $50K (65%).

5. People are conflicted between “Jesus” and “good deeds” as the way to Heaven. Among adults who have made a personal commitment to Jesus, most also believe that Jesus is the way to heaven. When given several beliefs about the afterlife to choose from, nearly two-thirds of those who have made a personal commitment to Jesus say they believe that after they die they will go to heaven because they have confessed their sins and accepted Jesus Christ as their savior (63%). Some adults believe, however, that they will go to heaven as a result of their good works. In this category, people believe they will go to heaven because they have tried to obey the Ten Commandments (5%), as a result of being basically a good person (8%), or because God loves all people and will not let them perish (7%).
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Plainly Speaking

What can pastors do to more effectively reach people of different colors and cultures?

Your primary focus should be reaching people. Pastors should seek resources to empower them to reach their community.

I am director of Building the Bridge (BTB) Ministries, which started 40 years ago with our late Pastor Nathaniel Urshan and was focused on African Americans. His intent was to bring diversity to the United Pentecostal Church International (UPCI).

Now, in 2018, within the black community here in Brooklyn, there are Caucasian teachers and Asian doctors. Every school around New Life Tabernacle has a diverse set of teachers and students. There is a shift in the mindset of pastors. All of us have now become diversified in our thinking because our communities have changed. You can reach any culture you desire as long as the community knows that you’ll accept anybody into your church.

What resources does Building the Bridge offer?

BuildingtheBridgeMinistries.com has resources for every type of community. We open our doors to funerals, weddings and counseling. We have substance abuse programs and do baby dedications. We’re a church that’s been in the community for 30 years. All I’m doing is taking what we’ve been doing, putting it under the umbrella of Building the Bridge Ministries, making the resources available to the entire UPCI and saying, “This is how you grow your church.”

What is Appreciation Sunday and how can it help churches?

Building the Bridge was the birthplace of Appreciation Sunday. Three years ago, there was turbulence in America related to law enforcement. When Appreciation Sunday came on the scene, the first thing it did was ease the tension in the community by saying, “We want to honor those who are doing well. Not all police officers are abusing their authority.” The police officers who came said, “We don’t know of any organization who does this, much less churches.” It took off. The following year, we did educators. This year we are honoring health providers. Appreciation Sunday is one of the official days on the UPCI calendar. It takes place the second Sunday of September every year. Last year, over 2,000 churches got involved. On www.AppreciationSunday.com, you will find all of the downloadable resources for how to plan it, how to get people to honor, what the day should feel like, what kind of sermon to preach, etc.

How do you run a Summer Camp or After School Program?

A Summer Camp Program or After School Program would fit any community. Moms who need to work when their children are out of school can register their child, pay a fee, and have an educator and the team offer breakfast, a curriculum, social interaction and/or field trips. (We run ours from 8 a.m. – 8 p.m.) When your Christmas pageants take place, you’re going to invite the parents. They come to see their child; that’s the greatest child on the stage. You introduce your church to that parent who says, “I like this church.”

What is the Pantry Program?

We give away food to the needy once a week. They come in and register, stay for service, and get a package of food. We’ve had six get the Holy Ghost just by having them come every Tuesday and stay for Bible study.

What is the Sunday School Breakfast Program?

Our church was struggling with Sunday school attendance. One of the educators I honored became a member of our church, so I met with her and asked how we could get more children. She told me about the Breakfast Program in the public schools to help students get to school on time. A lightbulb went off in my head. I sat down to save your community. It’s not difficult to save your community. Just love them. Offer what they’re looking for. People will just gravitate to our message. That’s what the conference is about.

What is the mission?

We have expanded Building the Bridge’s mission to reach more than just African Americans. It’s about community. When people see that the church reflects what Christ came to die for, you no longer have just a religious group. The church is no longer defined by one culture or one group but by its multiplicity of groups that are part of the congregation. Diversity comes through evangelism, but it’s intentional evangelism, reaching for everybody instead of just one group. Church can no longer be viewed as a place to just worship. It must become a place where you can belong and go for answers.

Contact information?

They can contact me through New Life Tabernacle at 718-209-9111 and mamitchellbtbdirector@gmail.com. My personal email address is: nmitchel@aol.com. The phone number at headquarters is 636-229-7900.
For information about these events, call the event coordinator. If you would like your event on this list, call (800) 8000-AS. IBC Perspectives does not endorse any seminar or conference listed. This page is provided simply as a service to the greater Apostolic community.

