



Encourage

Inspiration for IPHC Leaders

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CHRIST THE SAVIOR IS BORN, AND HE IS GOD WITH US

This Christmas season, we have the amazing opportunity to present the miracle of the Incarnation.



As a pastor, my favorite time of the year to preach was during Advent and the Twelve Days of Christmas. This year Advent begins on Sunday, November 30, and continues through the next four Sundays. The Twelve Days of Christmas constitutes the twelve days after Christmas and go through the New Year.

As you are praying, preparing, and reflecting on your preaching during this holiday season, I wanted to share a few thoughts with you.

First, Christmas is about the Incarnation of the Son of God (see John 1:1–18). You could speak for months from those eighteen verses in John's prologue. Notice the emphasis on light, life, the Word, fullness of grace and truth. Observe how "the Word became flesh" connects us to the first chapter of Genesis where we see that the Word has creative power. It connects us to Revelation 19:13 and the ultimate triumph of God over the spiritual darkness of our world.

Second, the virgin birth matters (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 1:26–38). We believe that the virgin Mary really was overshadowed by the Holy Spirit and through the Holy Spirit conceived the only



BY DOUG BEACHAM

DOUG BEACHAM is the presiding bishop of the IPHC. He has served in various roles in the church including Georgia Conference Director, executive director of Church Education Ministries, and executive director of World Missions Ministries.

begotten Son of God (Luke 1:35).

We as evangelicals have been too afraid of idolizing Mary to truly discern the significance of her faith and obedience. We have missed Elizabeth's prophetic blessing in Luke 1:42. We have missed Mary's Song in 1:46–55 and the powerful theological truths rooted in the Old Testament Law and Prophets.

Third, Isaiah 9:6 provides a four-fold revelation of the mission, character and life of the Son of God. He is: "Wonderful Counselor," "Mighty God," "Everlasting Father," and "Prince of Peace." As in all the passages referenced, the historical and literary context of Isaiah 9 provides a rich mine of knowledge, insight and application.

Fourth, Isaiah 11:1–16 speaks of an eschatological hope grounded in the promises of God through David. This is a hope, manifested in the character and spirit of the Messiah, which ultimately brings hope to all the nations of the earth.

At some point in the mid-1980s I entered the Advent season speaking each of the four Sundays on the Messiah's names from Isaiah 9:6. At the Franklin Springs Pentecostal Holiness Church we were blessed with the creative talents of Mrs. Felicia Bush who now serves with IPHC World Missions Ministries. She made a worship banner for each of those four Sundays that was brought down the center aisle as each service began with an Advent hymn. Each banner had one of the names from Isaiah 9:6.

I specifically remember the Sunday of the final name and

banner, "Prince of Peace." Each banner was hoisted on a large pole and carried by someone



I pray all of you
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Advent season.

in the congregation. Sitting on the platform, I looked up as the congregation sang and saw the retired president of Emmanuel College, Mr. W.G. Drum, walking humbly but stately down the aisle carrying the Prince of Peace banner. At that time he was probably in his late 70s or early 80s. This godly gentleman, well beloved by many alumni and all of us in that community, carried a banner that characterized a life

Encourage

A place of hope. A people of promise.

November/December 2014

Vol. I No. 10

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Encourage is published monthly except in July and December by the International Pentecostal Holiness Church, P.O. Box 12609, Oklahoma City, OK 73157. Digital subscriptions are available free of charge by contacting trutland@iphc.org.

lived under the banner of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

I hope all of you have a W.G. Drum in your congregation. More importantly, I pray all of you will take the time to study, prepare, and re-present Jesus faithfully this Advent season. ☐

IPHC missionary Russell Board and I have written an e-book entitled *Christmas Before and After* about this season that may further aid you in your preparations. It is available at: <http://www.amazon.com/Christmas-Before-After-Doug-Beacham-ebook/dp/B00A7XJ3LC>.



IT MATTERS

HOW YOU RESPOND IN A CRISIS

Simply get back to the basics to discover and experience God's victory during a leadership crisis.



BY MIKE
GRAY

MIKE GRAY is the conference bishop of Alpha Ministries, a network of IPHC ministers and churches in Alabama, Florida, Mississippi and Tennessee. Mike and his wife, Karen, reside in Montgomery, Alabama. Mike has also served in leadership as an IPHC pastor, Alpha Ministries Evangelism and Missions Director, and chief of staff for the IPHC Global Ministry Center.

