

WHITE WING 

FEBRUARY 2013

MESSENGER

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY



His-Story in the Making

GLOBAL MISSIONS MINISTRIES SPOTLIGHT


**VISION 2020:
THE LOCAL CHURCH**

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LES LIVRES POUR Les Enfants

books for kids



Les Livres Pour Les Enfants (Books for Kids) is a virtual book drive that provided 1,200 books for the Haitian orphans.

In 2010 the earthquake that devastated Haiti destroyed the orphanage as well as killing several staff and children. Since then, the orphanage, now called Ca-Ira Village, has been rebuilt, living quarters for the children have been completed and they have returned to their studies. However, the few books that the children had were destroyed in the earthquake.

The Helping Hands for Kids 2012 Targeted Giving Project, Les Livres Pour Les Enfants, asked for your help in purchasing 500 books for the Ca-Ira Village library.



Chandler Lee



Hagansport Children's Ministry

Children and adults from 16 congregations as well as 13 individuals have raised over \$12,000 to purchase books for the library. Thank you for not just reaching our goal, but doubling it!

Visit children.cogop.org for more information on the 2013 Targeted Giving Project.



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WHITE WING
MESSENGER

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Bringing honor to the WORD by the printed word, the White Wing Messenger strives to inspire Christian thought and practice as it imparts the "good news" of the Gospel while serving the connectivity needs of our church community.



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Visit us online—www.whitewingmessenger.org



Randall E. Howard
General Overseer

Vision for the Local Church

In our Vision 2020 segment this issue we are talking about the local church. I hope that it is obvious to everyone that the local church is the most important ministry level in any network or system of ministry. The actual 'work of the ministry' is done almost exclusively at the local church level. Think with me. Where do our children get baptized, as well as the vast majority of converts? Where does the community of faith, the people of God, gather to encourage one another in their walk with the Lord? Where do we hear the Word of God consistently, pray corporately, worship regularly, and plan ministry and service to the community around us? All of this happens at the local church. It is the visible representation of the body of Christ in that neighborhood or community.

With that understanding, I was so encouraged recently as I attended a pastors' conference in Mexico. I had already heard the passion of the general presbyter for Vision 2020. I was well aware of the commitment our national overseer had for the core values of prayer, leadership development, and the harvest. But the highlight of the conference for me was when four pastors from Mexico stood and began to elaborate how they were inspired to implement elements of Vision 2020 through their local church ministry and outreach. That was exciting!

Consider the potential for our three core values when local church activation is at a peak. The value of prayer says that this movement will become a mighty movement of prayer around the world. By the year 2020, our dream

is that the great majority of our local churches will have vibrant prayer ministries functioning which will empower every other kind of ministry in that local congregation. Consider that happening in 10,000 churches on every continent!

The value of leadership development anticipates leaders being called, encouraged, equipped, and sent. Yes, we can work on this from the International Offices and from regional offices, but the real movement-shaking impact will come as each local church and pastor discerns the call of God on young men and women and works with them to encourage their development in ministry. If each church of our 10,000 developed one new leader by the year 2020, we would have 10,000 new leaders for this great day of evangelization!

The value of harvest simply aims at proclaiming the Gospel and planting new churches to saturate our lands with believing bodies of faith. Consider what would happen if by the year 2020, 10,000 churches were bringing a modest number, say, 10 new people to Christ each year—or if several thousand of these churches helped to plant new churches. Because of the power of simple, local church application, the implications of Vision 2020 are world shaking through prayer, leadership development, and harvest activities. Pastors, begin to dream with us how your church could be a dynamo of prayer ministry, how new leaders could be encouraged, how lost souls could be redeemed, or a new church birthed. The realization of those simple goals will be life-breathing for your church and community pastors.

2013 Calendar of Events

January 31–February 2

School of Practical & Advanced Studies I & II
Macon, Georgia

February 7–9

School of Practical & Advanced Studies III
Peru

February 11–13

School of Practical & Advanced Studies I
Guyana

February 18–20

School of Practical & Advanced Studies I
Nepal

February 25–27

School of Practical & Advanced Studies I
North India

February 25–27

School of Practical & Advanced Studies I
Central India

February 8–March 3

School of Practical & Advanced Studies III
Belize

March 13–16

School of Practical & Advanced Studies III
Central Mexico

March 14–16

School of Practical & Advanced Studies II
Trinidad and Tobago (tentative)

March 22–24

Northeast Regional Ladies Retreat
Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada

March 25–28

School of Practical & Advanced Studies III
El Salvador (tentative)

March 30, 31

Easter Celebration at Fields of the Wood
Murphy, North Carolina

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CULTURE

Abortion Rates Drop Sharply



The Center for Disease Control recently revealed that the abortion rates in the United States had dropped 5 percent between 2008 and 2009, according to their most recent records. Although the drop is the largest decline in a decade, abortions in the US were still reported at 784,507 (although some analysts estimate the number at much higher, because some states, such as California, are missing from the data).

Randy O'Bannon speculated on the pro-life website LifeNews.com that the drop may be as a result of Christians and pro-life activists raising awareness of the sanctity of life:

“While different factors may be involved to differing degrees in this latest drop, part of the explanation surely lies in the cumulative response to years of pro-life education highlighting the humanity of the unborn child and the viability of life-affirming alternatives to abortion.

“That message has been promulgated by the discussion and passage of pro-life legislation and given practical effect by practical outreach of pro-life chapters, churches, and pregnancy care centers.”

If the numbers are a sign of advancement in the ongoing war, what can you do to help the numbers drop even further?

ATTITUDES & ADDICTIONS: CELL PHONES

Some interesting numbers about how people view their cell phone usage:

85% of American adults own a cell phone

67% of cell owners find themselves checking their phone for messages, alerts, or calls—even when they don't notice their phone ringing or vibrating. Some 18 percent of cell owners say that they do this “frequently.”

44% of cell owners have slept with their phone next to their bed because they wanted to make sure they didn't miss any calls, text messages, or other updates during the night.

29% of cell owners describe their cell phone as “something they can't imagine living without.”

11% of cell owners say that they themselves sometimes worry that they are spending too much time with their phone.

12% of cell owners say that people they know tell them that they are spending too much time using their phone.

—*The Best (and Worst) of Mobile Connectivity, Pew Internet, Pew Research Center, November 2012*

HOW CAN YOU HELP STOP ABORTIONS?

Every Christian is needed in the fight against abortion. It is not a job for specialists. God has instructed us to love our neighbors as ourselves, and that means our tiny, unborn neighbors, too. Here is an outline of becoming a missionary to the unborn:

Repent of our complacency and indifference to the fate of innocent unborn children who are daily being murdered in our land. Determine that we can and will do something to save these babies and eliminate this scourge.

Know the Scriptures dealing with the shedding of innocent blood, with God's punishment for nations which were guilty of this, and with God's plan for restoration through reestablishing justice.

Continued on next page

HOW CAN YOU HELP STOP ABORTIONS? *continued page 5*

Educate yourself on this life issue. There are a number of excellent books, pamphlets, and videos defining and explaining the problem and describing the positive steps that a pro-life advocate should take.

Work with our family, neighbors, friends, and associates. Urge them to become actively pro-life.

Help your church to become an active (not passive) pro-life force in the community.

Rescue babies right where the evil is taking place. Planned Parenthood abortion facilities, doctor's offices, and independent abortion mills:

- Join prayer groups at these locations.
- Become a sidewalk counselor (Assist those considering abortion).
- Volunteer at a local crisis pregnancy center (CPC), and help support the center financially.
- Volunteer at a local home for unwed mothers, and help support the home financially.
- Get involved in lobbying your city, state, and national officials and legislators on behalf of the pro-life movement.
- Vote and encourage other Christians to vote; distribute and use pro-life voting guides.
- Write to your news media when a matter regarding abortion arises.
- Join a pro-life organization and help to support it.

—Source: Crusade for Life, Inc.

US Birth Rate Dips to Lowest on Record

The US birth rate has dipped to its lowest numbers since being recorded. According to new findings from the Pew Research Center, from 2007 to 2010, the birth rate (the annual number of births per 1,000 women of childbearing age) of US-born women declined 6 percent, while foreign-born women in the US dipped even more, 14 percent, more than it had declined over the entire 1990-2007 period. The birth rate for Mexican-born immigrant women declined 24 percent.

Although the report does not address possible reasons for the drop in birth rate, it did point to another recent study that suggested lower birth rates were related to times of economic distress. Total US births in 2010 were 4 million.

—“U.S. Birth Rate Falls to a Record Low; Decline Is Greatest Among Immigrants”
November 29, 2012, Pew Research Center

CHRISTIAN POPULATION TRIPLES IN NEPAL

As a result of its first-ever census, the Himalayan nation of Nepal has estimated its Christian population at 1.4 percent of its 26 million inhabitants, tripling the number estimated in 2007.

Still, a prominent Protestant leader says the numbers could be even greater:

“We believe our population is more than the report claims,” Protestant leader CB Gahatraj told Asia News. “The problem is that during the census period, many newly converted Christians were afraid to tell their religion, and so were registered as Hindu.”

—“Nepal’s First-Ever Census Reveals Good News for Christians,”
Melissa Steffan, November 20, 2012, Christianity Today Gleanings Blog

ANNOUNCEMENT

Tomlinson College to Hold Cleveland Reunion

All alumni, former faculty and staff of Tomlinson College, and families are invited to attend the 2013 Tomlinson College Reunion in Cleveland, Tennessee, May 24–26, 2013. The weekend’s activities will include a welcome reception, class reunions, a homecoming banquet, worship service, and more.

More details, including registration information and a schedule, will be updated here in the *White Wing Messenger* as well as the Tomlinson College Facebook page, www.facebook.com/tomlinsoncollege. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the TC Alumni Coordinator at dhamby@cogop.org.



7 seven FOR YOUNG READERS

GOD TALKS TO LINCOLN

On the front porch of his little country store in Illinois, Abraham Lincoln and Berry, his partner, stood. Business was all gone, and Berry asked, "How much longer can we keep this going?" Lincoln answered, "It looks as if our business has just about winked out." Then he continued, "You know, I wouldn't mind so much if I could just do what I want to do. I want to study law. I wouldn't mind so much if we could sell everything we've got and pay all our bills and have just enough left over to buy one book—Blackstone's Commentary on English Law, but I guess I can't."

