THE WEIGHT OF THE CROWN
We have never seen times like these times. Everything is on the line, and the pressing question is – Are we prepared to face the complex and eminent dangers of this generation? Are we asleep or awake? This is not a mundane moment! Our nation, our institutions and our churches are rowing though tempestuous waters.

There are dark forces rapidly changing our world. Technology is deliberately being created as a tool of control that will oppress and shape our future. Our privacy, our financial viability, our freedom and our democracy are all at stake. Our children are purposefully and intentionally being brainwashed and pushed into a state of confusion and panic with regard to their sexuality and their basic human identity. We know well that the Judeo-Christian values that served as foundational principles of America and other freedom-loving nations around the globe are being discarded and trampled upon in order to usher in the agendas of elitists and liberal educators who glorify humanism, globalization and atheism. These are dark forces indeed, and they see Christianity as a primitive, outdated religion; an obstacle in the battle to control hearts and minds.

Who will help us? Within the powerful words of Psalm 139 is the answer. This chapter is a vision of hope. It poignantly answers the question. God will help us. He will draw the plan for our times. He will reveal His plan for us both intimately and personally, as well as for our corporate destiny. He will provide the energy, the vision, and the strength for us to endure and to succeed.

A few years ago while hiking solo out west, I took a short cut and within a short time after a couple of turns, I became disoriented and lost. Fear struck hard. What should I do? The answer was sure. I had to retrace my steps, my decisions. I had to look for my markers, retrace my map and in doing so, I regained my confidence. It was a simple solution, but the disorientation of my surroundings and the fear I felt were a great distraction.

This time in history is unique. It is challenging. Most certainly it is disorienting in some ways. And it’s easy to allow fear to take hold of our soul and cause doubt and questions to become so loud that we lose our focus and forget that we have a way, we have a map, we can retrace our steps, we can find where God desires us to be. However strong the seas may roar or how dark the night, there is a way, even in “the uttermost parts of the sea.” This way, this answer, however, is not our way. The most dangerous action we could take right now is to believe that we can face these times by ourselves, with our talents, our education, our methods. Only by standing on the instructions given to the Apostles will we live. If we arrogantly disregard the need for the Holy Ghost, if we become indifferent to the moving of His Spirit, we will be without a map, without a redemptive power. Alone.

But with God all things are possible. In Him we place our trust.

Psalm 139

O lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Loro, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee. Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me therefore, ye bloody men. For they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain. Do not I hate them, O Loro, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies. Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.
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JENNIFER MAST

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How Satan is Attacking Today's Couples

Interviews by John Fonzer Jr.

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

Aaron Bounds, Zanesville, OH -- There's a lot of chaos when couples are on their phones socializing and spending their time on people they don't have real relationships with, while the relationships they do have suffer. A lady came to me about problems in her marriage. God quickened me and I asked her if she had been on Facebook up to 3 o'clock in the morning. She said yes. Social media without balance creates emotional numbness, causing couples to feel disconnected with their spouses. Young couples are busy, and they don't know how to prioritize and take time for each other. They have the latest technology, calendars and notifications; yet, somehow, they miss it.

We use a program called Prepare and Enrich. We will not marry anyone who has not gone through the Prepare class. After marriage is the Enrich class. Giving them tools before they get married has helped tremendously. A lot of people have never been talked to about how to have a strong marriage. We also require them to go through Financial Peace University by Dave Ramsey.

The best thing the local church can do for marriages is talk about marriage. At Anchor Church, we're very intentional. I do a lot of teaching on marriage. Our Wednesday nights are called Life Groups. We have special classes that pertain to issues the saints are dealing with: marriage, raising children, finances. We are getting ready to start a class on emotional wellness. People say, "I wish somebody had talked about this 20 years ago."

Randy Blizzard, Las Vegas, NV -- Money is the number one reason for divorce in our country. Too many see a budget as a punishment plan instead of a spending and savings plan.

Family is the second trouble area because of a lack of understanding of what to expect. Couples do not go into marriage with a good understanding of how to set boundaries with family.

The third problem area in marriage is intimacy. God intended intimacy to be the very thing that draws us together in love. We not only give our bodies to our mate but we give our emotions and feelings. We must make time for intimacy without distractions. In 10 years of owning and operating the Christian Counseling Center of Las Vegas and helping over 3,000 couples get on the same page, probably over 90 percent of them came to see me with communication problems.

Communication is the key component of a great marriage. I encourage each couple to set aside 30 minutes a day to talk. Eliminate all distractions (especially electronics) and just talk. Each week, have a planning session about what your week will look like and plan your date night weekly. What is missing in most churches is a good pre-marriage counseling program. It is important that problems be dealt with before you say I do.

Robert Coffey, Portsmouth, OH -- Jealousy seems to be rampant in many lives today. Some jealousy is founded but a lot is unfounded. Men and women both seem to have problems in this area.

A man or a woman shouldn't have to always wonder what their spouse is doing or who they are talking to. After praying together as a couple, I recommend that they work on trusting each other. They need to have strong communication and explain to the other what it is that bothers them, so they can work on it together. I also tell them to identify their problems and work on the problems, not the symptoms.

A marriage cannot survive if there is no trust! A trust broken is hard to get back.

Andre Hunter, Saraland, AL - Churches should offer seminars and classes to prepare people for marriage and celebrate the gift of marriage with couples in the church as often as possible.

Some spouses have separate values and goals. These may include differences that are better for the marriage but may be challenging for one of the spouses. I advise them to accept differences from their spouse that benefit the marriage. I encourage them to develop a marriage together and blend their lives together — their values, goals and finances.

Romance and sex have become self-centered and a reward or punishment for spousal behaviors. Husbands and wives should put their spouse’s sexual desires and needs before their own.

Above all, couples should seek to please God, and in the process, they will please each other.

Gordon Parrish, Fairbanks, AK -- I really don’t counsel a lot. I have been a pastor for almost 44 years and have pastored the same church for over 40 years. In all the years I’ve been here, I can’t think of one couple that is divorced.

Professional counselors will tell you that people who are ongoing in counseling never get better. They always need counseling. If people can be helped, it’s usually in one, two or three sessions.

If I, as a pastor, can keep people at the altar, helping them and encouraging them to maintain their spirituality, most problems get worked out. That has been my focus. If you try to work with everyone one-on-one, you can only do so much. You only have so much wisdom, so much emotion, so much time.
There’s a lot of people that still have the old school mentality that the pastor needs to have his hands on everything,” said Pastor Ben Sawyer of New Life UPC in Effingham, Illinois. “We’re trying to teach people that if you have a Sunday school class, take ownership of that class. Make it yours; make it personal. I feel like people can have a big part of a growing revival church if they’re personally invested in it.”