In recent months I have studied 2 Chronicles 20, a passage that describes how King Jehoshaphat's leadership was challenged during a crisis experience. Preceding this crisis, Jehoshaphat had led Judah in great spiritual reform. Spiritual momentum was flowing through the land. Revival was in the air. The tribe of Judah was spiritually renewed and growing in the Lord.

But then things got tough. An unholy confederation of three enemies formed an army seemingly without number. The enemy was intent on destroying the king, so he challenged Jehoshaphat, God's people and God's work.

Sound familiar?

This all created panic and struck fear—even in the heart of a godly king and great leader like Jehoshaphat. The Bible says the king became afraid. Consequently, he called for the people of Judah to gather before the Lord in Jerusalem.

In his open prayer to the Lord the king declared, "O our God, will you not judge them? For we have no power against this great multitude that is coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are upon You." (2 Chron. 20:12 NKJV).

What do pastors, ministers and church leaders do when they do not know what to do? When faced with challenges in life, family, health and ministry? When the enemy condemns, intimidates and accuses our walk with God and

our leadership integrity? When hard fought kingdom advance and breakthrough is threatened by intense spiritual warfare?

I believe there are five leadership secrets we can learn from Jehoshaphat that can thrust us into the next season of ministry, free from past struggles, frustration and fear. We can turn any present challenge into a great victory for the glory of God if we respond correctly.

First, Jehoshaphat surrendered his fear to the Lord. He recognized that God did not give him the spirit of fear, but a spirit of power, love and sound thinking.

Second, he set his face to seek the Lord and proclaimed a worship assembly in Jerusalem with fasting. People came from all over the land to wait before the Lord. Wise leaders do not go to battle alone, but surround themselves with a quality team prior to engaging in spiritual warfare.

Third, he stood on the word of God in his prayer. The King cited Solomon's prayer and God's promise to Israel from 2 Chronicles 7. God's word is His word. It is indisputable. His word is eternal truth. Scripture did not fail Jehoshaphat—and it will not fail you either!

Fourth, He listened for God's voice until he knew what to do. "You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the LORD, who is with you...Do not fear or be dismayed...for the LORD is with you." (2 Chronicles 20:17 NKJV).

Fifth and finally, King Jehoshaphat and the people of Judah humbled their hearts, worshipped the Lord and obeyed the prophetic strategy from the Spirit of God.

The next day, the children of Judah marched out singing the song

of the Lord and praising the beauty of the Lord's holiness. Simultaneously, the Lord exercised His authority over Judah's enemies and released the might of His salvation. There were four life changing dynamics of the victory.

Deliverance—the enemies of Judah were scattered and silenced. The result was an overwhelming, overpowering and victorious outcome from the Lord's hand. Praise God, we are more than conquerors through Christ Jesus our Lord!

Prosperity—The people of God spent three days gathering an abundance of blessing from the defeated enemies in the valley of

Berachah, or valley of blessing. The Lord reversed what the enemy meant for harm and released the wealth to the people of God for the Kingdom.

Thanksgiving—The people returned to Jerusalem and Judah with joyous thanks and shouts of gratitude. The Lord's joy strengthened God's people and the sound of gladness echoed through the valleys and mountains of Judah.

Wholeness—Rest was restored to King Jehoshaphat, his leaders and their followers. The fear and angst that was prevalent yielded to quiet, calm and restored order.



Wise leaders do not go to battle alone, but surround themselves with a quality team prior to engaging in spiritual warfare.

In the current Hebrew calendar, the nation of Israel has entered a year of Sabbath rest. I pray this will flow into the church of Jesus Christ! Moreover, I pray that His rest will flow into God's ministers and their families to bring quiet, calm and restored order.

Listen, faithful ministers of God, do not become weary in your assignment! I believe you will experience a turnaround in this season if you keep your eyes on Jesus. Do not be distracted, discouraged or dismayed by the turmoil the enemy creates around you.

Remember: the battle is not yours but the Lord's! Be encouraged and rise up with renewed fervor. Turn your eyes upon Jesus, begin to pray and worship the Father, seek His truth and declare the glory of His salvation.

I believe the Spirit of the Lord is prompting me to declare freedom, healing, breakthrough and fresh fire in the Holy Spirit to all pastors, ministers and churches in the IPHC. Thank you for your faithful service in the Kingdom of God. May breakthrough and victory abound to all in the name of the Lord! □



HOW TO WALK THE MINISTRY TIGHT ROPE

Your success will often be determined by
the degree of balance in your life.



BY GREG
AMOS

GREG AMOS is the bishop of the IPHC's South Carolina Conference. He served as the Discipleship Ministries Director of his conference for 12 years. He graduated from Emmanuel College and received a Master of Ministry Degree from Southwestern Christian University. He and his wife, Tamara, have two grown children.