A strange-looking wagon was coming up the road. The driver angled it up close to the store porch, then looked at Lincoln and said, "I'm trying to move my family out west, and I'm out of money. I've got a good barrel here that I could sell for fifty cents." Abraham Lincoln's eyes went along the wagon and came to the wife looking at him pleadingly, face thin and emaciated. Lincoln ran his hand into his pocket and took out, according to him, "the last fifty cents I had" and said, "I reckon I could use a good barrel." All day long the barrel sat on the porch of that store. Berry kept chiding Lincoln about it. Late in the evening Lincoln walked out and looked down into the barrel. He saw something in the bottom of it, papers that he hadn't noticed before. His long arms went down into the barrel and, as he fumbled around, he hit something solid. He pulled out a book and stood petrified—it was Blackstone's Commentary on English Law.

Lincoln later wrote, "I stood there holding the book and looking up toward the heavens. There came a deep impression on me that God had something for me to do and He was showing me now that I had to get ready for it. Why this miracle otherwise?"

—Bible.org



Match Up the Biblical Couples

Adam	Zipporah
Joseph	Mrs. Noah
Boaz	Sarah
Zacharias	Eve
David	Hannah
Samson	Ruth
Elkanah	Mary
Moses	Elizabeth
Abraham	Delilah
Noah	Bathsheba

QUOTABLE

"The name of the game right now is compromise. According to the Bible, when that happens, we're no longer standing for anything. We're no longer on the side of the truth. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

Angus T. Jones, star of *Two and a Half Men*, in a video explaining his conversion to Christianity. Jones recently received worldwide media attention for his comments in the video urging viewers to quit watching the show and filling their heads with "filth."





His-Story in the Making

GLOBAL MISSIONS MINISTRIES SPOTLIGHT

A little band of native Christians in India were gathered in a revival meeting, confessing their sins. Suddenly a kerosene oil lamp fell to the ground and broke to pieces, so that the bench, the matting on the floor, etc., were soon in a great blaze. The Lord miraculously saved all the people from being injured, and enabled them to extinguish the fire. In a short time, they were all again down on their faces before God and the old preacher prayed, "Dear Lord, we thank Thee for sparing our lives, and we thank Thee for the object lesson Thou hast taught us. When that flame was confined within the lamp chimney, what a small thing it was, but the moment it was all smashed up, how great was the blaze. Lord, break us all to pieces that the Pentecostal fire may spread."¹

Many such testimonies were recorded in the early Pentecostal newsletters birthed and printed to tell the stories of a supernatural work of God concerning the emerging Pentecostal movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Reading these testimonies reinforces the reality that

these Pentecostal believers were not just recorders standing on the edge of a happening, they were the ones who were experiencing the blaze of Pentecostal fire. They were not just recording history; they were living in and narrating *His-Story* in the making.

Rehearsing the above testimony, I am always amazed at the intricate detail crafted by the Holy Spirit when He is instructing life lessons. No matter the lesson imparted, Holy Spirit weaves the necessary supernatural movement with spiritual discernment and delivers the message in such a way that we are not only enlightened, but our lives are forever impacted.

As a child reared in this wonderful fellowship, I remember those who regularly visited our local church who were themselves returning from some mission journey where God was not only present, but intimately involved in the thrust of the ministry. One sister spoke of the supernatural deliverances and the manifestations of miraculous healings that are witnessed and documented, all to the glory of God. Another brother

testified of speaking the Gospel to people who had never heard of Christ Jesus and the multitudes who had believed as a result of the Word and the presence of God. One brother, who still leads ministry in our fellowship, spoke of finding a tract from our World Language Department and persistently seeking until he had found the Body of believers where the Holy Spirit was leading him. When he spoke, he testified of seeing the blinded eyes seeing, the deaf ears hearing, and the dead raised back to life. Each testimony was an invitation from the Holy Spirit to find my place in this Church with rich mission history and serve with a heart of faith and ministry.

It is no surprise that I now find myself in a fresh opportunity so connected to the mission work for the Church of God of Prophecy. Over the past few years, I have been privileged to serve in Women's Ministries, which has always been a complement to our missions agencies. During these past twenty years, I, too, have seen God open blinded eyes, unstop deaf ears, and witnessed the miraculous of life eternal received

by those without Christ. My heart has been grateful and satisfied with the opportunity to serve in such an amazing place of ministry among the women of this fellowship. In this capacity, I have been privileged to visit more than 100 nations where the opportunity was given to share the Word and witness of Christ. The additional blessing of this service was the gift of connecting personally with the COGOP mission network which supports and supplies national/international ministries reaching 130 nations.

Recently, the leaders of the Church of God of Prophecy received a mandate from the Holy Spirit to return to the basics of our mission effort. We have been reminded that our every involvement with missions is a work of the Holy Spirit fanning the flames and stirring the passion. We hear His instruction: *Reap and work. Never abandon or grow dull. Be a missionary people. Tell the stories and facilitate the giving. Renew again the DNA of the Spirit of God within mission efforts.*

As we share the stories and testimonies from the nations in this missions issue of the *White Wing Messenger*, we celebrate what the Holy Spirit is already doing. We are witnesses to the initiation of new and unique ministries. We are experiencing a fresh fire in prayer for those who are on the front lines of mission activity. We are also experiencing a renewal of mission giving within our church. There is an activation of fresh things with an inspirational foundation. Paul encourages, “from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love” (Ephesians 4:16 NASB).

These testimonies give confirmation that the Spirit is leading and touching; opening eyes, opening doors, stirring passions for participating in the greatest cause of mission. There is an activation and pressing forward in accordance with the will, purpose, heart, and plan of praying in line with the will of God. Lord, help us to remember that this effort

concerns souls and help us never to forget that.

Cooperatively, Global Missions Ministries is re-envisioning the established and initiating the new ministries within the structure of the Vision 2020 mandate. In the following pages, you will find fresh mission challenges from the ministries that comprise the new Global Missions Ministries, including Harvest Partners, Helping Hand Ministry, and One Child Fund—and you will also be excited with the new initiatives of the Global Partners Cooperative and new partnerships being established including North American ministries.

Just as the early 20th century Christians were energized by the work of the Spirit and lived with expectation for the second coming of Christ, I believe we have sensed a new revelation toward the heartbeat of missions in calling and anointing in this day. Just as early Pentecostals believed they were living in the end times, we also have sensed the release of a tremendous power through the Holy Spirit among God’s people for our part of that day of Pentecost. Just as the early Pentecostal movement felt the impetus toward winning the world before Christ returned, we, too, sense expectation for God to spiritually renew the Christian church, thereby bringing to pass the restoration of spiritual gifts and the evangelism of the world. This expectation is a reflection of our heart of harvest among our people and our faith in Jesus that drives and compels us to reach the nations.

I recently heard the stirrings of this new mission directive from the inspiration of our general overseer and general presbyters. Bishop Howard reminded each of us that *missions is the artery that flows through the heart of this organization*. Bishop Clayton Endecott reflected on the need for a stronger mission connection in sharing the identity of missions throughout this entire body of believers. His desire reflected the *calling to do missions* as reflected within our Vision 2020 mandate being uplifted more than ever in order to do better and more visionary work within this fellowship to reach the harvest.

One story rises of the violence in a Latin American nation where the drug

lords had taken over the city more than two years ago. These men of violence had killed women and children in the city and threatened death to all who stayed. Most people left, including more than 120 pastors.

However, in that city there were twelve pastors, including several of our pastors, who decided to remain after everyone else left the city. By their faith to remain and minister, they are currently regarded as heroes among their people. Over these last two years, the twelve pastors have suffered greatly for their faith and their decision to remain. They have received death threats, the danger of kidnapping their children, and have even been robbed face to face. And yet, today, twelve pastors remain as heroes of the faith.

Recently these pastors decided to join together in prayer for the drug lords, even though these are the very ones who are threatening to kill them. They have determined that death is such a part of their lives, they have become almost immune to the violence in an attempt to continue ministering. Our brothers just go on, as heroes and martyrs, passionate for the cause of the Gospel.

Such are the stories that follow on the pages of this *Messenger*. You will read of other martyrs and heroes who continue to serve even in the threat of their own lives. The Gospel must be told. The fire must be released. These are our stories. This is our family. And this is our opportunity to be a part of the call to release the Pentecostal fire and reap the harvest. Find your place and join in this great missions effort.



Cathy Payne
Global Missions Coordinator

¹*Weekly Evangel* 174 (27 Jan 1917), p.11. Allan Anderson, *Spreading Fires: The Missionary Nature of Early Pentecostalism*. (Marynoll: Orbis Books, 2007) p. 3.



Revival continues spreading around the nations in the Caribbean region. In January we hosted our Caribbean Leadership Conference on the Dutch side of the island of St. Maarten. We rejoiced to witness the increasing numbers of young ministers as approximately 70 young leaders joined other Caribbean leaders for this time of training and preparation.



In our region, we must also recognize the transformation that continues in the nation of Haiti. More than two years ago on January 12, 2010, Haiti experienced a catastrophic magnitude 7.0 earthquake with an epicenter near the town of Léogâne, approximately 25 kilometers (16 miles) west of Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital. Estimates suggested more than three million people were affected by the quake. The earthquake caused major damage in Port-au-Prince and our loss included the lives of pastors and members (including five of our orphaned children), the destruction of 44 church buildings, pastoral and member residences, and most of the orphanage was rendered unusable which resulted in the relocation of the children for many months.

We speak a big thank you to Bishop Tim McCaleb and the many teams he has brought into this nation assisting in the recovery of our national operation. Over these past two years, these teams have been instrumental in helping to transform the lives of our people there and rebuild our national work, even making possible a ministry training effort with SOPA's last year.

I was recently visiting in the Port-au-Prince church on a Sunday morning for their 5:30 AM service. I was amazed with the packed out building completing their average attendance of 4,100 people for the first service of the morning. I watched as people moved out of that service and another 4000 people moved in for a second service. This mega church has six pastors assisting in ministry. After the conclusion of the morning, we thought we had seen all of those who attend in this church, but as we gathered for the evening, we saw that another 4,000 had come. I realized that we were looking

at 10,000 or more people who gather regularly at this local church. Almost a year ago I participated in the January 2012 anniversary service and there were 5,000 on property at that time. I witnessed 100 people who made salvation decisions that day surrendering to Jesus. We rejoice in all God has done.

The reports of this past summer ministry teams throughout Haiti indicate that five new churches have been planted with approximately 1,000 people who made decisions as a result of the ministry.

The challenges of this nation begin with the poverty of the people. Services usually include two offerings, the first for the expenses of the ministry and the second for the needs of the poor.

The central church of Haiti does not have a screen on the outside to allow participation to those who are sitting outside the sanctuary. With the understanding of the great need to make room for all who come to this church, they have acquired a piece of property upon which they hope to build an auditorium to accommodate all the people.



The vibrancy and dedication of our people in their struggle and their indomitable spirit propels them to continue going forward and the work is growing. Haiti is not just recipient of the blessings of giving and rebuilding, but there is a spiritual dynamism that will be a blessing to the church world. When you speak with Bishop Dorlean, our national bishop, it is recognizable that Haiti is one of the nations from which we anticipate greatness.