Keys to a Growing Church

Pastor Sawyer believes that the most important key to growth is a praying church. “How can you know the direction of the church if you’re not talking to God?” he asked. “We want the leaders in our church to be intentional with the things that they do. You don’t just hope that things accidentally happen. There should be times when you go out on purpose to minister to somebody.

“In Acts 6, Peter and the disciples appointed deacons to help out in other areas of the church. It says the pastor should be given to prayer and to the ministry of the Word. The pastor will have other obligations, but the more he can focus on prayer and ministry of the Word the better.”

Growth Ministries and Methods

“Right now, we are a smaller church, but there has been growth in the past couple of years that has been very exciting,” explained Pastor Sawyer. “Most growth has not been from door knocking or efforts like that. It has been from people bringing friends and family members. We have also worked very hard recently on our Sunday School Department. I believe that kids are the future of a church as well as the present. If you don’t have a live and growing children’s ministry, I don’t think you have a future for your church.”

New Life UPC has several departments and ministries, including youth, Sunday school, music, men, ladies, marrieds, hospitality, and visitor follow-up. Also, the church is in the process of establishing a Hyphen ministry.

Right now, the departmental leaders meet quarterly, once every three months. “We want to raise this to every month, but so far it’s just quarterly,” said the pastor. “They don’t hand in reports, but they are accountable at our meetings.”

Leadership

“The leadership of a church is on a higher level than that of a layperson or saint, so we expect more of them,” explained Pastor Sawyer. “We ask the leaders to do more than the saints as far as giving and faithfulness. There’s a lot of accountability. We expect our leaders to set monthly, quarterly and annual goals. In our meetings, we discuss how they’re coming along with these goals.”

For training, Pastor Sawyer focuses on sitting down and holding his leaders accountable. “We ask, ‘What are your goals and how will you reach them?’ We write down step-by-step how they plan to reach those goals. The training is hands-on right now.”
Involvement
The percentage of involvement in ministry at New Life UPC is fairly high, about 60-70 percent, which is over half of the members, according to Pastor Sawyer. They are “pushing really hard, all hands on deck,” he said.

He said around 50 percent of his members are actively reaching out and trying to bring somebody to church with them or start a Bible study. “Probably about half the people have caught on,” he said. “I believe that if outreach is not preached from the pulpit, taught in the classroom and spoken about in the staff meeting, it won’t happen. That is our biggest promotion.”

Personal Philosophy of Ministry
Pastor Sawyer is “a firm believer in the old-fashioned idea of prayer. I don’t know how we can operate without prayer. Our theme this year is ‘Add To,’ meaning that it’s important to add to your personal relationship with God. How can you know what God wants you to do if you’re not drawing closer to Him?

“We’re very much stressing 2 Peter 1:5-7: ‘...add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge...’ You can’t be too close to God.

“Lately, we’ve been talking more about growing a personal relationship with God. I’ve felt that this is the direction God wants for us. We can feel the faith, the expectancy building in our church people. We’ve been teaching them to look at themselves right now, even from six months ago. We are asking these questions, ‘Right now, do you feel like you are doing more for God than you did six months ago? Are you praying more? Are you more faithful? Are you giving more? Are you committing more? Because if you are, that means you’re growing. The closer you get to God, the more you know the will of God. The more you know the will of God, the more you’ll know how God can use you.”

Targeting Kids
It has taken some time and effort to create a stronger Sunday school experience at New Life UPC. “The past three or four years, our Sunday School Department has almost bottomed out,” explained Pastor Sawyer. “We have rearranged some things and are pushing to have a good, solid Sunday School Department.

“I believe in children and kids. Three or four years ago, we had 20 to 30 kids on Wednesdays and Sundays, then summer happened and we got down to only our church kids. Now, we’re pushing to have bus kids and to rebuild our Sunday school program. What an opportunity! If you can reach young kids, you can reach parents and siblings.”

Facility
Pastor Sawyer describes their church building as a “very solid, nice-looking brick building. The former pastor was very much a handy man and, with the help of others, he kept the building maintained. We can seat about 120-130 people. We have been in this building since 1970. It was an armory until the Presbyterians moved in. Then, Pastor Lawrence Jones bought the building and we have been in there ever since. We have a sanctuary building, which also holds our evangelist quarters, kitchen and fellowship hall. We have an educational building where we hold all our Sunday school classes and kids’ church areas.”

For future growth, a five-year plan is in place. “Within the next five years, we want to increase Sunday school up to 30-plus,” Pastor Sawyer said. “The educational building has six classrooms holding about 10 kids or less. We would like to knock out some walls and expand. We have reached out to neighboring businesses that are allowing us to use their facilities on weekends for parking.”

Growth
New Life UPC averages more than 70 people in attendance. “In four years, we have grown roughly 35-40 people,” he said.

“Last year, eight people got the Holy Ghost and ten were baptized. This year, we’ve baptized six so far and four people have received the Holy Ghost.”

In February of 2016, Pastor Sawyer and his wife became co-pastors with Bro. Upchurch. “In August 2017, we took on the church full-time and Bro. Upchurch retired. He is our bishop and still attends our church. I rely very heavily on him for advice. If I need something, he’s the first person I turn to. He spent the most time in my recent ministry investing in me. I trust him. He is as Christian of a man as I have ever met. He’s highly respected in the district by those who know him. I love that he still attends.”

Pastor Sawyer said the outreach methods at New Life UPC haven’t changed much. “Bro. Upchurch was always a very big Sunday school guy,” he said. “He’s always been good with kids. He loves people. His theme was, ‘I want everything for you that God wants for you.’ He’s very kind, very loving, very willing to help people. He put that in us as well.

“I love to be around people. I love to be friends and get to know people. I read a statistic one time that said, ‘Less than 15 percent of church’s successful outreaches will come from door knocking and advertisements and tracts. 85 percent of your average church’s successful outreach comes from personal contact, being a friend, bringing friends with you.’ That’s what we encourage people to do: bring their friends, bring their families, bring their co-workers.”

Concluding Remarks
Pastor Sawyer stressed that it’s important to “find somebody to be accountable to -- one, two, three different people that can have veto power in your life, that can say ‘no,’ and you will listen to them. It’s just as important to have a network of peers, people your own age that you can get together with. Some of the best times of my life have been with people who are doing what I’m doing that I can talk to.”
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Remember that every little bit counts — every smile, every positive interaction, every whispered prayer. It might not seem like you are making huge strides in your walk with God, but the little things you do reflect His love.

Even if you feel abandoned or hurt, know that God’s looking down on you. He might not answer your prayers in the way you want Him to but that doesn’t mean He isn’t listening.