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<td>Martyn Ballestero, Franco Platania, Mark Yandris and Timothy Spell</td>
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<td>(601) 853-2607 <a href="http://www.parkwaychurch.net">www.parkwaychurch.net</a> ParkwayChurch.net/NAMRegistration</td>
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<td>For more info: invest-in-futures.com (369) 792-0414</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEPT. 6-7</td>
<td><strong>Mid-America Renewal Conference (MARC)</strong></td>
<td>Calvary Tabernacle 902 Fletcher Ave. Indianapolis, IN</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 (317) 554-8069</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEPT. 25-28</td>
<td><strong>93rd Annual UPCI General Conference</strong></td>
<td>Kentucky International Convention Center, 221 S. 4th St., Louisville, Kentucky 40202</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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<tr>
<td>OCT 10-12</td>
<td><strong>The Apostolic Conference North</strong></td>
<td>Holiday Inn Conference Center, 3100 Wellington Place, Janesville, WI 53546</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
<td>Contact info: 608.921.4971 <a href="http://www.therockchurchwi.com">www.therockchurchwi.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>OCT 18-20</td>
<td><strong>MidAmerica Conference</strong></td>
<td>First Pentecostal Church of North Little Rock, 1401 Calvary Rd., North Little Rock, AR 72116</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
<td>For more information visit midamericaconf.com</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCT 31-NOV 2</td>
<td><strong>West Coast Conference - Fresno, CA</strong></td>
<td>Fresno Convention Center, 848 M Street, Fresno, CA</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
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<tr>
<td>FEB 1</td>
<td><strong>Indiana Bible College LIVE RECORDING</strong></td>
<td>Calvary Tabernacle 902 Fletcher Ave. Indianapolis, IN</td>
<td>Paul Mooney, Rob Rodenbush, Lindel Anderson, IBC Choir, IBC Chorale, IBC Praise, others</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ibc@apostolic.edu">ibc@apostolic.edu</a> <a href="http://www.go2ibc.com">www.go2ibc.com</a> or (317) 554-8069</td>
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<tr>
<td>FEB 1</td>
<td><strong>WinterFire 2019</strong></td>
<td>First Cathedral 1151 Blue Hills Ave. Bloomfield, CA 06002</td>
<td>Jon Piskeski, Sam Emory, Sean Libby, Janice Spilstra, 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>
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<tr>
<td>FEB 2019</td>
<td><strong>Compassion Sunday 2019</strong></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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<tr>
<td>APRIL 2019</td>
<td><strong>Indiana Bible College THEOLOGY CONFERENCE</strong></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 (317) 554-8069</td>
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<tr>
<td>APRIL 2019</td>
<td><strong>Ascend Student Convention 2019</strong></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><strong>Power Conference 2019</strong></td>
<td>Crossroads Arena 2800 S. Harner 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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Never. Instead, consider launching a targeted and aggressive plan for church growth. Light always shines the brightest in the darkest night (John 1:5). What the devil intends as intimidation, the Holy Ghost transforms into a call to action (Matt. 16:18). Five ingredients can be combined into a dynamic mix for revival: prayer, people, plan, promote, and preserve.

Plan – Growth comes from sowing gospel seed. The four most effective methods of seed sowing are bringing guests to church, teaching home Bible studies, personal witnessing, and Sunday school growth. Consider developing an evangelism plan that utilizes all four, and even more.

Preserve – As new converts come in, they must be discipled. Consider utilizing the new convert care ministry outlined in Total Church Growth by Tim Massengale.

Answer Forum

Church Growth

Sidneyland columnist Don Feder writes, “Christians are the only group in Hollywood can offend with impunity, the only creed it actually goes out of its way to insult. Clerics, from fundamentalist preachers to Catholic monks, are routinely represented as hypocrites, hucksters, sadists, and lechers. The tenets of Christianity are regularly held up to ridicule.”

In recent memory, never before has the church come under such blistering attack. So what are we to do? Pull back within our church walls in fear?

Church Today

Robert L. Rodenbush

Less Hell?

In her article entitled, “How do you sell God in the 21st century? More Heaven, less hell” (theguardian.com), Meghan O’Gieblyn discusses how the concept of hell has been rebranded in many evangelical churches. It has gone from a literal place of brimstone and fire to the less traditional, more seeker-friendly metaphorical journey of life on earth. The article mentions a marketing consultant who jokingly assigned himself the task of “rebranding hell.” Despite the levity of the assignment, the bubbled font and snappy slogans advertising hell as a great travel destination quickly went viral.

O’Gieblyn, a Moody Bible Institute alumus and former Christian, goes on to lay out the case that the church has done its own watering down of the idea of hell. She attended the famed Willow Creek church during her college years and began to notice that she had never even heard anyone mention the concept. “According to Hybels [the pastor of Willow Creek], God’s love was not an unearned gift granted to sinners, but proof that we mattered not the Lord’s, it will not succeed (Ps. 127:1).

T. W. Massengale

Church Growth

Church Growth in the Age of Donald Trump

Robert L. Rodenbush

Bobby Killmon

Thesory

Someone asked me about the “Deuteronomistic History,” and I was wondering if this is something we should embrace?