Please continue your prayers with us for this strategic national ministry.

—Clayton Martin, *Presbyter Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands*



Almost two years before the launch of Vision 2020, the message of the three main values of prayer, the harvest, and leadership training became watchwords for the nations in Europe, the CIS, and the Middle East. These nations anxiously awaited the launch and began immediately to share the message, including the foundational principle of stewardship. There are many stories from the initiation of

Vision 2020 emerging in Europe, the CIS, and the Middle East as throughout the area each nation has embraced the vision and are making it their own. Three nations will be highlighted in this update from Bishop Endecott.

In one nation, Azerbaijan, it is very difficult to plant a church or even to organize ministries. Our worker there (who remains nameless for security) travels from town to town and to neighboring villages and has taken the vision to plant churches by planting house churches or small groups for prayer, discipleship, and evangelism much like what we read about in China. There is presently no way to register these churches or contact them ourselves or even list them officially in any of our documents, but the number of such small discipleship groups is expanding rapidly. Our worker there is a direct result of the labors of Bishop John Doroshuk before he went on to be with the Lord. With Bishop John's passing all contact was lost with our worker until this spring. While the worker was traveling in a neighboring nation, he contacted friends who are also ministers and church planters there with COGOP. It just so happened Bishop Clayton Endecott was also in another neighboring country at that moment and it allowed three nations, each with strong political differences, to reacquire themselves with the worker from Azerbaijan and plan for a meeting to train pastors and workers in that far east region. Clayton Endecott will journey to the country this year to see some of these churches first hand.

The sharing of the 2020 vision was such a blessing and was received with great joy. Now almost weekly the worker reports of what God is doing and the new doors that are opening in the harvest through strategic prayer, discipleship, and mentoring leaders. A SOPAS 1 is organized among these nations this year.

Some of the needs from this nation include water, milk, and some kind of support through temporary agricultural jobs. There is a problem with clean drinking water in this region. The water is even harmful for watering trees and plants. Because of this, water is purchased and hauled in containers sometimes as large to accommodate 1000–1500 tons of water at a time. It would cost some 20,000 Euros to build a stone cistern in the area. It might take up to \$1400 to provide a village with clean water. Also needed are cows in order for families to provide up to seven liters of milk a day. Perhaps the Lord will guide us as we consider the challenges of how to minister in this area of the world.

In one of our Middle East nations (we do not publish the nation to protect our overseer and many pastors) political upheaval and difficulty was so great that several planned leadership meetings to train for the young harvest and for pastors training were canceled several times to protect both the visiting teams and the nationals who would attend. Bishop Clayton Endecott was able to visit them for the national pastors meeting this year, but they kept his presence very quiet. At that conference strategies were made and shared for the nations for prayer and for leadership training this year as well as special times to address the young harvest. All the pastors attended with great joy and were so happy to hear that Vision 2020 was spreading around the church. Our national Bishop gave a wonderful strategic and biblical account of why we need to plant churches and what God can do if we

will obey him in this. At the close of the service there were outbursts of weeping, rejoicing and dancing. Every pastor and leader made a commitment to begin planting churches in neighboring villages and cities. As this nation is not open to the Christian Church, it is mostly not evangelized and hundreds of towns have no church at all. Two new pastors were added to the church in the conference and brought their churches into our fellowship—one of them was planting the church under the overseer's spiritual covering and was only waiting for a chance to join with the church officially. The heart for Vision 2020 in this country is incredible as it is reinventing how they plan and even how they do church and ministry.

This nation is in need of new transportation. If you believe the Lord would use you to begin to meet this need, please respond to Global Missions Ministries at the International Offices.

The Czech Republic, one of our newest works in this area is working with contacts that were initiated through harvest efforts from Bishop Vitaly Votschnyk, the national overseer of the Ukraine. Under his direction, some pastors of independent churches in the Czech Republic began fellowship with the church in their neighboring nation. Bishop Vitaly asked Bishop Endecott to help to teach and to work as a father to young pastors as well as to some who were new to our kind of fellowship. As relationships unfolded it became obvious that a key pastor in this, Pastor Petr Slauvar from a town on the eastern borders of the Czech Republic, wanted to secure deeper fellowship with the Church of God of Prophecy to give an opportunity to share the vision and direction of our church with pastors he worked with in his country. The initiating times of teaching and fellowship included the full story of our history and ministry as well as our structure and vision. While they were keenly interested, the most interest was generated from the message of 2020 Vision and became captivating in every meeting. The values and commitments of the church and our recent call to rededicate ourselves as a movement to the call of prayer, the harvest and leadership development became the point of every discussion. It became evident to Pastor Petr, who was already committed to join the church, that this vision is exactly what they are called to. Three new churches joined the church and we are working with a half dozen more.

Clayton Endecott will return in October and again in April for a meeting with the churches and many other churches along with Bishop Vitaly of the Ukraine where we will work together, counseling and coaching them as well as hearing their strategies for prayer, the harvest and the development of leaders as well as to help them implement their involvement in stewardship and concerns for accountability. Our three new pastors and churches in Czech Republic were clearly most affected by the central vision of theme than anything else. Vision 2020 is giving them a vision of our church, a new kind of vision for a new time and perhaps new kinds of churches.

—Clayton Endecott, *Presbyter*
Europe, Middle East, and Eastern Europe

Russia—I want to send the words of gratitude from me personally and from our children to those who were with us all around the world through the year in fasts and prayers for my wife, Vasilisa. We did see the result of those fasts and prayers! They were not in vain! God was with us!

I also want to say thanks for every dollar that was donated with love for Vasilisa's care. Almost all the money came on time and it was such a blessing for us. May God bless and reward everyone for their contribution and response to our need.

These were the hardest days in my life and the life of my children but God has not left us alone. In these moments of grief, there were people like you who shared this grief with us.

I give special thanks for the Assembly. Never before were people honored like our loved ones were honored. I hadn't expected it and was so pleased that I have such a big family. We were surrounded by love and care for over a week.

Of course, I still can't believe that Vasilisa is no more with us. She is missed. Sometimes it looks like she has just gone somewhere and will be back soon. While we try to understand that she will not return to us, we know we will go where she is.

Please pray for my children and for me. I'm "mom and dad" now. Thank you so much for your love!

—Misha Murza



We continue to see great growth throughout this region with a Vision 2020 emphasis on church planting. According to our latest statistics, church planting continues to escalate with our area with an average of 1.55 new churches being planted every week. During the last two years, we have celebrated the planting of 162 new churches and added 12,400 new members resulting in a total membership of 140,000 and 2,400 local churches. Expressing an increased goal for this next assembly period we anticipate planting an average of more than two churches per week and plan for an increase in our membership by 10 percent.

While we rejoice in the growth that is taking place, we also have to recognize the national conditions in which our people live. During the last few years, our nations have experienced an increase of chaotic circumstances including kidnapping, extortion, and unbelievable violence that has impact upon our work directly.

As a result of this violence, many of our churches can no longer have evening services due to the danger. In this region alone, more than 100 people die violently every day. It seems as though this violence increased overnight.

One challenge affecting most of our churches is the limitation of covering from the men of the church, especially during the week because to maintain jobs, they must work. The nations of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras have become the most chaotic. Our people have great faith and hope. Please remember them in prayer.

The most aggressive project currently in progress in this region is the nation of Cuba. Recently, God has opened doors and left us with necessity to move as the Spirit is moving. The government is currently allowing COGOP to build new buildings and we have been blessed to respond in building several church buildings. Even with the blessing of the

nation, building is still a challenge. Even if there is financing, construction does not happen quickly. Additionally, finding materials and qualified labor is a challenge. And yet, even under adverse and challenging conditions, a SOPAS team is preparing for instruction for the first time in Cuba.

In addition to the challenge of building, the nation also has the necessity of a new vehicle. We have not bought a car in Cuba for many years. Recently, on two different ministry trips, the personal van of a brother in Cuba who has been willing to transport us has broken down multiple times.

The other big project in this area is the nation of Belize. The national overseer, Brother Somoza, is doing a wonderful job. However, he will also need resources for his projects as they have already begun work on a national property where cabins are still required. Additionally, they are hoping to work on the production toward a national office and parsonage relocation. Already, two parcels of land have been purchased for new church plants.

Finally, Guatemala has also been inspired concerning church planting. The national overseer had previously limited church planting, having only planted six churches from 2004 to 2010. That quickly changed in the last two years as Guatemala planted 34 new churches. Additionally, Guatemala has opened two church planting schools, part of which the general presbyter's office is funding. We are currently in the process of building cabins in which to house church planters as they come to receive training to continue to train church planters. In Guatemala, we have two church planting schools, which my office is partially funding. One cabin is nearing completion at the national property and we are ready to welcome those who will lead teams for the future of this nation.

—Benjamin Feliz, Prebyter, Central America, Mexico, and Spanish Caribbean



North America continues to move forward with VISION 2020. Empowered by the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8) we will focus and expend resources to live the core values of the Church of God of Prophecy in North America. We envision reaching every community with the life-changing Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Prayer: To promote prayer campaigns in each of our states and regions, in order for our local churches to become houses of prayer (Mark 11:17). This will begin each year with the 21 Days of Seeking.

Harvest: Recognizing the needs of lost humanity, our church is dedicated to fulfilling in every way possible the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). Our goal is to plant one new church each week in North America, and to strengthen existing churches with resources and various methods of evangelization and membership retention.

One testimony of harvest comes from Western Canada. The testimony concerns a young man's conversion from an anti-Christian religion into Christian faith and his call to ministry. He

and his wife have organized a new church fellowship in a local hotel since there is no available building to use. Their witness has led to other family members coming to Christian faith and joining their new church effort, and now the new church plant has grown to nearly 30 Christian believers.

Other encouraging news comes from the Mid-Atlantic region work as Bishop Leroy Greenaway has reported a new Spanish church plant organized in New Jersey with more than 100 members at the time of organization.

In the Pacific Northwest, news comes from Bishop Wallace Pratt and the IOU Region as grants have been given for planting new churches. With this assistance, this region has more than doubled their local church fellowships. In fact, since the Assembly, two new churches have already been planted.

Leadership Development: Jesus lived with and mentored His disciples for three and a half years. Paul mentored Timothy and instructed him to commit the same to faithful believers who would teach others also (2 Timothy 2:2). North America is committed to equip and develop leadership at all levels, with excellence, as it is our goal to raise the bar of effectiveness in ministry.

Holy Spirit Empowerment: The Church of God of Prophecy in North America seeks the empowerment of the Holy Spirit in all we do. From prayer to harvest to leadership development we recognize that we are utterly powerless to accomplish these goals without Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8).