Your Bible is a beautiful tool. Open it when you need a reminder of God’s love. Open it out of habit. Open it because you cannot get through a day without it. Seek refuge in His words.

Be a blessing to others. Exchange smiles, lend a listening ear or a helping hand. When you do good works for others, God looks on you with pride. Show His grace by being graceful to everyone around you.

Imperfection is a natural part of being human. You will be criticized for the ways you don’t measure up. Nod your head but don’t hang your head. Always try to be the best you can be. Always try to live in the image of God. But know that you cannot be flawless and blameless, and that God loves you anyway, unconditionally.

Don’t be afraid to speak up and speak out. You have a story in you that the world needs to hear. Try to bring others to Christ, try to share the good news, try to be a disciple whenever you can. You can, and will, change lives.

You are wonderfully and beautifully made in Christ. Stand firm in your morals and decisions. Do not change yourself for others or for love. Be proud of your body, your faith, your soul, and your being.

Know that you are not alone. There are hundreds, thousands, millions of other women trying to find their way. Seek out relationships and friendships that will encourage you, and people that will love and guide you along your spiritual journey. Know that there are so many people who love you, and a God who loves you even more.

Keep fighting for your faith. Challenge the perspectives of the people around you with respect and dignity. Show God’s love and be open and willing to share the gospel with others.
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Tell us about yourself.

I was raised in an independent Apostolic church. My family was always heavily committed to church work, so naturally that impacted my life and passion for ministry. I evangelized and youth pastored before attending Indiana Bible College. I then taught at Calvary Christian School for five years while attending graduate school. I have a lovely wife of almost 20 years and a 17-year-old son. I have served at IBC for 11 years.

Has there always been an Apostolic Church?

In Matthew 16:18, Jesus says about the Church, “...the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” A denominational seminary president once remarked to a mentor of mine, “It must be awfully lonely being a Oneness Pentecostal.” The accusation was that if “the gates of hell shall not prevail” against the Church, why can Apostolics only trace their belief to the early 1900s? Did the gates of hell prevail against the Church for centuries? These types of accusations are indicative of how important answering this issue is regarding our beliefs matching Scripture.

One thing to point out is that we Apostolics do not believe in a “triumphalistic view” of church history. This means we do not care what the majority of people came to believe. We seek first to be biblical. There has always been a “narrow” way and a “broad” way. Truth may have winnowed down to just eight souls in Noah’s day, but truth is still always truth.

The question remains, though – has there always been an Apostolic Church? There are two differing views of church history on this. One view is the restorationist view of church history. It would say the visible Church “went into darkness” (had less than full Acts 2:38 revelation) and then God brought light and revelation back in stages until 1914. The opposite view is the remnant view, which claims there has always been an Apostolic church or Apostolic truth in every age.

Is the restorationist view of church history connected to the Light Doctrine?

Yes, either implicitly or explicitly. The idea that the “full gospel” (John 3:5, Acts 2:38 and Heb. 12:14) ceased to exist or was “hidden” until a small remnant brought back over time is the same view. Those holding this view say that during that time those people were judged only by “all the light they had.” The major problem is that Acts 2, John 3 and Hebrews 12 have never disappeared from Scripture. So no one has ever been without an Apostolic witness.

Is this connected to the 3-Destination Doctrine?

Again, yes. It is a subset of belief connected to the Light Doctrine. Some well-meaning Apostolics have misused verses like 2 Pet. 3:12-14 seeking to make a distinction between “the righteous” and “the holy,” saying there are two different types of “saved” people. The problem is the text is talking about “righteousness,” not “the righteous.” They have also attempted to make Rev. 22:10-12 speak to three separate destinations for the “righteous, the holy, and the wicked.” Again, this is misuse of the context. Holy and righteous is one group. Unjust and filthy is the second group. That’s easy to see because if one was consistent, wouldn’t there have to be four destinations? Bishop Golder said it best, “There’s only heaven or hell, and you’re not smart enough to miss them both.”

What are the dangers of these doctrines?

There are multiple. First, it tempts us to leave people unsaved. Secondly, it quenches the fires of evangelism. The belief that, “they don’t know what we know, but they’re going to be okay” is a very different view than seeing them lost and on their way to hell.

I believe people can be sincerely wrong. Yet, sincerity gets them something. John 16:13 says they will be led to ALL truth. Not some truth. I think Acts 4:12 should make us shout and rejoice for our salvation. Not some salvation. We must remember our hope and constancy in God is established through His Word. If we can’t trust what God says on sin and being lost, we can’t trust what He says on grace and salvation. So, what do we do with all these people in history like Luther, Wesley, Seymour, and all the “revivals” in history? We must be careful. Some of these people may have later seen the truth of Jesus name baptism and received the infilling of the Holy Spirit speaking in other tongues. Yet it may not have been recorded in history. However, we cannot say less than what Jesus taught. It is a subset of belief connected to the Light Doctrine.
For information about these events, call the event coordinator. If you would like your event on this list, call (800) 8000-AIS. 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><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>Jerry Dillon, Jason Dillon, Raymond Woodward, David Shatwell, Mark Morgan and David Smith</td>
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<td>JAN 31</td>
<td><strong>Indiana Bible College LIVE RECORDING</strong></td>
<td>Calvary Tabernacle 902 Fletcher Ave Indianapolis IN Host: Paul D. Mooney</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 call (317) 262-4030 or (317) 554-8069</td>
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<td>FEB 20-22</td>
<td><strong>WinterFire 2020</strong></td>
<td>First Cathedral 1511 Blue Hills Ave Bloomfield, CT 06002</td>
<td>Jeff Arnold, David Bernard, Kenneth Carpenter, Theodore Brooks, Mark Drost, Michael Mitchell, Janice Sjostrand, Sam Emory</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 27-29</td>
<td><strong>Indiana Bible College CONNECT 2020</strong></td>
<td>Indiana Bible College 1502 Sumner Ave Indianapolis IN 46227 Host: Paul D. Mooney</td>
<td>Paul Mooney, Rob Rodenbush, Jason Gallion, Bobby Killmon, Lindel Anderson, others.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.indianabiblecollege.com/connect">www.indianabiblecollege.com/connect</a> or call (317) 262-4030 or (317) 554-8069</td>
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<tr>
<td>APRIL 2020</td>
<td><strong>Ascend Student Convention 2020</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 2020</td>
<td><strong>Power Conference 2020</strong></td>
<td>Crossroads Arena 2800 S. Harper Rd Corinth MS 38834</td>
<td>To be announced</td>
<td>For more info, call Josh Hodum (662) 872-9999</td>
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Church Today

Fraud Alert - Scammers Target Churches and Believers

Recently, someone impersonated our pastor and sent spam e-mails, mostly to our staff members. The initial e-mail seemed harmless: “Are you available to help me?” A few people responded and the scammers used our pastor’s name and sent a request: “I am out of town and need a favor. My cell coverage is bad, and I need you to purchase some gift cards. You can use your business or personal card, and I will reimburse you.” Thankfully, our people recognized that it was likely not legitimate, but these types of scams are increasingly common. My wife received a similar e-mail from a scammer impersonating a pastor’s wife from our district. These schemes are prevalent and can be very dangerous, not only targeting people for money but, in some cases, scams can lead to physical danger.