What is it? First, remember it is just a theory. It could be summarized as follows: Joshua through Kings shows a fulfillment of promises in Deuteronomy. Israel’s future and being in the land of Canaan is shown vividly and in great detail. The accuracy of Deuteronomy (and its fulfillment in the books of Joshua to Kings) has made liberal critical scholars conclude Deuteronomy could not have been written by Moses because it is prophetic in nature (written about what will come). They instead claim Deuteronomy through Kings must have been authored by someone living after these events.

Conservative Bible-believing scholars say Deuteronomy was written by God through Moses, and Joshua through Kings is simply recording the history of that fulfillment. Liberal critical scholars object, claiming all these materials must have been written or reworked shortly before or after Israel’s exit in Babylon. The author/re-worker (redactor) that they suggest edited or wrote Deuteronomy (instead of Moses) is termed the “deuteronomist historian.” Men who embraced modernistic anti-supernaturalism like Dewitt, Wellhausen, and Noth created and developed this theory, which grew out of their anti-supernatural bias and Hegelian evolutionary dialectic.

What’s at risk? This theory has become very popular in recent scholarship, and Bible believers need to understand the term and its devastating presuppositions. We Apostolics who believe in the inerrancy and inspiration of the Bible must know what holding this view means for Scripture. It starts with the denial of God’s ability to foetall the events of the future and have Moses accurately record them. That’s the only reason to suggest Moses didn’t write Deuteronomy and invent “editors” or “redactors” who changed the text. If you don’t believe in the supernatural and the fact that “holy men wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,” then I see the necessity of claiming someone “faked” a text.

What is the problem with endorsing the “Deuteronomistic History?” There are serious issues that make holding the view untenable for Apostolics. First, the theory suffers from its starting point. It is humanistic in that it denies supernatural prophecy. As Apostolic Pentecostals, how can we believe this? Second, it denies in part or wholly that Moses authored Deuteronomy. This is a contradiction to Deuteronomy’s own claims about the author being Moses (Deut. 1:1-5; 31:9-26; 32:44).

Thirdly, the NT quotes Moses as the author of Deuteronomy (Acts 3:22 quotes Deut. 18:15 crediting it to Moses). Also, see I Cor. 9:9. Fourthly, in Matt. 19:8 Jesus claimed Mosaic authorship by quoting the passage on divorce in Deut. 24 attributing authorship to Moses. Can’t we believe Jesus? Will we not lose the incarnation if Jesus is lying, deceiving, or simply wrong and doesn’t know Moses didn’t write Deuteronomy?

This theory, when held consistently, destroys inspiration and inerrancy. As one of my favorite preachers said once, “I refuse to make a contribution to the death of the Church.” What that means here is that we can’t adopt uncritically the methods of this age.
"THE NATIONS ARE GATHERING"
THE 4TH UNITED PENTECOSTAL CHURCH INTL.
MULTICULTURAL SUMMIT
IN NORTH AMERICA
AUGUST 2-4, 2018
DALLAS TEXAS
23 MINISTRIES | REACHING THE GLOBAL
COMING TOGETHER | HARVEST AT HOME
FREE ONLINE REGISTRATION AT MCMSUMMIT.COM
THURSDAY EVENING | AUGUST 2
5:00pm  Registration Opens
7:00pm  World Network of Prayer Pre-Service Prayer
7:30pm  Main Service  |  Cortt Chavis

FRIDAY MORNING | AUGUST 3
9:00am  Combined General Session  |  David Sagil
9:45am  Lab Sessions
  French Evangelism  |  Dieudonne Kahozi
  United Nations Ministry  |  Art Wilson
  Deaf Evangelism  |  Ernesto Murillo
  Amish Evangelism  |  Jacob Hostetler
  South Asian Evangelism  |  Don David Hanscom
10:45am  Lab Sessions
  R.A.I.N African Immigrant Evangelism  |  John David
  Filipino Evangelism  |  Bienvenido Terrible
  Jewish Evangelism  |  David Sagil
  Spanish Evangelism  |  Raul Orozco
  Youth Breakout  |  Kyle Chavis  |  Victoria Reyes
11:45am  Lab Sessions
  NAME Native American Evangelism  |  Jeff Chavis
  Vietnamese Evangelism  |  John Wolfram
  Building the Bridge  |  Mike Mitchell
  Multicultural Ministries Missionaries  |  Stanley Wilt  |  Darrell Collins
  Youth Workers Breakout  |  Amado Huizar
  North American Missions  |  Scott Sistrunk
12:45pm  Ministers & Spouses Banquet  |  $25

FRIDAY EVENING | AUGUST 3
7:00pm  World Network of Prayer Pre-Service Prayer
7:30pm  Keynote Speaker  |  Jeff Chavis
        Main Speaker  |  Art Hodges