—Sam Clements, Prebyter, North America



The exciting news from South America is that this region is growing toward self-support. Already, the larger nations are growing healthy national accounts as well as lending support to the smaller, needier nations among them. The greatest need for outside assistance is found among the four smaller nations of Uruguay, Paraguay, Colombia, and Ecuador.

In line with the Vision 2020 impetus, every church in South America is growing as a result of church planting. The nations of Paraguay and Colombia have planned to plant ten churches, increasing the growth by one-third. These nations are already training church planters. One of our national leaders from South America, Bishop Alvino, of Peru, has been actively engaged with the support of Bishop Gabriel Vidal in training and raising up church planters in these nations.

One miraculous story of ministry and sacrifice comes from Peru. One of our young men, who is training through the Gordon Conwell program, invited me to visit a ministry the Lord had opened for him personally. At the age of 22, this brother began to see the children in the streets in great need. As he recognized that someone needed to help these children, he began to use his own means to reach out to help and feed children. Before long, he organized a local church mission ministering to more than 200 children. Every Sunday morning,

with other young people helping him, he gets up to cook for these children. He then he feeds them the word of God in a church established for the children.

There is another such ministry, born in Trujillo and Equitos, in the lower part of the nation where the Amazon floods. In this area, children often just disappear. A new ministry is helping them through the Church of God of Prophecy. As a result, the community has built a center and the children are being helped. Even the political leader of the area has been impacted and some of the parents of these children have been saved.

—Gabriel Vidal, Prebyter, South America



We have now established the church in two new nations. Neither of these nations have work allotments. The nations are Kiribati and Nepal. So that you have an idea of where these nations are located, Kiribati is the group of islands which includes Christmas Island. Nepal is a small nation next to India and is very poverty stricken. We are not asking for work allotments but would appreciate very much the support of several projects such as a goat farm, chicken farm, and/or a cattle farm. These projects would help these nations to be self-supporting from the very beginning.

Kiribati—The Church of God of Prophecy was established with a new church plant which included converts from Islam, Seventh Day Adventist, and Latter Day Saints. These new converts are coming together in fellowship and the church is growing quite well.

November 6, 2012, Bishop Gary Langley received a report from the pastor along with information about church body registration. According to the Constitution of Kiribati, a church cannot register until it has reached 2,000 members. However, we may proceed with the establishment of the church in the nation until we reach the 2,000 member minimum and then reapply for the registration.

The members are visiting homes daily in order to evangelize the island people and increase the membership to this number. The pastor spoke of the need for a laptop computer and modem and used clothing. This new church has been operating a church school but they have had to move from the campus where they were housed. They are in need of \$10,000 for a multipurpose plot of land that would be the home of the school as well as the church. This particular nation is in a precarious situation due to the fact that it is an atoll (a coral island or group of islands that encircle a lagoon partially or completely), and the predictions by scientists are that the islands will be under water due to the rising of the ocean. They have negotiated with Fiji to be able to relocate the population to the Fiji Islands should that action become necessary.

At the present time, the churches in Hawaii are gathering used clothing and trying to figure a way to get the clothing to Kiribati.

Nepal—This nation has only asked for very specific projects. As mentioned above, we are endeavoring to make this nation self-supporting through the tithes and the special project of farming. We are also in need of a motorcycle for the coordinator of the work in Nepal. This motorcycle will cost \$2,500 and will be used to go into the remote areas where the roads are steep, often muddy, and therefore a good motorcycle is needed. The other item that is needed is a computer. We have learned through experience that it is better to purchase the computers within the countries. The cost of this item is \$800. Our work in Nepal began with 12 key leaders forming one local church. However, these 12 key leaders represent 60 churches.

Myanmar—Myanmar has been operating a church planting school similar to the one that we have in Indonesia. We have already seen about eight churches planted through the efforts of the students who have graduated from this church planting school. This year the graduation of the school will be conducted in one of the villages in hopes of establishing a new church in that particular village. We also have an orphanage that is caring for children who were left alone due to the terrible cyclone that was so devastating to Myanmar a few years ago.

Malaysia—In the month of October, we installed a new overseer for this country. The new overseer has been in ministry for many years in this country and has ministered to the street people, drug addicts, and alcoholics. We now have 16 churches and 12 missions in this country since reorganizing our work there. The work continues to grow as a result of your prayer and financial support.

Singapore and East Asia—We are working with some people in East Asia in hopes of officially establishing something there in the near future. This will not look like our conventional work due to restrictions, but we will be seeing people added to the church. We are also praying to make this work self-supporting through the possibility of printing some of our church literature in this part of the world.

South Korea—Bishop Jung Min Lee, the son of Overseer Emeritus Bishop Chul Jea Rhee, was appointed as the overseer of South Korea at the Assembly of 2010. This has been a great transition and the nation now has several new missions operating. Their goal is to organize 27 churches by 2020. The leaders of these new mission stations need your prayer support.

Pakistan—We are very thankful for your constant prayer support for our work in Pakistan. Without this prayer support, our work could not function in this nation. I cannot tell you the conditions under which they operate. Just know that they are in desperate need of your prayers. We also want to thank you for sending the funds for the purchase of a vehicle for this nation. The funds have been sent and we will be sending more information once the purchase has been completed.

Australia/Sri Lanka—We have a new mission going in Australia due to the efforts of Pastors Philip Morton and Jerry Guy. In Sri Lanka, a very war torn country, we now have four churches that are growing.

Samoa/New Zealand—The work in Samoa continues to grow both in American Samoa and Western Samoa. They have

also built a couple of new buildings in the last several years. Bishop Kuka made a trip to New Zealand in the month of October in an effort to reestablish our work in that nation. We are very excited about this possibility.

Hawaii—For several years now, the four local churches in Hawaii have been meeting together for their Sunday services and then ministering in their own communities during the week. There have been great efforts put into the training of the leadership. They have organized some great small groups to minister to the people of the islands. Now they are beginning to think about reestablishing the works in some of the communities so that they will have their own weekend services.

India—The work in India is moving forward, and has really taken on new life on solid ground. We now have three regional overseers who are directing the work there. We are working on a consortium with the ACTS school in Bangalore so that we can better train our pastors and leaders. We would also like to implement some of the self-support projects that will help us supplement the tithe system until it reaches its full potential and is able to sustain the work there. There are several buildings that need to be built or repaired. We are also in need of transportation (car/motorcycle) for each of these three regional overseers.

Japan—We don't want to forget about our missionaries in Japan.

Fiji—We have a new overseer for Fiji. He has gotten settled in and the churches are excited about this new leader. They are planning to establish a discipleship training school there.

I extend my blessings to each of you and thank you for your prayerful support.

—David Browder, *Presbyter, Asia/Oceania*



Conakry—It is indeed a great joy in the Lord to report to you that the Lord is still with us in Conakry. I have been on a month long tour to all the nations I supervise with the exception of the Cape Verde Islands. In Conakry we baptized 34 persons. Among those baptized were two ladies from a tribe violently opposed to Christianity. They are the children and grandchildren of the late Salami, a well known man of this area.





Our membership in Guinea is increasing and we see this as an opportunity to get to the interior of the country where many are yet to hear about Jesus as we continue to see and feel the hand of Lord moving us forward. We are grateful to you all for all your support. We thank Global Missions Ministries for the motor bikes for our home cell groups.

With all the Lord continues to do, we are inspired to execute the following visions through your prayers and support: to hold our first national convention next year, fully open a church in Guinea's second largest populated city in February 2013, and to put up the first floor on our two-story building plan for a regular primary school to be ready for 2013/2014 school year. You can see this building in some of the photos where you can see the pillars in the hall where we had our joint service.

God bless you more and more for all your prayers and support.

—Peter Koyea, National Overseer

Sierra Leone Report—“What the cutting locust left, the swarming locust has eaten. What the swarming locust left, the hopping locust has eaten, and what the hopping locust left, the destroying locust has eaten” (Joel 1:4). Joel here told of a locust plague that appears to offer no hope; especially for Israel that was awaiting “The Day of the Lord” where God would restore her former glory. As I examine this locust plague that struck Israel, I see a striking parallel with the country of Sierra Leone.

This nation has experienced eleven years of the worst civil war in West Africa, if not the entire continent of Africa. The war has left an entire colony of amputees, scores of orphans, and consequently rendered the nation one of the most impoverished on the continent. In 2010, there was a horrific automobile accident that resulted in the loss of five of our church frontline leaders. The church in general was devastated, but more so, families that were immediately impacted.

For our people, this situation just about evaporated what little hope started to be generated after the end of the civil war; however, thank God, the hope of a brighter day is dawning. In 2011, God placed a heavy burden on the hearts of my wife and I for this nation, which resulted in us moving to Freetown to set up a home. We quickly declared what we call “Operation Hope.” We established sponsorship for the children who were directly affected by the automobile tragedy, implemented holistic plans among church leaders and laity to move forward, and raised the morale of our 38 public schools.

Since 2011 to date, our church membership has grown considerably; the launching of our outreach program has

resulted in three new missions in the nation with many more to follow. This year we have refurbished a building that was destroyed by rainstorm and established another Junior Secondary School (JSS) with approximately 100 students. Yes, hope has come alive! The church in Sierra Leone has been the first country on the continent to be organized (1936), but she is getting ready to live up to her tenure of longevity.

We are indeed grateful to the International Youth Department for coming on board with us, launching a program “Building Sierra Leone Now.” More information can be obtained on this new project through the Youth Ministries.

Sierra Leone sincerely desires your prayers for political and economical stability.

—Levi Clarke, National Overseer

Tanzania—We are completing our national project of the Church of God of Prophecy Complex Center. This center is located around the National Church of God of Prophecy premises in Dar es Salaam and will complete the construction of 14 shopping units to generate income for the church/mission needs in the nation. This project will also directly benefit the Church of God of Prophecy, the community, the national government through levies, and various institutions and organizations.



The main objective of the project has been to generate funds for the church/mission work in the nation and, in the long run, enable the Church to become self-sufficient.

This project will enable the Church in Tanzania to establish other opportunities such as a dispensary, kindergarten, cafeteria kitchen and dining room, dormitories, and a conference hall.

Since the shops will be rented to interested businessmen under close supervision of the Church administration, the sustainability of the project is guaranteed as an income generating endeavor.

The Church administration will allow continuous transparency and periodic surveillance of the physical implementation of the project to ensure that the input equals the output. That is, that the funds, personnel, materials, etc. produce the intended result.

We are very close to completion of this project. We ask that you continue to remember us in prayer that we remain good stewards of all God has put in our hands and that we complete this ministry opportunity.

—Eric Mwambigija, National Overseer

GOINGS

EXTENDING YOUR

“Today is second Sunday and the offerings go to foreign missions.”