After giving a seminar on this topic recently, it seemed almost everyone in the audience was dealing with the aftermath of one of these schemes having affected themselves or someone close to them. With permission, I share that one story.

A lady waited outside her home with her purse, because she was told she had won the Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes. Finally, she called a friend and they were able to convince her to go inside and end communication with the scammers. It’s likely she was being targeted for a robbery. I’ve listened to the horror stories of others who spent hours dealing with the aftermath of phone scams that trick honest people into giving criminals remote access to their computers. From there, con artists can access banking and credit accounts and steal funds. It’s nearly impossible to get back those losses. Some common ruses use the name of computer companies, banks, cyber security services, the Social Security Administration, and the IRS to gain trust or intimidate the innocent party into providing information or paying fees, etc.

Nefarious swindlers are taking advantage of everyone they can and, according to the Securities and Exchange Commission, religious groups are often targeted. One pyramid scheme scammed 125 church members out of $7.4 million using a pitch filled with Biblical references. I have personally worked to help faithful believers who’ve been entrapped in scams, and sometimes I have had to work very hard to convince them that the con artist is a cheat and that the scheme is not an answer to prayer.

I highly recommend pastors alert members and discuss these matters openly with the congregation. Resources are available through your Attorney General’s office. They will also know what scams are common and current in your area.

Theology

What can we do with the complexities young people are facing today?

“They help understand the times. The new secular worldview informs all types of stances on things such as sexuality, abortion, assisted suicide, homosexuality and transgenderism. This “new orthodoxy” is being taught through all major social institutions, including academia, the media, public schools, Hollywood, private corporations and, increasingly, the law.

One thing that helps young people is to see the ideas which drive the new secular view on ethics. Learning the core ideas under their claims allows young people two benefits. First, it allows a needed truthful response, for only truth sets free. Secondly, it also allows us to have a compassionate response by seeing them as “prisoners of war” captivated by the lies of the age.

Another good starting point to equip our young people and young adults is to see under the agenda of these secular moral theories and their implications. They ultimately devalue human beings and thereby destroy the possibility of human rights. We must also equip them with the knowledge that any time they dissent from this new “public orthodoxy” they will be labeled as intolerant and falsely accused of things like discrimination. This will be broken upon homosexuals, racist, sexist, classists, etc. Then they will be targeted in these public venues for campaigns of shame and intimidation. Being aware of this is critical because they must know the context of America has changed, and they are going to see more pressure because of their stands. That’s okay; the first century Church thrived under increased pressure and so will we. But more than that, truth is critical to helping people trapped in these lies and is the only thing that can set them free and bring true peace into their lives.

If a view on any of these moral issues is true, then it must move past the arena of ideas and ultimately be livable. Or to say it another way, it must match reality. Lewis said, “The Christian and the materialist hold different beliefs about the universe. They can’t both be right. The one who is wrong will act in a way that simply doesn’t fit the real universe. Consequently, with the best will in the world, he will be helping his fellow creatures to their destruction.” Giving our young people the confidence to face this moment and arm them with truth, as well as Spirit, will enable them to bless their world.

Passing to our young people the confidence that the baptism of water and Spirit is God’s answer to the human dilemma for living out truth is essential. But so is teaching them to cooperate with God’s reality in all of life. These two things provide confidence for the moment God has, in His providence, trusted them with. We should not merely rant against the day. We must not assimilate. We should not bunker down due to intimidation. We should see these challenges in light of God’s provision. Spirit and truth are always enough to produce true worshippers in any age. What a moment God has trusted both us and them with!
The Time Is Now

Arkansas Int.

Saturday • 7:00 PM
Jonathan Shoemaker
San Jose, CA

Monday • 2:00 PM
Larry Bolden
Rialto, CA

Tuesday • 2:00 PM
Jonathan Alvarez
Conyers, GA

Tracks

AICM desires to strengthen the local church, knowing that the local (name)

Register for the free workshops at: A

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JOHNNY GODAIR
DURHAM, NC

SUNDAY • 7:00 PM
FLOYD ODOM
DECATUR, AL

MONDAY • 2:00 PM • YOUTH
BRENNAN CLABORN
RIALTO, CA

MONDAY • 7:00 PM
NATHANIEL URSHAN
SOUTHAVEN, MS

TUESDAY • 2:00 PM • YOUTH
ARI PRADO
ALAMEDA, CA

TUESDAY • 7:00 PM
MATTHEW TUTTLE
VIDOR, TX

A church is the impetus for revival. We are offering three tracks for ministry teams: MINISTRY, OUTREACH, AND MUSIC.

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AKE • TASHA SHOEMAKE • JACQUE URSHAN • NATHANIEL URSHAN
Spiritual Growth

Carol Clemans

God Has Answers For Anxiety, Depression and Suicidal Thoughts

Proverbs 12:25 – “Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, but a good word makes it glad.” Anxiety causes depression, and depression can lead to suicidal thoughts. How do we overcome these toxic thoughts?

Romans 12:1-2 (NLT) “And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to live lives marked by love, not envy or selfish ambitions. Do not concentrate on your own interests, but think of others. For even Christ, our Savior, did not count equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being born in human form.”

There are some that consider this choice to be spiritual oppression, bondage or church rules that keep women trapped in a patriarchal system dominated by men and antiquated ideas of spiritual authority.

I believe our Apostolic heritage, our tradition of modesty, and submission to God and spiritual authority has been preserved because it is not only biblical, but it works! When a woman wakes up each morning and makes the conscious decision to dress and groom herself in a manner that pleases Christ, it sets the tone for the entire day.

It’s our duty to continue to preserve these distinctive. To do so, this generation needs the “whys” behind what we teach (1 Peter 3:15).

I asked the questions, “What if, for sake of argument, we looked at the idea of modesty from a secular perspective? What would we find?” Here are some powerful examples from non-religious sources on this issue:

Like it or not, you are being judged by how you look, how you dress, and how you carry yourself—and, if you’re lucky, how you do your job” (Forbes).