Finding balance in your life is not profound. It's not super spiritual. But lack of balance can be costly—or even deadly.

When I have viewed videos of people walking across Niagara Falls or from one high-rise building to another, I am simply baffled as to how anyone can accomplish such a feat. It has not escaped my attention that the tight rope artist is constantly making adjustments so as to keep his or her balance.

It is easy for me to see a correlation between this scene and that of a pastor or minister. The demands of ministry are constantly pulling us one way while our family demands and physical and mental health needs are pulling the other.

Keeping balance in life is such a critical point for us to have an effective ministry, but the enemy of our souls would love to drive us to the point of imbalance. If he can accomplish this then no matter how anointed we are our ministry effectiveness is eventually compromised.

Sometime back I read an article by Eugene Cho entitled *Death by Ministry* (you can find it at churchleaders.com). Cho shared the following statistics regarding pastors:

- 80% of pastors say they have insufficient time with their spouse and that ministry has a negative effect on their family.
- 40% report a serious conflict with a parishioner once a month.
- 33% say that being in ministry is

an outright hazard to their family.

- 75% report they've had a significant stress-related crisis at least once in their ministry.
- 58% of pastors indicate that their spouse needs to work either part-time or full-time to supplement the family income.
- 56% of pastors' wives say they have no close friends.
- Pastors who work fewer than 50 hours per week are 35% more likely to be terminated.
- 40% of pastors considered leaving the pastorate in the past three months.

Feeling dizzy? Take a breath. Here are some more statistics about what pastors are dealing with today when it comes to ministry stress:

- 1,500 pastors leave the ministry each month due to moral failure, spiritual burnout, or contention in their churches.
- 50% of pastors' marriages will end in divorce.

- 80% of pastors and 84% of their spouses feel unqualified and discouraged in their role as pastors.
- 50% of pastors are so discouraged that they would leave the ministry if they could, but have no other way of making a living.
- 80% of seminary and Bible school graduates who enter the ministry will leave the ministry within the first five years.
- 70% of pastors constantly fight depression.
- Almost 40% polled said they have had an extra-marital affair since beginning their ministry.
- 70% said the only time they spend studying the Word is when they are preparing their sermons.

Under these circumstances, it's no wonder ministers often have family, health and mental issues that hinder ministry whether it is visible to others yet or not. T. D. Jakes in his book, *Loose That Man and Let Him Go*, says that fatigue "robs people of creativity and secretly steals their energy and discernment. Tired people are less... careful. Even simple problems seem insurmountable. When fatigue robs people of their better judgment, they make permanent decisions based on the stress of temporary circumstances."

Pastors and ministers, join me in a commitment to guard the balance of our lives. There is too much at stake! As Dr. Tim Lambert shared with us at a recent Discipleship Ministries Day of Motivation: "Let us divert daily, withdraw weekly and abandon annually."

During a critical season in my life I heard the Lord tell me that self pity will allow you to justify anything. Sadly, I've seen this prove true in too many ministers. If our marriage relationship gets out of balance and we start feeling sorry for ourselves it becomes easy to justify the second look, the flirt ... until one day the line gets crossed and the damage is done.

In other cases, if the ministry doesn't compensate us well enough, we can be tempted to justify cheating on taxes, taking a little here or there, and before you know it trust is destroyed. Remember, it's the little foxes that spoil the vine!

On a final note, we also need to be on the lookout for life being out of balance for our parishioners and to be sure the ministry demands on them are not destructive as well. We not only bear the responsibility for ourselves but also for the care of our flocks.

May the Holy Spirit help us to hear His voice louder and more clearly than any other voice. May we hear His warnings and respond wisely. May we finish well and make it safely across this tightrope called ministry. □

The enemy of our souls would love to drive us to the point of imbalance.

Who Do You Pray With?

Too many pastors today are isolated. Here's a practical way to connect in prayer.

"What is the biggest problem pastors are facing today?" That question was put to me at a recent breakfast meeting. As I chewed my eggs and bacon, I also chewed on how to answer the question. After querying other pastors, one response stands out. Pastors don't have a pastor. Many pastor neglect for themselves what they are called by God to provide for others.

According to Dr. Jerry Kirk, author of *The Prayer Covenant*, "most pastors not only do not have a pastor, many don't even have a brother—a close friend—with whom to share the joys and pains of life."

The unique calling of a pastor necessitates cultivating relationships with a few people who will encourage us to be transparent, who will ask the hard questions, and who will provide accountability for our lives. Otherwise, we run the risk of becoming isolated and insulated from others, caught up in the whirlwind pace of pastoral responsibilities.