Twelve times a year in American COGOP sanctuaries, this statement is made, placed in bulletins and the option for ‘supporting missions’ is given. It is quite easy to say and quite easy to check the box on the tithing envelope. But not to denigrate the sacrifices of giving (God knows it takes financial support), the reality of actually going is not so easily comprehended.

Jesus couldn’t have given us a clearer picture of our Christian responsibility than when He said, “I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me” (Matthew 25:35, 36). This statement added to the Great Commission of “making disciples of all nations” reveals to us that missions is not a one-time “food-drop.” We are to establish highways to the mission fields in foreign lands so that connections are made and relationships are formed enabling us to fully change lives.

It is not enough to send resources alone. We must connect people face to face, going into their land and helping them where they are. In fact, given the choice, most foreign missions would rather have our continued visits than our money. More than once, and in more than one country, they have shared with me that my time with them was valued more than my

money. The Revelation 3 church in Philadelphia was commended not only for their works of faith, but also for their perseverance in doing so.

Likewise, rewards are given to those who persevere in traveling these mission highways. Those who go are refreshing the nations with and by God’s love which in turn brings refreshment to them. They are actively feeding the physically and spiritually hungry and in the process receive spiritual food which cannot be described. The unseen gift, the reward of persevering works of faith, is that while they are instrumental in changing lives, their own lives are being changed. Something happens spiritually when you are working alongside and ministering with and to people from around the world. Countries that don’t have the resources we have must depend on God. They do not have doctors and drugstores readily available as we do. When you speak on healing, their hope rises quickly, and when you witness someone latching onto God and His promises by faith, your own faith is driven to new heights.

At the age of 17, I began mission ministry in camps. It wasn’t until 18 years ago that I began traveling outside of the United States. In those 18 years we have seen hundreds of lives changed in the eight trips that I have made prior to this letter. Having experienced firsthand the benefits to those I have served and the

rewards that I have personally received, it was a given that my children would begin at an early age. My son is now 19 and has made six mission trips, five to foreign countries. My daughter is 16 and has traveled to Guatemala where she and I rescued a precious infant who was severely malnourished and in need of surgery for a cleft pallet.

I encourage everyone to prayerfully consider making a trip. I promise, it is worth the effort and you will be better for it.



*Bill Vines, Pastor
Breenzewood
Fayetteville, North Carolina*

ENDING

REACH BEYOND YOUR LOCAL CHURCH

The Harvest Ministries church in Roanoke, Virginia has a long record of supporting mission projects around the world. Our desire to reach others with the Gospel intensified in May of 2011 when a handful of people felt led of God to approach me about forming a group within our church that would focus entirely on raising funds for mission projects throughout the world—they named themselves, “Mission Possible.”

This group has sponsored numerous fund-raising projects, such as dinners

and yard sales. They also partnered with the Kroger supermarket chain, which offers a Kroger card. For every dollar spent on a Kroger card a percentage is given to the church for missions.

So far we have received approximately \$5,500 from Kroger that has gone toward our mission projects. Through different fund-raising projects and other donations, this group raised approximately \$50,000 to benefit mission projects around the world in this 13-month period.

These funds have been sent around the world to places like Cameroon, Indonesia, Kenya, Uganda, and Benin just to name a few. In October of 2011 the Mission Possible group along with the members and friends of the Harvest Ministries church decided to send me and two gentlemen from our church to our Harvest Partner nation of Indonesia—it was a life-altering experience for the three of us.

My wife, Robin, and I have always supported world missions and have led the churches we have pastored over the years in supporting world missions—but to be able to see the work that is being done firsthand gave me a totally new perspective on missions. Now when I talk to our Harvest Partner, Brother Zebua I have better understanding of the people and the needs they have.

In fact, after visiting the orphanage in Batam, I asked Brother Zebua what his greatest need was at that time.

He told me that having the children’s education paid for in the Batam orphanage was his most pressing need.

On the flight back home, I felt a prompting from the Holy Spirit that our church needed to step in and help with this. It did not surprise me when we presented this opportunity to our congregation that 40 individuals or families stepped up and said, “We’ll pay for the education of these children.” So far almost \$10,000 has been contributed with each sponsor giving \$35 a month for this purpose.

During this same time period of raising funds and blessing others around the world, our church has continued to honor our commitment as a Harvest Partner with the nation of Indonesia and has contributed more than \$12,000 for this purpose.

You may be thinking, “My church could never raise that kind of money.” Or you may be part of a smaller congregation who struggles to pay your bills—believe me, I understand that—but I want to encourage you to pray and seek God’s direction on how you and your church can reach outside of itself and bless others around the world. As the words to the old gospel song say, “Little is much, when God is in it.”

I want to challenge and invite you to join us on this journey. And I promise you this—if you do, you will never regret it!

*Milton Atkins, Pastor
Harvest Ministries
Roanoke, Virginia*





Mission Trips

Haiti

March 2-9, 2013
 Team led by Tim McCaleb
 (615) 633-5732
 tmcc1200@aol.com

India

February 2013
 Team led by Scott Lee
 (307) 672-6643
 scott@bethesdaworship.com

Sierre Leone

April 28-May 9
 Team led by Tim McCaleb
 (615) 633-5732
 tmcc1200@aol.com

Peru

June 11-18, 2013
 Team led by Curtise Sutton
 864-710-3881
 ktcdc@nctv.com

Peru

June 18-25, 2013
 Team led by Ted Cooper
 864-710-3881
 ktcdc@nctv.com

Guatemala

July 2013
 Team led by Bill Vines
 910-813-3069
 destinationglory@aol.com

Peru

Middle of July 2013
 Team led by Pete Tolbert
 ptolbert@creativetouchstudios.com

Guatemala

Pending 2013
 Team led by Jason Gainey
 (864) 295-2277 opt. 4
 jasonraygainey@gmail.com

Cuba

Pending 2013

Dominican Republic

June/July 2013
 Teams led by Ben Feliz
 423-559-5520
 bfeliz@cogop.org

Cameroon

October-November 2013
 Teams led by Scott Lee
 (307) 672-6643
 scott@bethesdaworship.com

Sierre Leone

Pending 2013
 Team led by Trevor Reid
 423-559-5305
 treid@cogop.org

Ted Cooper—Member at Seneca, South Carolina—After leaving Bible school, I participated in mission teams to Mexico, Morocco, and Spain. Since then I have led teams to 23 different nations with 46 trips to Peru and have introduced over 200 people to mission work with the largest team being 36 people.

Curtise Sutton—Pastor Happy Hills, Alabama—I was appointed as interim pastor to a mission church and now after 14 years, that mission church is now a “Missions Church” in Happy Hills, Alabama.

Pete Tolbert—Mission Director, Keith Street Ministries—Pete and Josh Dasher represent men’s ministries as they travel to Peru and help people as they can. “‘We are one big Church of God of Prophecy family’. I heard that said all my life growing up. But I didn’t really see it until I went and saw it myself on the mission field.”

Jason Gainey—(Pastor of Carolina Heights, South Carolina)—I sold everything I had upon graduating and went on a mission trip among the aborigines in Australia. This began my zeal for missions. After introducing my vision for missions, our church has such a zeal for outreach that for the last 17 weeks, we have witnessed someone being saved every week. It makes a difference in your local church.

Tim McCaleb—Presiding Bishop of Texas—After arriving in Haiti, we began the work of repairing 12 of our destroyed churches; all have now been rebuilt except two. Pastors’ homes have been repaired and there have been numerous repairs done on other buildings. We have led about 100 individuals to Haiti. We try to never complete the project because we want to leave the people something to do themselves.

Bill Vines—Pastor of Breenzewood, in Fayetteville, North Carolina—In 1994 I traveled to Thailand on my first mission trip. Our ministry team ministered to orphaned children and worked to improve substandard buildings. It changed my life. I knew if it was in my power (and God’s will, of course), I would be returning to the mission field. In the last seven years, I have been to Guatemala no less than seven times. Each occasion has been uniquely rewarding and with varied accomplishments. We have fed hundreds of people who usually found their food digging through garbage at land-fills. We have dedicated buildings, built churches, and seen numerous miracles and souls saved.

Scott Lee—Pastor, Bethesda Worship Center, Sheridan, Wyoming—Over the last 13 years I have been blessed to pastor the church in Sheridan, Wyoming, where we have seen the Lord move us from a church of about 50 faithful to a growing missions church ministering to between 300-350 souls in three Sunday services weekly, hosting several parachurch organizations, and partnering in missions with the nation of Cameroon.



John Payne
 Global Missions Administrator

MAKE IT PERSONAL

I began working at the Church of God of Prophecy International Offices in the Global Missions Department in October, 2012. I knew upon being hired that one of my responsibilities would be to help promote the One Child Fund and the Helping Hand Ministry, and process funds that were received for these two ministries.

During my second week here, I received a few e-mails with photos of children from our churches' orphanages for the next One Child Fund newsletter. I sat at my desk and cried as I looked through them. Here are so many beautiful, smiling children from all around the world. These children are no different from my children (or yours). How could they be left with no one? *Orphaned?* God spoke to me in that moment that they had not been abandoned. They are our children. God has entrusted them to us. These are children of the Church of God of Prophecy. In addition to experiencing the love of Christ by having all their basic needs met, these children are being educated and disciplined. We have an incredible opportunity to sow into their lives and raise up a generation to reach all nations for Jesus.

I have also learned a great way to invest in the work of missions through the Helping Hand Ministry. Through this program you can help empower the ministry of missionaries working all over the globe to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The funds you donate are used to support the Gospel message in the nations including vehicles for national leaders, construction of buildings, supplemental support for church planters, and evangelism. Without even leaving your home, you are able to make a huge impact on global missions and the advancement of the Gospel.

While these are certainly difficult economic times for much of the world, our call remains the same, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28.19, 20 NIV).

We have such an opportunity through these ministries to fulfill the Great Commission, and we can be assured in the promise that, no matter what our circumstances, He is with us. When you donate, 100 percent of what you give is directed to the ministry you specify. Whether your gift is great or small, it is literally life-changing to those who receive it. Please prayerfully consider what investment you can make and give. You will be blessed.



Amanda Lawson
Global Missions Administrative Assistant



Getting Connected

Serving as a facilitator assisting local churches and nations with mission connections over the past eleven plus years, I've witnessed firsthand how God has impacted the Harvest Partners Ministry through getting connected. And, while it is true that most people get more excited about assisting with special projects being completed in order that they have a visible, tangible point of fulfillment, it is of the utmost importance that we not



forget the bread and water ministry needs of our nations.