Women in high-level positions who dress in what is seen as sexy attire are viewed as less competent...These women are passed over for promotions more often than their more modestly dressed female colleagues” (Psychology of Women Quarterly).

Even fashion icons weigh in on the topic: “With women, the more unhappy they are, the more undressed they are” (Muccia Prada). “Modesty is the highest elegance” (Coco Chanel).

Modesty is clearly something that God knew was important. In order to live modestly, we have to define it. These definitions aren’t rules but rather a way to demonstrate to ourselves and to others that we are God’s chosen, His bride.

Does fashion matter? Of course it does! How you wear is how you present yourself to the world—fashion is instant language” (Miuccia Prada).

“My dear brothers and sisters, I urge you to live lives marked by love, not envy or selfish ambitions. Do not concentrate on your own interests, but think of others. For even Christ, our Savior, did not count equality with God something he desired to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being born in human form.”

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Jaye Rodenbush is a speaker, teacher and writer who serves as dean of administrative and academic affairs at IBC. She has a B.A. in Music and Corporate Communication and a Master’s in Higher Education. She is also a speaker, teacher and writer who serves as director of Women’s Ministries at IBC. She has a B.A. in Music and Corporate Communication and a Master’s in Higher Education. Follow her blog on Facebook or at jayerodenbush.com

Family & Culture

Jaye Rodenbush

Does Fashion Matter?

Our Apostolic distinctives and the holiness identity that we have associated with a woman’s choice to dress modestly and to live a separated life are under constant scrutiny.

It’s our duty to continue to preserve these distinctive. To do so, this generation needs the “whys” behind what we teach (1 Peter 3:15).

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Accounting & Tax

Delano Sherley

Update on Housing Allowance

We all have been watching the outcome of the 2017 lawsuit in Wisconsin that challenged the constitutionality of the ministers’ housing allowance. In March of this year, the Seventh Circuit reversed the lower court’s decision, upholding the ability to pay a minister a housing allowance.

While some believe there will be more lawsuits in the future, for now ministers can continue to reduce federal and state income taxes by having the church board approve a housing allowance.

The resolution should be in writing, for a specific dollar amount, and must be designated in advance (you cannot make a retroactive resolution).

Now is a good time to review your housing allowance to see if any adjustments are needed for the last half of the year. We also recommend that you include the following language in the resolution, “Be it resolved, that this housing allowance designation shall apply to calendar year 2019 and all future years unless otherwise provided.” This allows one resolution to cover future years, and protects the loss of the tax benefit should the board forget to approve the allowance annually.

Delano Sherley is a CPA and president of Delano Sherley & Associates, Inc. He can be reached at 513-737-1314. Delano Sherley & Associates, Inc., 8240 Beckett Park Dr., Suite A, West Chester, OH 45069. Email: Delano@dsacpinc.com Website: www.dsacpinc.com
Pope Francis Changes Lord’s Prayer

Pope Francis has officially approved a change to the Lord’s Prayer in Matthew 6:13 that replaces “lead us not into temptation” with “do not let us fall into temptation.” US Catholic reported that the Vatican enacted the change on May 21. Newly elected Pope Francis reportedly believes the new version is better because the first translation implies that God leads people into temptation. “A father doesn’t do that, a father helps you to get up immediately,” Francis said. “It’s Satan who leads us into temptation; that’s his department.”

In defense of the original translation, the late theologian Charles Spurgeon explained during a sermon in 1863 that the word temptation in Matthew 6:13 actually holds two meanings, both the temptation toward sin and the facing of trials and tribulations.

While Spurgeon agrees that God does not tempt us, he does argue that God will send us into trials and situations in which temptation toward sin is ever-present. “God tempts no man,” Spurgeon said. “For God to tempt in the sense of enticing to sin is inconsistent with his nature, and altogether contrary to his known character; but to hang gay pride flags elsewhere, such as inside on walls or even outdoors. But it can’t fly from the flagpole.

In terms of fetal tissue research, the Trump administration recently banned government scientists from conducting fetal tissue research, capping a contentious debate within the Department of Health and Human Services.

“Promoting the dignity of human life from conception to natural death is one of the very top priorities of President Trump’s administration,” an HHS statement read.

The department said it was discontinuing fetal tissue research among scientists within the National Institutes of Health. Any future research “that requires new acquisition of fetal tissue from elective abortions will not be conducted,” the statement said.

Some scientists had said fetal tissue research was necessary to find cures, although other scientists said such research was unethical and that alternatives existed. Pro-life groups applauded the HHS decision to stop scientists from using fetal tissue.

“This is a major pro-life victory and we thank President Trump for taking decisive action,” said Susan B. Anthony List President Marjorie Dannenfelser. “It is outrageous and disgusting that we have been complicit, through our taxpayer dollars, in the experimentation using baby body parts.”

Trump Administration Stands Strong on Christian Issues

Two recent decisions by the Trump administration illustrate that Christian values are being applied to modern moral dilemmas. In mid-June, the current administration reversed an Obama-era practice and banned embassies from flying the gay pride rainbow flag on flagpoles during LGBT Pride Month, according to American diplomats. A few days earlier, in another landmark decision, the Trump administration banned government scientists from conducting fetal tissue research, handing pro-lifers a major victory.

In regard to the flag issue, embassies in Israel, Germany, Brazil and Latin America have requested but been denied permission to fly the gay pride flag alongside the American flag on their respective embassy flagpoles, NBC News reported.

The Obama administration allowed embassies in foreign countries to fly the gay pride flag on the official flagpole during LGBT Pride Month as a way to promote its agenda overseas. The Obama administration’s move took place even before the U.S. Supreme Court legalized gay marriage nationwide.

The new Trump policy apparently took effect when Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, a Christian, was sworn in last year. Requests to fly the gay pride flag on the flagpole must be made to the State Department, NBC News reported.

All have been denied. This doesn’t mean embassies can’t hang gay pride flags elsewhere, such as inside on walls or even outdoors. But it can’t fly from the flagpole.

Seymour Alignment of Religious Trends

According to the BBC, more than two dozen Christians were praying in three locations around the nation’s capital when they were rounded up and taken into custody recently by security forces. In the northeast African nation of Eritrea.

This is only one instance of a growing trend of persecution against Christians in Eritrea. On May 10, 141 Christians were arrested in the nation’s capital of Asmara after gathering for a meeting. Open Doors USA reports.

According to the Christian Post, since the nation declared its independence from Ethiopia in 1993, only four religions are officially recognized by the Eritrea government: Orthodox Christianity, Sunni Islam, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Eritrea and the Catholic Church. All other religions are considered illegal.