SATURDAY MORNING | AUGUST 4
9:00am  Combined General Session  |  David K. Bernard
10:00am  Forum  |  David Bernard  |  Brocc Chavis  |  Mike Mitchell
          Raul Orozco  |  Scott Sistrunk
          Ladies Ministry  |  Vani Marshall
          Youth Ministry  |  Amado Huizar

HOLY GHOST CRUSADE | AUGUST 4
11:45pm  World Network of Prayer Pre-Service Prayer
12:00pm  Worship  |  Cortt Chavis
         Main Speaker  |  Gordon Mallory
Columnist Forum

- Spiritual Growth
  Intimacy!
  Don’t be intimidated by anyone! Paul says not to be intimidated by your enemies (Phil. 1:28). This counselor says, “Do not be intimidated by another person who friend or enemy.”

  Intimiation is a tool of the devil. It can be added to low God-worth - a feeling of being inferior to others. Why? All humans are created by God - that puts us all on the same value level in God’s sight. All humans will stand before God at the Judgment Seat of Christ or the Great White Throne Judgment - God is the judge of all.

  God does not compare us regarding status in life, education, pedigree, finances, abilities, performance, ministry, etc. He looks at our heart!

  The Bible teaches submission one to another in the fear of the Lord – Eph. 5:21. Mutual submission is based on the fact that all must be in submission to God first.

  If you are looking for other people’s approval, you are miserable. There will always be at least one person that does not agree with you. That’s okay. We must refuse to be a people pleaser. We must be determined to be a God pleaser - He is our judge.

  God says if we compare ourselves among ourselves, we are foolish! God created each of us with a unique design, and with abilities and callings on our life.

  We are all created by God in His image and likeness. First of all, God gives us value because He is our Creator. Secondly, God was manifest in the flesh as Jesus Christ and He paid the price for our sins on the cross - God became our Savior! THIS IS WHY WE HAVE EXTREME VALUE!

  Our value and worth come from GOD ALONE - not from our performance in the past, present or future!

  www.carolclemans.org - read 488+ articles & watch 100+ videos on Carol Clemans YouTube channel.

  Invite me to teach through www.Skype.com for your church, home group, or ministry – (636) 448-0121. I provide counseling nationwide by phone/Facetime/Facebook video/Skype. Mins. Ref: Pastor Daniel Batchelor, Dupo, IL, © Carol Clemans

- The WOW Factor
  Influence
  Influence is a vital part of the WOW factor of leadership. Leadership impact increases as influence increases. Influence can be positive or negative. You add value to people when you use influence in a positive way. Manipulation is using influence for personal gain, and it brings a negative result.

  Moses sent 12 spies to view the promised land and bring back a report to all the people. Two returned with a positive report and 10 came back with a negative report. The 10 allowed their fear to influence their decision, and it impacted the future of an entire generation.

  Joshua and Caleb lacked the influence with the people to convince them that God was able to bring them to their promise. The leaders’ influence must be greater than the people’s resistance.

  Three reasons the people disregarded their report:
  1) They forgot their past. They forgot God’s deliverance from the bitter hand of bondage.
  2) They became settled with their present. God was providing their needs, but they would rather go back than move forward.
  3) They feared their future. Joshua and Caleb saw the potential; the others saw the enemy.

  The 10 allowed their fear to dictate what report they gave to the people. Joshua and Caleb allowed their faith to determine their report of blessing. Fear influenced the people; faith could have saved them.

  When those who follow are faced with the prospect of the unknown, they will face fear. Leadership gets people to move beyond fear. If influence does not move the people, then you must go back and build a relationship with them.

  Joshua grew his leadership ability and his influence eventually led the people into the promised land. Gaining influence takes time, but it is worth the investment to experience the blessings that come with positive influence. Use your influence to leave a lasting WOW!

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

- Coon’s Connections
  A Guaranteed Way to Reach the Lost – Preach to Them!

  We often reach for a magic solution for impacting the unconverted. There is a solution. It is not magic, but this solution has worked for several millennia. Preach to the lost in front of us!

  As a young, itinerant and dumb evangelist, on occasion I found myself thinking, “I’d preach to the lost if there were more lost people here.”

  Most of my years of evangelizing would have been in churches of average size or less. In an audience of 75, there might be one lost person or two. It took becoming a pastor, then thinking about what other effective pastors were doing before they dawned on me that Jesus taught to focus on the one lost sheep. We had no finances for a grand financial effort. Something practical was needed. The premise of reaching for one changed my preaching and made my life more effective. Since that discovery, I’ve used the premise Sunday is for Sinners! Few Sunday mornings find me preaching to the already converted.