Did you know that your regular Mission Giving [HPL1] on the second Sunday of each month, along with your March and October Mission Drives provide the life-line support to keep the Church of God of Prophecy functioning within our nations? Not only does your Mission Giving provide a meager budget to sustain our National Overseers and their families, it also helps provide

budgeted funds for leadership training and equipping of pastors and leaders within the nations; assists with evangelizing and outreach efforts to reach the harvest; provides discipleship avenues for instilling the Word of God; etc.

If your local church is already partnered with a specific nation, thank you for getting connected to reach beyond your own walls and impact the harvest fields.

And, if your local church has not yet partnered, won't you consider getting connected today?

It doesn't require any extra offerings to be taken in order to become involved, but rather allows you the capability of choosing a specific nation to bless with

your local church's regular mission giving. Contact the Global Missions office to find out how you can get connected with this vital mission ministry known as Harvest Partners. Phone: 423-559-5207; or, drop us an E-mail: harvestpartners@cogop.org

Annette Taylor, Liaison
Harvest Partners Ministry





Taking the Violent By Force

When you pray for God to open doors of ministry, I can tell you from experience that they're not all going to appear comfortable or even safe to walk through.

In addition to being pastor of the Anchorage, Alaska, Church of God of Prophecy, I'm also a nurse manager of a nursing unit at a local hospital. Normally, the managers don't work on holidays. But on July 4th, I chose to go in. While there, I decided to go downstairs to another nursing unit and ask their manager a few questions. After getting down there, I remembered it was the holiday so of course she was off. As I turned to go back to my unit, I was delayed twice by people stopping to say hello. As I once more turned to

leave, I heard an overhead paging alert called a "code gray." A "code gray" is a situation where someone in the hospital is violent, dangerous, and usually has a weapon. It was paged for a specific patient's room in the department where I was at that moment. Since this was not my area, I didn't know anything about the patient or the situation.

Usually, when "codes" are on other units, we hang around initially in case they need an extra pair of hands but we don't get involved, especially if it involves violence and weapons. That is

specifically left to the security guards in the hospital.

After the overhead page, I started to leave. They had many security guards and other good-sized guys lined up outside the patient room to prevent him from escaping. As I tried to leave, God spoke to my spirit, "You must go in that room." I said, "No, Lord; they have plenty of help, it's not even my department, and we're not supposed to interfere with the security measures in these kinds of situations." He spoke to me twice more, saying the same thing. Finally, without thinking, I walked over to the charge nurse and told him, "I have to go in there" and he let me through. Then I told the security guards the same thing and they let me through.

A young 33 year-old man sat on his bed, looking very angry, upset, disturbed. He had been threatening suicide and also to hurt anyone who tried to stop him. I said hello, introduced myself, and asked his name. He told me and I reached out to shake his hand. As I did, he reached out and laid his knife in my hand. I thanked him, handed it to one of the guards outside the door, and continued visiting with him. I said, "It seems you must be really hurting to be at the point of suicide." He opened up and shared everything. He was lonely, felt he had no one, and felt hopeless. He started crying, and I started crying. I hugged him and told him that he is loved, that God loves him, and I love him. I explained to him how I wasn't supposed to be at work that day, I don't work on that unit where he was, and I was delayed twice from leaving the unit before his code was paged, that normally the security guards would not just step back and let someone like me enter the room of an armed man. I told him that's how much God loves him, that He would arrange all this to the smallest detail, just because He so loved him.

We had a wonderful visit. He willingly allowed me to pray for him. He was being transferred that day to a psychiatric hospital. I encouraged him to go ahead and do it, and work with their counseling.

Months passed and I never heard anything except that he did agree to the transfer to the psychiatric hospital. I've never stopped praying for him. But I've never heard anything to let me know what happened, was he still alive or was he dead? I've told God a few times that I'd like to know if he's alive and if so, how's he doing, etc. But no info had ever turned up.

About four-and-a-half months later (November 12), I was preaching at the local rescue mission. After the service, a young man came up to me and asked, "Do you remember me? I'm the man that was going to commit suicide. You stopped me, and I gave you my knife." I cried out his name (I remembered it well), and we hugged and both of us cried and bawled and cried some more,

then wept and hugged some more. He started telling the guys around us at the mission about his trying to commit suicide, how the guards backed away and let me into his room, how he gave me his knife, and how I had told him how much God and I both love him. He remembered every detail of our brief encounter. He said he spent time in the psychiatric hospital, but that it was what I had told him about God loving him that helped him through. He said he's been out of the hospital for a while now and in a rehab program. He said he still has some depression and mental illness, but that he has not and does not think of committing suicide at all, at any time since our meeting. He wants to start coming to church with us as soon as his program will give him a pass.

I cannot express to you the blessing it was to see him again. God is so good! I had asked God to somehow just let me know that he was alright, and instead, God brings him back to me, face to face, heart to heart.

Please pray for this young man. I told God that I now want him saved, sanctified, filled with the Holy Ghost, and ministering in some way to others like himself, who feel like no one cares, that no one loves them, and they're all alone. What a mighty God we serve! Personal evangelism? Yes! Be careful what you ask God for. You might get it.

—Arlita Lefler
Anchorage, Alaska

Update: He just called me a few minutes ago because he wanted to tell me the following—He said "I wanted to tell you that last night I gave my heart and soul to Jesus. I gave Him my heart and my soul!" He was thrilled, I was thrilled; we both cried. Oh how great is our God! I told him that's how much God loves him, that He would arrange all this to the smallest detail, just because He so loved him.





TEN THINGS YOU CAN PRAY FOR OUR KIDS

Prayer is the spoken or unspoken expression of our faith in the life-changing power of God. It is the vehicle that transports the substance of things hoped for and evidence of things not yet revealed into reality. While prayer is sometimes a spontaneous result to an immediate need, it can be and should be a planned event. Because children have great value in the kingdom of God, we should be praying well-planned, consistent prayers for them. Here are 10 biblical truths you can pray for our children every day.

1. **FOR GODLY WISDOM:** 1 Corinthians 3:19 tells us, “The wisdom of this world is foolishness before God,” and Romans 12:2 says, “Do not be conformed to this world.” With that being said, we need to pray that our children will have godly—not worldly—wisdom. James 1:5 promises, “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.” Ask for your children to seek for and receive a supernatural application of godly wisdom.
2. **FOR CHARACTER:** This is probably the most difficult thing for a parent/leader to pray for our children/youth, because we know that character is developed by through trials in a person’s life. In fact, Romans 5:3, 4 says, “We also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope.” As hard as it is to pray for troubling times in the lives of our children, we know that challenges, disappointments, and even heartache are what will help them grow into the godly men and women they were created to be.
3. **FOR A SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE:** Daniel 6:3 says, “Daniel distinguished himself above the governors because an excellent spirit was in him.” And 1 Corinthians 10:31 instructs, “Whether, then you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” Pray that your children

will give their best to everything they attempt so that God will be glorified in all they do.

4. **FOR HUMILITY:** We live in a world that frequently admires pride, arrogance, and self-righteousness. Yet James 4:6 tells us that “God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble.” And in Matthew 23:12, Jesus promised, “Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled, and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.” Pray that your children will appreciate their infinite worth as children of God but, at the same time, will recognize that God expects them to walk with Him—and their fellow man—in meekness and humility.
5. **FOR A DESIRE TO KNOW GOD:** We pray they’ll make the team, or pass the test, or fit in at school, but is there anything we can ask for our children that will offer them more happiness, fulfillment, and success than a personal, intimate relationship with their Creator? Ezra 8:22 tells us, “The hand of our God is favorably disposed to all those who seek Him,” and Psalm 86:11 implores, “Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name.” Pray that our children will have a hunger and thirst to know God more every day, and an undivided heart to seek and serve Him with abandon.
6. **FOR DIRECTION:** Proverbs 3:5, 6 says, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and don’t lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your path straight.” And Ephesians 2:10 says, “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.” Pray that our children will learn at a young age to seek God’s direction and guidance in all things, so by the time they make big decisions—like

continued on page 30



STRENGTHENING LOCAL CHURCHES FOR THE HARVEST

“Enter to worship. Depart to serve.” Those words were painted on a large sign above the doors of a church I once attended. It took me a few decades to fully understand the true meaning of those words, because, frankly, I didn’t see them modeled too much. Most of the serving I observed was within the walls of the church, and it was serving one another. As wonderful as that was, it was not doing much to engage the surrounding community and help point them toward Christ. After three years as an active church member the typical person in the pew has few relational connections outside the congregation, and only superficial interactions with their non-Christian neighbors. Many of our churches are over-programmed to the point that our members spend so much time engaged in church-related activity that they are too busy to serve as president of the school parent’s association, participate in local charitable causes, or just enjoy recreation with a co-worker.

All too often we act as though the world around us is more our enemy than our mission field. If we truly desire to engage in the harvest, we have to come to grips with the reality that the harvest is not taking place inside the walls of our churches, but in the surrounding community. Our weekly gatherings should be geared toward equipping believers, celebrating what the Lord is doing in worship, and partnering with our people in the harvest that has been taking place throughout the week.

“You can’t win your enemies to Christ. You can only win your friends.” ¹This is, for many churches, a paradigm shift. We have come to believe that if we can get our friends to join us in an organized meeting in the church building we will be engaged in the harvest. We have placed enormous importance on two hours each week (10:00 AM until noon on Sunday) and missed the opportunities presented during the other 166 hours of the week.

We pray, “Your kingdom come, Your will be done in earth, as it is in heaven,” ²without understanding what that really means. The Kingdom is the realm in which the King reigns supreme, and where He makes things happen according to His will. When the church prays, “Your kingdom come” we are calling forth the rule and reign of our King, and announcing His desire to see righteousness, justice and peace prevail. When the church prays, “Your will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” do we fully grasp what we are declaring? In heaven there is no sickness, no homelessness,

no abuse, no suffering, so we are declaring the shalom, the completeness/wholeness of the Kingdom where our Lord reigns when we usher in healing, compassion, righteousness, and justice in His name. That is the door to harvest we sometimes fear to enter.

As the church moves away from being a holy huddle and seeks ways to impact our cities with the Gospel, we need to see the fingerprints of Christ in areas not always labeled with a Christian name. Driving nails for Habitat for Humanity, mentoring the children of incarcerated parents, collecting and distributing food for the hungry, serving on disaster relief teams—surely this is God’s work when done in His authority.

One of my favorite days in seminary was an exercise called “Exegeting the City.” We took public transportation into the heart of Los Angeles and started walking. Our mission was to see if we could find evidence of God’s presence in the center of such a large, urban, secular metropolis. After miles of walking, talking to people and observing, I departed that afternoon with a deep sense of awe at the hundreds of powerful evidences we had seen of God’s presence, manifested through God’s people, in the heart of the secular city. Pastors, why don’t you take your leadership on such an excursion? Walk with them through your town or city looking for the fingerprints of God. You are likely to find them in unlikely places. Be prepared, because you are also likely to find a lot of hurts needing healing and they will gnaw at your heart until you take action.