SEMINARY PRESIDENT APOLOGIZES TO CONSERVATIVES

Former Aussie Rugby Player Fired For Expressing Christian Views; Files Suit

After being fired for sharing a post on Instagram opposing homosexuality, Australian Christian Rugby player Israel Folau has filed suit against Rugby Australia. The 30-year-old announced recently he had filed an application with the Australian Fair Work Commission for religious discrimination.

As Christian Headlines previously reported, Folau’s contract was terminated in April after he shared a post on Instagram warning “drunks, homosexuals, adulterers, liars, fornicators, thieves, atheists and idolaters” to turn away from sin.

The former Wallabies player wrote in the April 10 post, “Those that are living in sin will end up in Hell unless you repent. Jesus Christ loves you and is giving you time to turn away from your sin and come to him.” He then quoted Galatians 5:19-21.

Soon after, Folau was accused by Rugby Australia of breaching the players’ code of conduct, which led to termination of his contract. In an independent hearing, Folau — signed to play through 2022 for more than $1 million a year — was found guilty of a “high level” breach of contract. This triggered a snowball effect, causing two of the superstar’s sponsors to drop him. Folau continues to fight the charge.

New York’s legislature passed a bill banning the declawing of cats recently, citing it as a painful and inhumane procedure – four months after the same body of legislators approved a bill permitting abortion of a human unborn baby up to the moment of birth.

■ Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minnesota) is facing criticism for suggesting that Jesus was Palestinian and not a Jew. According to CBN News, Omar retweeted a tweet from Omar Suleiman, an American Muslim scholar and civil rights activist, suggesting that Jesus was Palestinian.

■ The president of a seminary founded in 1836 on the “infallible” Word of God says in a new interview she doesn’t believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ, the power of prayer, a literal heaven or miracles.

Serene Jones, president of Union Theological Seminary in New York, made the comments in an interview with Nicholas Kristof of The New York Times for an article published Easter weekend. Although intended to inspire readers, it spotlighted the leftward drift of many seminaries.

Union Theological Seminary’s founding constitution stated the seminary’s goal was to promote the “Kingdom of Christ.” Professors were required to affirm they believed “the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the word of God.” But, as Jones made clear, the seminary is a very different school today.

International Christian Rugby player Israel Folau
IDAHO DISTRICT

20/20 VISION | 20 CHURCHES BY 2020 MULTICULTURAL CITIES

TARGET CITIES
- SPOKANE (8200)
- MOSCOW (26,000)
- MCCALL (3500)
- BOISE (217,000)
- MERIDIAN (105,000)
- KUNA (29,000)
- EAGLE (26,000)
- JEROME (11,000)
- HAILEY (8300)
- POCATELLO (56,000)
- BLACKFOOT (12,000)
- REXBURG (28,340)

* APPROVED FOR METRO MISSIONS

DO YOU FEEL A BURDEN TO PLANT A CHURCH, BUT HAVE NOT YET NAMED YOUR PLACE OR CALLING?

Contact information
Nathaniel Hampton phone # 918-618-2566,
Dan Kantola phone # 208-866-2930 or email djkantola@yahoo.com
On the evening of May 3, Calvary Tabernacle’s sanctuary was filled with Indiana Bible College students, friends, and family as 35 IBC seniors graduated.

The night before during the Graduation Banquet, pastor of The Calvary Church in Cincinnati, OH and IBC alumnus Tom Ellis spoke to the graduating class about, "The Fear of Better Options."

The evening of graduation, the pastor of Calvary UPC in Addison, IL, Brian Labat, gave the keynote, admonishing students, "God has a plan; it's brilliant, and you're in it."

In what has become a staple of the ceremony, IBC President Paul D. Mooney recited the poem of unknown authorship, "The Torch Bearer," which reminds us, "Tis the torch that the people follow, whoever the bearer may be."

Congratulations, Class of 2019

Kade Abbott
Sam Bailey
Thad Benson
Mary Brian
Brittanie Bryant
Benjamin Cashen
Kristoria Chapman
Gabrielle Dixon
Drew Duncan
Jonathan Fitzsimons
Gioselin Gonzalez
Zachary Hudspeth
Zachary Kidder
Brielle Labat
Kayla Lewis
Robert Lewis
Paige Lohrman
Triston Manning
Daniel Maratta

Chelsea Mason
Joseph McCann
McKenzie Middleton
Meghan Mitchell
Daci Mooney
Alicia Nations
Bree-Ana Pelkey
Brooke Robinson
Charles Robison
Janae Scanlon
Jonathan Paul Schellhardt
Rebecca Spooner
Luke Stumbo
Rustin Young
Jeremias Zuniga
A Death Certificate

I Samuel 15:24-30 reveals a desperate Saul taking hold of the mantle of the prophet Samuel after he failed to kill the Amalekites and their livestock as God commanded. The verses depict the tragic severing of Saul from his calling and his God. The door shuts with a finality that reverberates through time. As the drama unfolds, it is apparent that Saul is so concerned with the approval of the crowd and his appearance as “the anointed one” that he fails to recognize the severity of what has taken place. He pleads with Samuel to honor him before the people and offer up a sacrifice, so he appears upright in the eyes of the people. He is unaware he has signed the death certificate on his calling, and the kingship won’t be passed to his children. His action destroyed his relationship with his spiritual leadership and his God. As I read the Biblical account, I want to beg Saul to grab ahold of the man of God for another reason. Saul, you’ve made a major mistake; you’ve got to repent and make this right, because after this point there is no turning back.

The Human Element

The story of Saul causes a conflict of emotions. We often see him as the penultimate villain with the javelin ready to kill the hero, David. But, if we deny that elements of Saul’s personality reside in each of us, we do the story a disservice. Furthermore, it’s difficult to find God’s justice in the story. Was Saul merely a casualty caught in the crossfire of a rebellious people and a vengeful God? Why did God in His foreknowledge know the mistakes he would make, yet still put him into power? The heart of the story beckons us to take a closer look at Saul’s ascent into power and his subsequent descent.

The Man of the Hour

The people of Israel had rejected their God and His theocracy. God didn’t need Saul’s kingship to prove that no man could replace Him as king. To argue that Saul’s failure to effectively lead was due to an insurmountable moral deficiency is to suggest God was incapable of preparing Saul for the task. But I believe the same God who called David, called Saul. God planned to equip Saul to become the man of the hour. God tells His prophet in I Samuel 9:16 that he is supposed to “anoint a man...to save my people from the Philistines.” We see Saul as a man full of promise and potential. In verse two, the Bible describes him as a “choice young man...goodly...there was no young man goodlier.” He was tall and strong, a man who could take command. We know that he responded initially with humility. “...Am I not a Benjamite of the smallest of my tribe?” Why would you call me? I’m nothing. We read that Saul prophesied with the prophets. The Bible says he was literally turned into another man.