  Evangelism is to bring good news to people who desperately need an answer. Think about your preaching from the perspective of one who does not regularly attend church:

  1. Did your message simply point out a problem or did it offer a solution? To condemn without a remedy is not evangelism.
  2. Was hell preached hot and eternal? If so, did you declare an escape route?
  3. Did you speak within the comforts of your “church” culture or did you preach a resurrected Christ who is relevant to the realities of the culture in which we now live?

  Evangelistic preaching at the local church level works. I’ve been part of several churches that reached a point of baptizing newcomers weekly. My challenge to you – learn to preach to the lost people. One of my books, Masterful Preaching, focused on my journey from spending too much time informing saints to becoming effective at reaching for the lost. As we work to reach the lost – don’t forget to preach to the ONE lost person Jesus sends your way.

  It is not necessary to read Masterful Preaching to learn to be more effective with the lost. Of course, it might help. My process involved much reaching and observation. It was quite a journey.

  Look at Masterful Preaching Carlton Coon Sr.

  At checkout, use PersP55 to claim a 5% discount.

  Carlton L. Coon Sr. pastors SpringfieldCalvaryChurch (Springfield, Missouri). Author of 23 books. For a conversation about revival, email carltoncoon@gmail.com. Blog posts and resources are at carltoncoon.com.

Accounting & Tax
Cost Savings (Continued)

Churches can save a significant amount on the cost of computer hardware and software. Many companies provide a discount to nonprofits. TechSoup is a company that provides discounts on many products including Microsoft Office 365, QuickBooks desktop and on-line version, Adobe and many more. For a complete list, visit their website: www.techsoup.org. They also have discounts available on computer hardware and can provide tech support for companies that do not have their own IT (information technology) staff. You will need to fill out an application and prove your 501c3 status, but the savings is definitely worth the effort.

Dell sells refurbished computers that are like new as well. Look for the Dell – Outlet on their website. Many of the computers are new but were sold and returned and are now offered at a discount. Apple also has a refurb/clearance site.

Delano Sherley is a CPA and president of Delano Sherley & Associates, Inc. He can be reached at 513-737-1314. Delano Sherley & Associates, Inc., E240 Beckett Park Dr. Suite A, West Chester, OH 45069. Email: Delano@dscalpinc.com Website: www.discalpinc.com

For media and graphics, look at Igniter Media. They have a library available for an annual subscription. It includes backgrounds, title graphics, countdowns, mini movies and more.

If you know of other places that a church can save in this area, please email and let us know!
**Facebook Rejects Ad Depicting Crucifixion of Christ**

Facebook rejected an ad from the Franciscan University that included a depiction of the Crucifixion of Christ. The Catholic university said it was posting a series of ads to promote its online theology programs and one of the ads showed the Crucifixion of Christ on the San Damiano Cross.

The ad was rejected for its “shocking, sensational and excessively violent” content, the Ohio college said on its Twitter account.

In a blog post, university officials said they agreed that the depiction is “sensational and excessively violent,” but that wasn’t means for rejection.

“And it was certainly excessively violent: a man scourged to within an inch of his life, nailed naked to a cross and left to die, all the hate of all the sin in the world poured out its wrath upon his humanity,” the post said. “This is sensational, this is shocking. This is only possible because of the excessive violence that he endured for us.

“He was despised and rejected of men.” It was ever thus and will ever be, for those who do not see with the eyes of faith, and love with a love unquenchable.

It’s possible that Facebook’s auto-content editor rejected the ad, but Rod Dreher, of the American Conservative, said “a Christian culture would know that for the people who revere this symbol, they are looking at an image of death’s defeat, and of eternal life.

“This incident is alarming because of what it reveals about the kind of world that Christians are going to live in. Facebook is one of the most powerful media companies on the planet. If it decides that it will not approve Christian content because it finds that content violent, bigoted, or what have you, then that will have a tremendous potential effect, not only on the ability of Christians to communicate, but (more importantly) on shaping the way the Christian faith is regarded widely in this post-Christian culture.”

**Security Camera in MI Appears to Have Captured a Guardian Angel**

A Michigan fire chief believes his home security camera captured an angel hovering above his pickup truck one night in early May. Glen Thorman, 54, said the camera took two pictures of a “supernatural being” perched above his truck parked near his home in East Jordan, Mich. He is convinced that it was an angel sent to protect him and his family.

“I have a security camera that sits in my window and I have it set to take two pictures, back to back, a second or two apart,” he explained. “I had it going off after midnight that night and I didn’t check it then, but when I was eating lunch the next day I was thinking, ‘Oh look, the camera took a couple of pictures last night.’

“I was like, ‘Whoa, it’s an angel.’ I mean, honestly, tears started coming from my eyes and right then I sent it to my wife and I sent it to my pastor. The pastor said right back, ‘That’s an angel.’

The first picture on the camera shows a winged creature in the air and the second shows it flying off. Thorman continued: “As a family we pray for God to send angels to protect us and watch over us, and when that happened, it just blew me away. It strengthened our faith and confirmed, ‘This is real, God is real, angels are real and miracles happen.’”