“If you want to prove your priorities, don’t show me your mission statement, show me your spreadsheet.”³ Matthew 6:21 (NIV) says it like this: “. . . where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Love your city more than you love your stuff.

When author Francis Chan was senior pastor of Cornerstone Community Church in Simi Valley, California, the church was convicted of the amount of money being spent on themselves. Their budget review revealed that the overwhelming majority of their income from contributions was going toward the maintenance of the machine. Facilities, salaries, equipment, expendable supplies were their primary expenditures; money from the church membership was being used to provide programs for the church membership. In a spirit of repentance the church leadership wrote into their church governing documents a requirement that 50 percent of their income be given to needs outside of the church. For every dollar the church received in tithes and offerings they were allowed to spend no more than 50 cents for the church budget. This was, no doubt, not an easy thing to achieve. It is likely that sacrifices were made and some difficult budget decisions resulted from this decision. However, Cornerstone Community Church gained a heart to give and a reputation as a giving church.

There is a mental trap pastors often fall into. Faced with a stack of bills to be paid and limited financial resources, it becomes easy to begin to cling to the church income stream and see it as a finite resource to be preserved when, in fact, it is God’s provision through His people and is a limitless, renewable resource when held with an open hand. Pastors are prone to remind the congregation that “you can’t outgive God” to encourage generous offerings. That same maxim

can be equally applied to the church budget. A local church engaged in the harvest must trust God and His willingness to provide and not make every ministry decision a budgetary decision.

If you feel impressed of the Spirit to invite someone to come and minister, sing, teach, or preach but hesitate because you fear collecting a special offering or providing an honorarium will affect your monthly income, the budget is driving your ministry in unhealthy ways.

One of the goals of the pastor of a local congregation is to reach people that God is our source and provider, and He is a God of plenty and not lack. Along with encouraging them to give their first and their best in tithes and offerings, my local church actively promotes child sponsorship programs such as Compassion International and our own One Child Fund. On top of that each year we pack hundreds of shoeboxes for Samaritan’s Purse Operation Christmas Child. We also operate a food distribution center for the Hawaii Food Bank, support numerous young people as they participate in short-term missions with Youth With a Mission, and much more. We have proven that generous giving is not a zero-sum game—increased giving to needs outside of the local church does not result in less money for the church. Instead, as people learn to give freely their hearts are open to becoming more faithful in stewardship to the church as well.

Equip and mobilize every member to win the lost of his or her community.

“Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send. ⁴We love that passage, but sometimes forget that the workers we are asking the Lord to send will probably be sent from the pews of our local church. Take to time to reexamine the priorities of your life and your local congregation. Consider the possibility that we might be structured in such a way that we have no time or money left for the harvest. Consider what your church schedule and budget might look like if outreach, Kingdom proclamation and harvest were the highest priorities.



Gary Langley, Overseer of Hawaii and the Republic of Kiribati

¹ Rick Warren—Twitter@RickWarren

² Matthew 6:10

³ Dr. Michael Lawson, Senior Professor of Christian Education at Dallas Theological Seminary

⁴ Matthew 9:38 (NIV)



Editor's note: Welcome to our new section, Ministry Helps, specifically for leaders. Every month, we'll include articles and information of use to churches as well as sermon outlines submitted by other pastors and leaders. Feel free to share your outlines and ideas for the section by sending to editorial@kogop.org.

PROGRESS or REDEMPTION?

An excerpt from Ed Stetzer's, *Subversive Kingdom: Living as Agents of Gospel Transformation*, speaks of the quest for human progress versus the Bible's story of human redemption:

The dominant, culture-shaping story throughout much of the world for the past three hundred years has been the pursuit of progress—a story inspired by the hope that humanity, by maximizing its powers of intellect, discovery, and initiative, is fully capable of creating its own version of heaven on earth.

That's the kind of thinking and energy that turns on the coffeepot each morning in most homes throughout the Western world. This is the generational mind-set

embedded into the fabric of modern life and the expectations of modern man.

Try harder. Work smarter. Take charge. Make it happen. But what is foundationally wrong with this picture? The problem is that the Bible—our authority on all life and our guide to all truth—doesn't subscribe to this same story of human progress. The story of the Bible (and, therefore, the story we as Christians are called to tell and participate in) is the story of human redemption.

Progress. Redemption. Big difference. The first one futilely attempts to fashion heaven on earth in the form of hard work, positive energy, peaceful thoughts, better nutrition, and stuff like that. The other successfully brings heaven to earth in the form of God's Son and his atoning death, sent here to redeem (to "buy back") the captives of this oppressive world order and to set them free. One fails; the other cannot fail.

Life enslaves. But Jesus saves.

You can order "Subversive Kingdom" through White Wing Bookstore at 1-800-221-5027. There is also a video curriculum available for small groups and bible study classes.

The Word

"The Bible is God's summary of events. What the world calls 'human history' is merely a subjective record colored by the writers' own outlook. Scripture is God's view. "Your Word is truth" (John 17:17). The Bible is not 'to make us think' but to make us act. It is neither an academic treatise nor an encyclopedia to explain everything. It does not crack every conundrum and satisfy mere curiosity. His Word does not hinge on a few texts. The world is a continuous swirl of events, thoughts, reactions, but God has watched for thousands of years. Approaching the work of witnessing and evangelism, God's Word is the secret. The Holy Spirit knows life's intricacies and how to touch the secret springs of the human heart, often from oblique and surprising angles. The Word is our true platform. Preach the Word!"

—Reinhard Bonnke

Church Growth Myth

Larry Osborne: "Nothing in nature supports the goofy idea that healthy things always multiply and grow. Living things grow to a size predetermined by DNA and environment. But once any living thing reaches its prescribed size, it stops growing. It's not a matter of health. It's a matter of God's design."

Are you satisfied with God's design for your ministry? Here are four questions to move toward ordained satisfaction:

1. Who are you getting advice from?

Be sure to gain wisdom from a well-rounded group of people. Learn from well-known teachers at mega-conferences as well as from lesser-known leaders who share from smaller platforms.

2. What are you reading?

Be cautious how you apply the endless ideas for ministry growth. For example, the strategies for exponential church growth in a town that has expanded from 10,000 to 100,000 will not fit if your town has shrunk.

3. Why are you comparing?

For years, I've heard pastors harbor jealousy toward other churches, gossip about other pastors, or discredit the work done elsewhere. Let's stop competing against one another and start celebrating when others grow into their God-ordained size.

4. When will you start asking God what He thinks?

If you don't know if you are functioning at God's ordained size, ask Him. Commit to praying to gain a better sense of what God thinks about your current state.

—Justin Lathrop, "Don't Believe This Church Growth Myth", Pastors.com

Sermon OUTLINE



*Submitted by Benjamin Duncan
Pastor, High Point, North Carolina*

Title: “The Signs of a True Repentance”

Topic: Empowered by the Spirit
(Sermon 2 of 7).

Truth: John the Baptizer preached repentance and challenged his audience to offer “fruit” or proof of the same. Many of the religious held to their privileged ancestral Jewish heritage as the security of their salvation; but, John pointed out that they could not rely on their family trees to get them right with God and assure them of an entrance into heaven. He said that the “axe” (i.e., judgment and wrath) of God would cut down and destroy such a spurious belief system. These people then were moved from a phony repentance to a genuine one as we see the change in their demeanor. Obviously, they wanted to be right with God and the Holy Spirit’s conviction had come upon them as they were now willing to change. They made inquiry as to what to do? John intimates that true repentance, empowered by the Holy Ghost on the inside of the heart, will be validated by a change in conduct on the outside through our interaction with others.

Thesis: Today, believers must also preach genuine repentance and expect evidence of changed lives among the penitent. Too

many are deceived into relying on the faith of their fathers, grandparents, church affiliation, etc., to usher them into salvation and heaven on the “coattails” of these relationships. Yet, we know that salvation is personal, and thereby is a decision that each individual must authentically make to avoid the judgment and wrath of a righteous God. Such an internal change will be accompanied by an outward evidence of a new life in Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit will empower every true believer to make the necessary changes in thought, speech, behaviors, and activities, in order to validate to others confirmation of a godly lifestyle.

Text: Luke 3:7–14

Thought 1: A Vocal Message Finds Confrontation (3:7–9)

- A. Assumed Sincerity Probed (3:7, 8a)
- B. Ancestral Superiority Problematic (3:8b)
- C. Announced Sentence Personal (3:9)

Thought 2: A Volitional Moment Fosters Contrition (3:10)

- A. An Intentional Motion
- B. An Interest Mentioned
- C. An Inquiry Made

Thought 3: A Visible Modification Follows Conversion (3:11–14)

- A. The Individualism of the Citizens Revealed (3:11)
- B. The Integrity of the Collectors Repudiated (3:12–13)
- C. The Intimidation of the Combatants Rebuked (3:14)

Submit your sermon outline for publication to editorial@cogop.org.

Notes

VIRGINIA

RAISING FUNDS FOR BOTSWANA IN ROANOKE

At the 2010 Assembly in Greensboro, North Carolina, Brother Phillip Segadika from Botswana, South Africa, shared his vision of the Empowering Women in Botswana initiative. His plan was to train women to become nursery school teachers. This project would help them to provide resources for their families, as well as helping to keep them from becoming victims of an ungodly lifestyle because of the extreme poverty. We felt that this would be something that our mission group would be interested in pursuing. We already had other commitments we were funding, but in the spring of 2012, we began working on this project.

About the same time, a very gifted artist in our church, Marietta Price, felt inspired to make a quilt for Veronica Venable, who has served the Harvest Ministries church so faithfully for many years. The decision was made that the quilt would be the avenue that we would use to raise our funds for the Botswana project. People were given the opportunity to give a mission offering in honor of Veronica and they each signed a square, which would become part of the quilt. Over a few months, we worked to get squares signed. So many people who had known her over the years were thrilled to be able to be a part of this effort to honor this remarkable woman. On September 30, 2012, the quilt was presented to Veronica during the Sunday morning service. The quilt and the presentation were a complete surprise to her.

Everyone who has seen the quilt is amazed at the quality and beauty of it. We are so blessed to have Marietta as part of our church family. Her many talents and gifts are a great treasure to us. We were thrilled to be able to send Brother Segadika \$2,000, which will fund scholarships to train two women in Botswana. Marietta, the artist, explained her vision for the quilt:

“When inspiration arrives, action is required. Early in April 2010, I was inspired with a complete mental picture of a quilt featuring our beloved Pastor Veronica praising God. She often is a true picture of beauty and grace in her service to our faith family at Harvest Ministries. Although I could visualize the finished product, I did not know when and why I was to make a quilt for her.