Saul had everything he needed to become a king like David and to defeat the Philistines. In I Samuel 10:24, the people cry out, “God save the king.” Saul had the heart of the people, was approved by God, was humble and had the assurance and affirmation of the prophet. The anointing oil had been poured over his head. What more did you need, Saul?

What Went Wrong?

Saul went from mountaintop to valley low within the blink of an eye. He went from winning battles for the Lord to positioning himself against Samuel and becoming the enemy of God. We see him commissioned to kill the Philistines but instead he is comfortable sitting on his empty throne, and he...
sends a young man out to do a king’s work. He chooses to set himself apart from the will and calling of God. His God-approving kingship is over in less than five chapters. His path-chosen, his legacy set in stone.

To label this tragedy God’s design or a moral failure is to deny that Saul may reside in you and me. In I Samuel 10:9-23, Saul goes from prophesying with the prophets to hiding from God’s prophet. Did humility cause him to take cover “among the stuff” or could it be that for Saul it was just a small step from his place of hiding to his position on a tyrant’s throne? We must examine our own hearts, if Saul is to be expelled.

Perhaps Saul was not able to fight God’s enemies because he could not conquer the enemy within his own soul. Was he afraid he couldn’t measure up? Was he unwilling to yield himself to the only One able to move on his behalf? Would he be a man of God? Or would he merely occupy an empty throne, powerless to accomplish the will of God?

Ultimately, Saul’s view of God determined the trajectory of his reign. His definition of kingship didn’t extend beyond the golden crown that encircled his head; he thought the weight of the crown was his alone to bear. He took responsibility for maintaining the allegiance of the people, fought to defend his own authority, and sought to overcome his imperfections on his own. In the end, if he couldn’t convince himself of the reality of his calling, how could he convince the people, how could he not convince God? His inability to come to terms with the reality that God had called him to be a king ensured he would forever hide from the call, and a king in hiding will always be either a tyrant or a timid, ineffective leader.

Don’t Bear the Crown Alone
In ministry, when you try to bear the weight of the crown alone, you, like Saul, will imagine enemies at every turn and the calling will become yours, not God’s. You may minister, but you will be wholly ineffective. You may preach, but you will have no power in the pulpit. You may sing the solo, but you will not have the anointing. Like Saul, you are incapable of measuring up on your own. You cannot simply put on a garment of ministry and become what He’s called you to be.

Ministry is not a ticket to wield authority but a commitment to service and humility. It is a journey, not a destination. His call is life-transforming. Sometimes ministry requires you lay your all on the altar without any assurance He is going to breathe life into you again. It is suffering death before partaking in the glory of the resurrection. Moving forward in ministry is not as easy as just answering the call or feeling the anointing oil on your head. It is deciding to never turn back, and determining that there are battles worth fighting, and hills worth dying on. God does not promise ease in ministry. You cannot hold the crown on your own. If God has called you, He will equip you, but you must be willing to not only give Him your best but also your worst.

The Crown of the Anointing Oil
The anointing is the overflow of your relationship with God; it isn’t a spigot you turn on and off. Once you have felt His anointing oil, you are forever transformed. It is impossible to wipe away its marks on the soul.

Saul walked away from God, but the memory of the anointing oil being poured over his head drove him to search for Samuel with the witch of Endor. If you walk away from God, you will always seek a substitute for the anointing experienced in the presence of the King of Kings.

The God who anoints you wants all the broken pieces, the hidden pain, the perfectionist tendencies that seek to destroy, the personality quirks, and feelings of inadequacy.

He wants the pride you seek to hide and the feelings of worthlessness you fight to silence in the dead of night. He desires the mask of perfection that hides the cracks in your facade and the weighted crown you wear that bows your shoulders, driving you to the ground. He doesn’t just want your all; He demands it.

Give Him Your Best and Your Worst
You can’t make yourself good enough for God. He isn’t afraid of your struggles and weaknesses; He knows your heart completely. The only way you’ll escape the comforting shadow of your own weakness is if you recognize living victory to victory is just as dangerous as defeat. You cannot understand the power of a Healer until you have presented Him with your deepest pain. In fact, sometimes you have to grip the ragged edge of pain and allow your heart to bleed at the foot of Calvary, so that His blood can bring healing.

Furthermore, you cannot trust God with your future if you do not trust Him with your past and present. You cannot understand the strength of God until you are willing to present your greatest weakness.

Surrender
Saul was unwilling to give his insecurities and imperfections to God. The young man who hid behind the stuff, afraid to surrender, tried to survive and become king on his own terms. However, he wasn’t strong enough to wrestle with the weight of an earthly crown and because he never allowed God to define his worth and shape his character, he failed to be the king God anointed him to be.

God desires a relationship with you, and His anointing demands you come to Him in transparency and complete surrender. If you are willing to give Him your best and your worst, He can transform the weakness and pain you desire to keep hidden into your greatest strengths. He does not want you to wrestle with His call on your own; He will equip you. When you yield yourself to Him, He can repair all that is broken; and He will bear the weight of the crown.

Bio: Sis. Jennifer Mast received her BA in Biblical Studies from Indiana Bible College and went on to study Biblical Languages at Regent University. She holds general license with the UPCI, is a passionate preacher and teacher, and has been actively involved in various ministry capacities since 2004. Currently, Sis. Mast serves at Indiana Bible College as both the Registrar and an instructor for the Biblical Studies Department. She teaches a number of courses, including Introduction to the Bible, Gospel of John, Romans & Galatians, General Epistles, New Testament Greek, and Biblical Hebrew. She loves working with young people and counts it an honor and privilege to help train the next generation of Apostolic ministers. In addition, she is a part-time evangelist, basing out of Calvary Tabernacle in Indianapolis, where she is also an occasional guest speaker on the CTYA podcast, found in the iTunes store. Email: mailto:jmast.ibc@gmail.com Twitter: @Jen_1335
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Come Help Us!
A Ghana University Student Begs For A Church to Be Planted in Tartu, Estonia

By Gregg Stone

“Come help us!” The cry is the same as the Macedonian call to Paul in the book of Acts and the answer was the same: “We will come to you!” That’s the response given by Bro. Nate Turner, missionary to Estonia, when he received a message via Facebook asking, “Do you have a church in my city?”

“When God opens a door for ministry in a new place for you, He just may be planning to plant a church through you,” said Bro. Turner. “In September of 2017, a young Apostolic man from Ghana named Isaac wrote to me on Facebook, saying that he was a graduate student at the university in Estonia’s second largest city of Tartu and asked if we had a UPC church there. Tartu is two hours from the capital city of Tallinn by car, and we had never held a service there before. I had to tell him that we did not yet have a work there, but that if he would like, we would be glad to travel there to have a service with him. That was the genesis of a new church plant in Estonia.”