Some sceptics have suggested that the camera in fact captured a moth flying close to the lens.

But the faithful of East Jordan insist that it was too cold for moths and, if it were an insect, then the camera would have taken similar photos before. Thorman agreed, saying, “My camera takes a lot of pictures, but I’ve never had anything like this.

“Lots of people are talking about it here, texting me and messaging me, saying that it’s a miracle and it’s beautiful.”

Deneille Moes, senior pastor at River Church where Thorman and his family worship, had no doubt that the photo showed an angel. She said: “I believe the image is of an angel. We do believe that God sends angels to keep us from harm when we pray. There’s no doubt we are looking at something supernatural.”

**News in Brief**

- A new study from the Barna Group found that Christians are not evangelizing as often as they used to. The recently released study is a follow-up on a study conducted back in 1993. The statistics showed that in 1993, 89 percent of Christians who had shared their faith agreed this is a responsibility of every Christian. Today, just 64 percent share their faith—a 25-point decline.

- Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds signed one of the country’s most restrictive abortion bills into law last month. The so-called “heartbeat” legislation bans abortions once a fetal heartbeat has been detected, at about six weeks of pregnancy. Exceptions are made in cases of rape, incest or medical emergency. The law, which is being contested by the American Civil Liberties Union and Planned Parenthood, will reportedly go into effect July 1.

**U.S. One of “7 Worst Countries” When it Comes to Late Term Abortions**

Christian leader Franklin Graham is calling on believers to pray for lawmakers and the country after the U.S. Senate failed to pass a 20-week abortion ban.

“This week the Senate was 9 votes short of saving a lot of lives. But the vote finished at 51 for, 46 against the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act that would have banned abortions after 20 weeks in the U.S.,” Graham wrote on Twitter. “We remain among the worst 7 countries in the world with these 20-week abortions. Pray for our lawmakers; and pray for our nation to turn to God.”

The pro-life legislation could not earn enough votes to overcome a pro-abortion filibuster. Just three Democrats in the Senate supported the bill. Two Republicans opposed it.

According to the Washington Post, Graham is correct in saying that the U.S. is one of only seven countries in the world that allows elective abortions after 20 weeks. About 18,000 unborn babies are aborted every year in the U.S. after the 20-week mark.

**Scandinavia Mostly Considered Cashless Society**

Fewer than 10 percent of Norwegians are still using paper currency or coins, which could completely disappear in a decade, according to the local authorities.

Jon Nicolaelsen, the deputy governor of Norway’s central bank, has said Norwegian society has become cashless, and that this is very much a present reality rather than a future dream. “According to our latest numbers, we have less than 3 percent of broad money in cash. Less than 10 percent of the number of transactions, including buying coffees, are in cash,” he said.

Norway’s chief banker added that the phenomenon has nothing to do with the Bank of Norway’s policy; it’s just the wish of the people. “We have no wish to eliminate cash. It is the public itself that chooses other means of payment,” he said.

Cashlessness is on the rise globally, as more and more people are abandoning paper money. Scandinavia and neighboring Finland have been the leaders in this area.
Arkansas Internal
FIRST PENTECOSTAL CHURCH OF
1948
2018

---FRIDAY---
AUG 3
SERVICIO EN ESPAÑOL

JULIO MAY
7:00 PM

---SATURDAY---
AUG 4

Celebrating
PENTECOSTAL MUSIC

- LIVE RECORDING -
7:00 PM
featuring the
FPC MASS CHOIR
under the direction of:
JOY NORRIS & MARK YANDRIS
Minister of Music:
KURT KANHAI

---SUNDAY---
AUG 5

NATHAN HOLMES
KEYNOTE
National Campmeeting
NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

YEARS of
PENTECOSTAL FIRE
ARICM.NET

-MONDAY-
AUG 6

RICK MAYO
11:00 AM MINISTERS SESSION

ELLEN MAYO
11:00 AM MINISTERS WIVES SESSION

-MONDAY-
AUG 5

GODAIR
10 AM

NATHANIAL URSHAN
1:00 PM

JOEL HOLMES
7:00 PM

-TUESDAY-
AUG 7

LARRY BOOKER
11:00 AM MINISTERS SESSION

LORRAINE BERTRAM
11:00 AM MINISTERS WIVES SESSION

JONATHAN SHOEMAKE
1:00 PM

MATTHEW TUTTLE
2:00 PM
In the opinion of many, of the various spiritual disciplines, nothing is more important than prayer. Nothing will quite impact our spiritual growth like a well-developed prayer life. However, prayer has sadly become one of the most neglected of disciplines in our hurried lives. If you hunger for a closer walk with God, the following six points will help you to develop your prayer life in a more meaningful way.