About the same time, Ruth Robinette, leader of our Mission Possible group, requested that I head a fundraising project for Empowering Women in Botswana. Knowing Veronica’s passion for Christian education and that she had received the “Billy Murray Christian Educator of the Year” in 2008, the quilt for Veronica and the Botswana project became one. It was secretly known to all of us as ‘Veronica’s Quilt.’

“A longtime friend of Veronica’s, Nancy Turner, was nearing the end of suffering with cancer and had asked Veronica to officiate at her funeral. A mutual friend was able to get Nancy’s quilt square signed two days before she went to be with the Lord. Also, through the assistance of another friend, we were able to obtain the signature of another dear friend, Benny Summerlin, who Veronica had worked with before she came to Harvest Ministries. He passed away two days after he signed the quilt square, having confirmed his faith. I was in awe of God’s love and attention to the details of Veronica’s life and was honored to be a part of His showering of love on her.”

—Ruth Robinette



TESTIMONY

My heart is full of thankfulness. I am reminded of a two-year old little girl who pulled a pot of boiling coffee off the stove (the kind you percolated on the stove—before automatic coffee makers). She burned her body so badly that, when her mommy tried to remove her little t-shirt, it took the flesh with it. That little girl

could not know then what God had planned for her. Her mommy and daddy did not know what God had planned or how much He really loved them. They did not know about His healing power.

Even though they were not Christians, they had attended a church service with the little girl’s uncle and had

heard of the ministry of Christ and His divine healing in the Scripture. Feeling desperate and hoping for some relief for their little girl, they took her to church and had her prayed for.

The next morning the smell was so bad they took her back to the doctor and were amazed when the bandages

BULGARIA

Reaching the Cities and Towns

The people from the town of Vetovo were invited to a concert at the central square. Teams from five churches preached the Gospel, worshipped the Lord, and presented dramas. More than 1,000 people listened to the Good News and received an invitation to come to the church. It was a big revival for the whole town.

A team from our mother church in Rousse ministered for a week in northwest Bulgaria in the towns of Lom, Vidin, and Septemvriizi. There were meetings with children as well as adults' and women's conferences. One-day Bible camps with

the kids were packed with joy, clowns, puppets, funny games, and Bible stories. During the women's meeting, many women were delivered from depression and felt the presence of the Holy Spirit. One new mission field was opened and a new children's ministry was established.

It was something new and interesting for our country to have meetings for a week in a tent in the town of Tutrakan. The first evening many people came to see the Jesus film. The next evening, we showed another film as well as shared the Good News, distributing Bibles, tracks, and Christian books. Praise God for all He is doing in Bulgaria.

—Peter Georgiev, National Overseer of Bulgaria

CHURCH

Greeting Church Visitors

What are the right words to say to new visitors at your church? Here are some suggestions from welcomechurchvisitors.com

Greeting Church Visitors at Entrances

Use a few different greetings—the same phrase spoken every weekend by every person is insincere. Sample one-line greetings for parking lot or entry greeters or for your members to say in a hallway:

- "Welcome to [church name] this morning!"
- "God bless you."
- "We're glad you are here this morning."
- "Good morning and welcome to our church."
- "I've not met you yet! Welcome."
- "I don't believe I've met you yet. Have I?"

Greeting Church Visitors from the Front

During the worship service, the leader can say something like the following to welcome visitors:

- "We are glad that you are here with us this morning."
- "If this is your first or second Sunday with us, we are grateful that you have come to be with us this morning. It is our hope that you experience the love of Christ this morning and His presence during our worship."

If your church does the passing of the peace handshake ritual, the worship leader can go on to say this to help the church greet visitors:

- "Get up, turn and greet someone that you've not met yet. Shake their hand, introduce yourself, and take a few moments to welcome them to God's house."

Greeting Church Visitors after the Worship Service

During the fellowship reception time after the service, church members can be encouraged to look out for and intentionally greet people they haven't met. I have found it helpful to break the ice and initiate the conversation by saying:

- "I've not met you yet. I'm Chris."

were removed. There was no sign of a burn, only a little mark on her neck where the bandage had rubbed. Broken and blessed, they knew if God could do this for their little girl, there must be something wonderful about His love.

The next Sunday, they went back to church with a whole new appreciation

for the love of the Father. They knelt at an altar and gave their hearts and their lives to Him. Since that day nearly 60 years ago, I have learned that it was because of His love and His touch that the only scars I bear from that experience are the ones my Savior took on Himself for my redemption and my healing.

I am thankful for a God who loved me then and loves me now. I am thankful for a Savior who healed me then and has healed me many times since. I am thankful for parents who were receptive to His love and forgiveness. I am blessed.

—Connie Disbrow, Cleveland, Tennessee

TEN THINGS YOU CAN PRAY FOR OUR KIDS

continued from page 23

- college, career, and marriage—they'll be in the habit of following His perfect plan every step of the way.
7. **FOR FAVOR:** In chapter two of the book of Esther, many young women were brought into the palace to be prepared and presented as potential brides before King Ahasuerus. Verse 8 and 9 tell us that from the moment Esther arrived, she found favor with all who saw her. (The king made her queen, which put her in the perfect position to save her people from annihilation.) Luke's gospel tells us that Jesus grew in favor with God and man (2:52). There's nothing wrong with praying that our children will have favor with teachers, school administrators, coaches, and eventually employers—as well as with classmates, teammates, and coworkers—and that they'll be liked and appreciated for who they are.
8. **FOR DISCERNMENT:** In 1 Kings 3:5, God gave King Solomon an open invitation to ask for anything he wanted. Anything! Solomon requested a heart to discern good from evil in order to judge God's people, and the Lord was so pleased that He showered the ruler with riches and honor, elevating him beyond all of his contemporaries—and blessed him with a long, healthy life.
9. **FOR GODLY RELATIONSHIPS:** 2 Corinthians 6:14 warns, "Do not be bound together with unbelievers." Pray that our children will value God-fearing friends, that the Father will 'pave' their way with faithful Christians, and that they'll eventually find their way to godly mates, as the Lord intends.
10. **FOR RESPECT TOWARD AUTHORITY:** If this generation had a slogan, it would be "No Fear!" Our children are conditioned by media, movies and music, not to respect parents, teachers, school administrators, police officers, government officials. Being rude is not only acceptable; it's cool. Yet Romans 13:1 tells us, "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established." Pray that your children will have proper respect for everyone from the President to their nursery worker, to the boss at their part-time job, and appropriate fear toward God.

—Wayne Pense
Overseer, Heartland Region

IN HIS PRESENCE



W.M. "Tommy" Queener

Bishop W.M. "Tommy" Queener, 67, of Fort Myers, Florida, passed away Friday, November 30, 2012. He was serving as pastor of the Marion Street Church of God of Prophecy in Fort Myers.

Bishop Queener was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma, January 23, 1945. He moved to Cleveland at the age of 3. He attended public school in Cleveland, until his sophomore year when he transferred to Tomlinson Memorial School where he graduated. He began his ministry at the age of 16.

In 1965, while under ministry appointment in Texas, he married

Yvonne Medders of Daytona Beach, Florida. During their 47 years of marriage, they ministered in pastoral leadership in the states of Texas, Florida, Alaska, and Kansas. He served as state bishop in Alaska, North Dakota, Montana, and Wyoming over a period of 18 years before resuming pastoral positions.

He was totally committed to serving his Lord and had very little interests that did not involve his passion of ministering and or fellowshiping with his brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Ministers

Carl E. Steele

Richlands, Virginia; August 3, 2012;
Licensed minister for 4 years.

Bobby R. Snow

Jasper, Alabama; November 14, 2012;
Licensed minister for 58 years.

Avery G. Montgomery

Grayson, Kentucky; August 24, 2012;
Licensed minister for 59 years.

Florence Ables

Dennis, Mississippi;
September 8, 2012;
Licensed minister for 56 years.

Janice I. Williams

Dawes, West Virginia;
September 4, 2012;
Licensed minister for 21 years.

Jovis E. Wesley

Enterprise, Alabama;
September 14, 2012;
Licensed minister for 49 years.

Raymond D. Wallace

McCalla, Alabama;
September 20, 2012;
Licensed minister for 66 years.

Samuel B. Moss

Nassau, Bahamas; July 11, 2012;
Licensed minister for 19 years.



The Evidence of Change

When a tragedy occurs that involves one person hurting or killing another, without fail the news media tends to congregate in the neighborhood of the criminal, seeking answers. During their broadcast, they feature interviews with neighbors, friends, or family, asking them the questions going through the minds of community members: “Did you see this coming?” “Did you notice anything unusual about this person?” “What kind of person was he/she?”

More often than not, the acquaintances of the accused speak in positive terms toward the subject: “This is not like him at all.” “I can’t believe she would ever do such a thing.” “They have always been so nice to me.” Rarely do you hear someone say, “Oh, it doesn’t surprise me—I knew they were no good.” Perhaps that’s for the best, since it would make community events all the more awkward if or when the accused is exonerated.

Speaking in such glowing terms of a person accused of the unspeakable only adds confusion to those seeking closure. Sometimes it raises doubts about whether

the person is guilty or innocent, but at the very least it shows that things are not always what they may appear to be. There is the nice, public face that was visible to the neighborhood, but there was a darker side that no one noticed.

Conversely, I wonder what it would look like if the scenario were flipped and the person who exhibited a mean, cold, hard exterior to the community was somehow, privately, a sweet, tender, loving person? Imagine the news crews descending on a neighborhood seeking answers about someone who rendered a really good deed. “Are you talking about that mean old man who hollered at my son? There’s no way he saved someone’s life.” “That woman doesn’t have a sweet bone in her whole body. You must have confused her with someone else.”

It doesn’t make sense, really. It’s one thing to hide your sins or darkness from people and it’s quite another thing to hide your light. I would venture to say it’s not possible to hide it for long, even if for some strange reason you wanted to.

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to

your Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 5:14–16 ESV).

When you surrender your life to God and come into the realization of the great love He has for you and all of humanity, it will transform you in noticeable ways. You will start to become more patient, less short-fused, more kind, less mean, more loving, less hateful, more joyful, less angry. As your “old man” or your human nature would lean, your new life will run counter to that. It will be so out of place, so seemingly off-balance to the norm that people will notice, before you ever open your mouth.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control . . .” (Galatians 5:22, 23).

Would it come to a surprise to your acquaintances and neighbors to find that you were a follower of Christ?

If, as the old challenge has been offered, you were to ever find yourself on trial for being a Christian and the prosecution was seeking evidence to convict, would they find enough? Consider the “fruit of the spirit” as your criteria—what verdict would be rendered?



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