Bro. Turner’s team made the two-hour journey to conduct the first service in this new location. “Our first service was in a small meeting room of a hotel in Tartu that only had a conference table,” he explained. “Besides Isaac, there were three of us from the church in the capital city, giving us a grand total of just four people. Isaac wept in the presence of the Lord, and we felt the Lord’s blessing on the service. We began advertising in the local newspaper and on Facebook, and have been holding bi-weekly services there for the past year and a half.

“In January of 2018, the first lady received the Holy Ghost. Then two more received the Holy Ghost and we baptized our first Tartu convert in Jesus name. At this point, we continue to travel to Tartu with a faithful evangelism team every other week, and there is a core group of Estonians and international university graduate students who faithfully attend the services. Last weekend, one of the Estonian ladies said that God had told her she would attend a church with an English pastor and that he would train her for evangelism. I told her that I speak English, and that I would love to train her from the Bible! Isaac is preparing to begin teaching Bible studies on the campus, and we are excited about launching a campus ministry in Tartu.”

With the goal to plant a church in Tartu with a pastor onsite to lead it to revival, maturity, growth and the eventual planting of daughter works throughout that area of the country, Bro. Turner and his team are working hard to make this dream a reality. “Our plans for the future are to follow the leading of the Spirit as we continue to advertise, hold services in Tartu, teach Bible studies, lead people to the New Birth, and continue on-campus small group meetings for university students,” said Bro. Turner. “God opened the door, and we are confident He will lead us to the fulfillment of His purpose in Tartu.”

Haven of Hope Church: From Permanent to Portable

By Gregg Stone

Everything is on wheels! Taking the church from permanent to portable is a concept adopted by Bro. Rick Perry, pastor of Haven Of Hope in New Haven, Connecticut.

After selling their church building, the church now conducts services in an inner city school consisting of a 300-seat auditorium, with use of the gym, cafeteria, other rooms, and the swimming pool for baptism purposes. “Multiple factors played into this decision,” explained Pastor Perry. “Our building was too small, as we kept hitting 90 percent capacity and losing people as a result. We only had nine official parking spaces. I was approached by a real estate agent asking if we were willing to sell our building. Keep in mind we had tried for a year and a half with no success. Being a younger church, we had not had the opportunity to save a lot of money but we had capital in our building.”

But a miracle soon happened, when another church with bank financing in place gave Haven of Hope more than what they paid for the building. After much research, Pastor Perry decided to make his church portable. To make it work, the process is involved and very well-structured. “We start at 7:30 a.m. on Sunday with the first wave of volunteers emptying the trailer and bringing the contents to the respective doors of those ministries needing the supplies,” he explained. “We have a foreman who is in charge of the loading and unloading of the equipment, we have someone that is responsible for all signage, we have someone over the breakfast, and we have people that know how to set up sound from start to finish.

“At 8 a.m. the second wave comes and set-up begins. At this time, a team begins cooking breakfast for all 20-30 volunteers, and at 8:45 we have a tag-in meeting with everyone over a hot breakfast. Music practice starts at 9 a.m. Half an hour later, prayer time in the prayer room (which is half a gymnasium) begins. We also start our Growth Track class at that time in the library. At 10:15, all platform ministry and support teams meet for one last tag-in to go over the order of service and then church begins. At the conclusion of service, we load up.”

Going portable has brought many benefits, and Pastor Perry is quick to recommend it to others. “I would certainly recommend what we are doing, but they need a solid team of people to help do it,” he said. “Systems are key. One of the major benefits is that the building is maintenance free. Also, we don’t have to do any repairs and we don’t even have to invest in any cleaning supplies. For us, it’s a win-win!”

He said becoming portable has brought growth to the church. “We are seeing new people as a result of more parking and comfort in the sanctuary,” said Pastor Perry. “We are also seeing new people get involved sooner. They may not have a complete grasp on holiness standards, but it doesn’t stop them from putting up signs in the parking lot and hallways. It has also forced us into small group ministry (Connect Groups) and this has been a huge blessing in that many of our members travel good distances for service and it is creating leaders within the body. These groups will ultimately lead to other church plants, and that is our future goal.”
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Word To The Wise:
“Whenever you think you’d like to go back to your teenage years, think of Algebra.”

* * * * * *

A pastor assured his congregation he was their servant and that they should feel free to call him anytime they had a problem. That night the pastor’s phone rang at 3 a.m. On the other end was a dear elderly lady who said, “Pastor, I can’t sleep.”
“T’m so sorry to hear that,” he comforted her. “But what can I do about it?” She sweetly replied, “Preach to me a while, pastor.”

* * * * * *

A girl asks her father, “Why does it rain? Is it God crying?”
“No,” says her father. “It rains to make the plants grow. Do you understand?”
“Not exactly,” says the girl. “Why does it rain on the sidewalk?”

How Do You Get to Heaven?
I was testing the children in my Sunday school class to see if they understood the concept of getting to heaven. I asked them, “If I sold my house and my car, had a big garage sale and gave all my money to the church, would that get me into heaven?”
“No!” the children answered.
“If I cleaned the church every day, mowed the yard, and kept everything neat and tidy, would that get me into Heaven?”
Again, the answer was, “No!”
By now, I was starting to smile. “Well, then, if I was kind to animals and gave candy to all the children, and loved my husband, would that get me into Heaven?” I asked them again.
Again, they all answered, “No!”
I was just bursting with pride for them. “Well,” I continued, “then how can I get into Heaven?”
A five-year-old boy shouted out, “YOU GOTTA BE DEAD!”

* * * * * *

Moses’ mom.

* * * * * *

One evening, a bird-lover stood in his backyard and hooted like an owl -- and an owl called back to him! They had a whole “conversation.”
He tried it again the next night, and the next -- and the owl always answered. He was fascinated.
Sometime later his wife had a chat with her next-door neighbor. “My husband spends his nights calling out to owls,” she said.
“That’s odd,” the neighbor replied. “So does my husband.”

* * * * * *

Good News: The youth of the church came to your house for a visit.
Bad News: It was in the middle of the night and they were armed with toilet paper and shaving cream.

* * * * * *

A boy was watching his father, a pastor, write a sermon.
“How do you know what to say?” he asked.
“Why, God tells me,” his father said.
“Oh, then why do you keep crossing things out?”

* * * * * *

“You’re all set. Head directly to the Reunion Center.”

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Hebrews 13:7

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