The importance of prayer. With God, everything revolves around relationship. God desires you to know Him, to love Him, and to make Him the number one priority of your life. While He desires our service, it falls a distant second to relationship.

In Luke 10:38, we read of Jesus in the home of Mary and Martha. Martha was focused on service, taking care of her guests. In contrast, Mary sat at the feet of Jesus and drank in the words that He spoke. Martha complained that Mary “hath chosen that good part” and that Martha should not be so “careful and troubled about many things.”

If you are too busy to pray, you are simply too busy. Jesus is not impressed with our college degrees, how many books we have written or what positions we hold in the church – not if they come at the expense of our prayer time and relationship with Him.

He wants to talk to us in that still small voice and hear us express our problems and needs. He desires our worship and devotion. He wants our heart above all else (Ps. 27:4; 1 Cor. 13:3).

The more you pray, the more you want to pray. Developing a prayer life begins with understanding the absolute necessity of prayer (James 4:17). It begins in the mind with knowledge and understanding and then moves into the heart. What begins as a purpose soon turns into a passion.

Great prayer warriors often talk of their prayer journey. Over time, God leads them to that place of deep communion, a journey that takes time and persistence. Few have heard of Igal or Nahbi. But we have all heard of Joshua and Caleb. All were spies, but only two returned with a vision for victory (Num. 13). But Joshua’s faith began long before the river crossing. In Exodus 33:11 we read, “But Joshua, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle.”

God is more interested in consistency than quantity or quality. We are not ignorant of Satan’s devices. He will tell you that if you are not praying an hour a day, you are wasting your time. So you start with an hour or more. You struggle. It’s challenging to pray an hour! So you become discouraged and finally quit; that’s what He intended.

You must learn to walk before you run. An athlete does not start by pressing 300 pounds. He starts with 75 pounds and builds from there. Satan will press you to do more than you are able, knowing you will soon quit. Therefore understand this: God is more interested in your daily prayer being consistent than He is in the quantity or quality of your prayer. Focus on praying five minutes a day, but do it seven days a week at a set time and place (Ps. 55:17). It will soon grow to 10 minutes, then 20. Before you know it, the time flies past and you are praying an hour or more and the quality of your prayer time will grow as well. Focus on consistency. Pray every day. God rewards faithfulness. The quantity and quality will soon come.

Be a believer and not a beggar. We need a proper mental image of God. He is a good God. He wants to answer your prayer. He enjoys doing good things for His children (Matt. 7:11). We do not have to beg God for answers. We should simply tell God our needs and then thank Him for the answer. As long as you are not asking amiss, i.e. contrary to the will of God (James 4:3), you can be assured that God hears your need and will do what is best.

Do not try to fight in the flesh what should be fought in the Spirit. The Apostle Paul said, “Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us (Heb. 12:1).” The word patience here means “steadily, faithfully.” Satan knows that if he can stop you from praying, he will soon defeat you. So Satan quickly points out our faults and tells us we are wasting our time praying because we have sin in our lives.

This lie of the devil is most insidious. Having faults are reasons all the more to pray. The devil says you must first overcome your sin before you can rightly pray. But the Bible says, “Casting all your care upon Him; for he careth for you” (1 Pet. 5:7). The key to overcoming sin is praying daily for God’s strength to conquer sin.

We are fighting a spiritual battle. Trying to overcome with the flesh what can only be conquered by the Spirit is folly (Eph. 6:12). Start praying, keep praying, and God will show you how to vanquish every fault by the power of the Holy Ghost.

Have a specific time to pray, a specific place to pray, and maintain a good prayer list. David said, “Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice (Ps. 5:3; 88:13; Acts 3:1, 10:3, etc.)” I am saved today because of a praying mother. I remember coming home many times from school and finding my mother on her knees, Bible open, photos spread out, and prayer list stained with tears. She also kept her “honey box.” This tin box was stuffed with notes of God’s answers to prayer. In times of discouragement, she would go to her honey box and thank God for His many miracles.

To this end, consider keeping a prayer journal. Add to it regularly – requests, answers, scriptures to inspire, and inspirational notes of encouragement. As prayers are answered, note the date and circumstances. Prayer must never become routine or mundane. It is as real and alive as our God. Start and end each day with prayer. It is the key that unlocks the depths of spiritual understanding and the door that opens your heart to unspeakable joy.

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Register at SOTAD.org
The Family Ministries Council (FMC) was established in 2013 as part of the UPCI’s commitment to raise awareness of our families’ needs and provide resources to assist in strengthening and guiding families. UPCI General Secretary Jerry Jones chairs the Family Ministries Council, which is dedicated to serving Apostolic families. The council is a cooperative effort of Youth Ministries, Ladies Ministries, Apostolic Man, Children’s Ministries, and the Office of Education and Endorsement. Its mission is to coordinate the efforts of the UPCI’s focused ministries to children, youth, ladies and men in order to serve our families holistically.

Three important initiatives of the FMC can greatly benefit the local church:

**Life Line** - It’s a fact that many families are struggling and failing in our world. Chad Flowers, along with a team of qualified, credentialed Apostolic authors, has developed a series of pastoral counseling guides for families in crisis. Each Life Line guide contains case studies, statistics, interview questions, biblical insights, resources, and a sermon or lesson on a specific crisis topic. Credentialed UPCI ministers can download current Life Line guides from the family ministries website free of charge. They include topics such as Dealing with Divorce, End of Life Issues, Depression, Substance Abuse, Domestic Violence, Addiction, Anger, Bullying, Death of a Child, Financial Stress, Discouragement, and more. Counseling guides on additional topics are under development currently, and will be released at General Conference 2018.

**Family Bible Week** - Strong families are built on the principles of God’s Word. The UPCI Family Ministries Council has developed a collection of resources for pastors who wish to encourage families to commit to reading and discussing the Bible together. Resources include articles from Apostolic authors, sermons, and recommended books and websites. A promotional poster and graphics which pastors can adapt for their local church are also available on the website.

**The Book Project** - FMC is excited to announce a full-length book to guide Apostolic families, entitled *The Apostolic Family: Insight for Living in the Twenty-first Century*. Contributing authors include David & Connie Bernard, Stan & Marlene Gleason, Brent & Rachel Coltharp, Marvin & Claudette Walker, Anthony Mangun, Terry Pugh, Keith & Janice Sjostrand, Mel & Lisa Reddy, and more. The book will consider all aspects of family life from academic and biblical perspectives. This groundbreaking book is scheduled for publication with Word Aflame in the summer of 2018, and will be released at General Conference 2018.

Our secular culture does not provide adequate support for families. Indeed, the biblical concept of the family, including the institution of marriage, is under attack in many Western nations. Apostolic families are an important witness to God’s plan for families and they need support and encouragement. The Family Ministries Council is committed to providing resources to local pastors to assist them in ministering to families in crisis.

For more information about the UPCI Family Ministries Council, please visit http://www.upcifamily.com. You may also sign up for the FMC email newsletter through the website.
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Word To The Wise:

“Love is blind, and marriage is an eye-opener.”

A hunting party, hopelessly lost in the mountains, blamed their guide for leading them astray.

“You told us you were the best guide in Colorado!” they cried.

“I am,” he said, “but I think we’re in Wyoming now.”

A hunting party, hopelessly lost in the mountains, blamed their guide for leading them astray.

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“I am,” he said, “but I think we’re in Wyoming now.”

Dentist: “Just try to relax. I’ll have your aching tooth out in five minutes.”

Patient: “How much will this cost me?”

Dentist: “It’ll be $1,000.”

Patient: “That much for just five minutes of work?”

Dentist: “Well, if you prefer, I could pull it out very slowly.”

An older couple was lying in bed one night. The husband was almost asleep when his wife started reflecting on all the love they had shared. The old gentleman had started to snore when she nudged him and said, “Honey, do you remember how we used to hug?”

The old gentleman replied, “Yes, dear,” and rolled over and gave her a big hug.

Then he was almost asleep again when she nudged him and said, “Honey, do you remember how we used to kiss?”

“Yes, dear,” and he rolled over and gave her a big kiss.

He was almost asleep for a third time when she nudged him and said, “Honey, do you remember how you used to nibble on my ear?”

The old guy threw off the covers in frustration, sat up in bed, and got up. The wife said, “What are you doing?” In an exasperated tone, he said, “I’m going to get my teeth.”

Things Only a Mom Can Teach

ANTICIPATION: “Just wait until your father gets home.”

RECEIVING: “You are going to get it when we get home!”

LOGIC: “Because I said so, that’s why.”

“If you fall out of that swing and break your neck, you’re not going to the store with me.”

MEDICAL SCIENCE: “If you don’t stop crossing your eyes, they are going to freeze that way.”

THINK AHEAD: “If you don’t pass your spelling test, you’ll never get a good job.”

HUMOR: “When that lawn mower cuts off your toes, don’t come running to me.”

BECOME AN ADULT: “If you don’t eat your vegetables, you’ll never grow up.”

SEX: “How do you think you got here?”

FORESIGHT: “Make sure you wear clean underwear, in case you’re in an accident.”

ROOTS: “Do you think you were born in a barn?”

A tourist stopped a local in a village he was visiting and asked, “What is the quickest way to the lake?”

The local thought for a while. “Are you walking or driving?” he asked the tourist.

“I’m driving.”

“That’s the quickest way.”

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Judge: “What good have you ever done for society?”

Robber: “Well, I’ve kept four or five detectives working regularly.”

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