I have used Dr. Kirk's 40 Day Prayer Covenant Card for the past two years in my private prayer time. It is a simple yet profound tool containing ten phrases that have impacted my spiritual growth. The unexpected blessing is this prayer tool has also provided the means of building close relationships with a few other pastors.

For almost a year, I've met with two other pastors for a weekly prayer time. They are from IPHC, Southern Baptist and Presbyterian denominations. I am enriched from the diverse backgrounds of our group.

Their wisdom and spiritual depth inspire me. I'm less apt to feel isolated and alone when I recognize how other pastors face the same issues I struggle with.

Despite our busy schedules, we prioritize our early morning prayer appointments. We use the Prayer Covenant Card to guide our time together, but we also share our concerns and pray specifically for the needs of each other.

The value of this experience has led me to begin two more weekly calls, each with two other pastors. We limit our calls to 30 minutes each, but those 30-minute segments have become the most significant item on my weekly schedule.

I encourage you to use the Prayer Covenant Card in your daily prayer for one week. Then ask God to lead you to pastors both within the IPHC and in other denominations, with whom you can join in covenant prayer. I am thankful for these six men who pray for me daily. I consider it a privilege to pray for them. www.theprayercovenant.org

BY LOU SHIREY

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WARNING: DON'T CATCH THE EGO VIRUS!

Because of insecurity, many leaders in our movement have developed a title fetish.



BY J. LEE
GRADY

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I am often asked if I have a title, and my answer doesn't satisfy some people. I travel a lot, so I don't consider myself a pastor. All kinds of labels have been pinned on me: Reverend, prophet, apostle ... even bishop. Once I was introduced to a church as "Dr. Grady" and I almost crawled under my seat. I only have a college degree. There are no letters after my name.

I tell people: "You can call me Lee. Or if you want to sound formal, you can say, 'Brother Grady.'"

Today it seems we've developed a title fetish. For a while everyone in charismatic and Pentecostal circles was becoming a bishop (and some were installed into this office with rings, robes and funny-looking hats). Then the same guys with the pointy hats started calling themselves apostles.

Then the prophets got jealous and started calling themselves apostles too! I knew one lady who, not to be outdone, required people to call her "Exalted Prophetess."

Now the latest fad is requiring church folks to address certain people as apostles. (As in, “When Apostle Holy Moly arrives, please only address him as, ‘Apostle,’ and then make sure he is seated in a private room while his two adjutants, wearing dark glasses, guard his door.”)

They’ve even invented an elaborate theology to go along with this ridiculous rule. It suggests that you can’t receive the true anointing from a man of God if you don’t honor him with the right title.

Sounds so very *ooo-ooo* spiritual to the naive. But it’s garbage.

Jesus didn’t play this religious game, especially when he was around the Grand Poobahs of His day—the long-robed scribes and Pharisees. After accusing them of loving the best seats in the synagogues, He pointed out that they loved to be called “Rabbi” by men (see Matt. 23:7).

Then He warned them: “But do not be called Rabbi; for One is your Teacher, and you are all brothers. ... the greatest among you shall be your servant. Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted” (v. 8-12, NASB).

People have quibbled over these words for centuries, insisting that ecclesiastical titles are not the problem; pride is what Jesus was rebuking. I would agree that Jesus was going to the root sin. But He was also asking these title-crazy guys if they’d be willing to ditch their labels and act like normal people.

When I was in China several years ago, I met some amazing leaders who had planted thousands of congregations. They had also spent a lot of time in jail for their faith, and they’d been beaten with iron rods for preaching the gospel. They were the bravest apostles I’ve



If people can’t see
the anointing on your life
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ever met. But when I asked them if they used “apostle” as a title, one guy said: “We believe in those roles in the church. But we prefer to call each other ‘brother’ or ‘sister.’”

That settled it for me. A few years later I met Iftakhar, a Pakistani apostle who has oversight of 900 churches. He also has two scars on his arm from gunshots fired by Muslim extremists who

have put a price on his head. When I asked him how I should address him, he smiled and said, “Iftakhar.”

If these two giants of the faith—and true apostles—don’t require to be addressed with titles, then Your Worshipful Grand Master Rev. Dr. Bishop Sleezer (who claims oversight of maybe four churches) shouldn’t wear his ministry role around his neck like a tacky neon name badge.

If people can’t see the anointing on your life through your character, then don’t cheapen the gospel by wearing a title just to boost your ego.

I’m not saying people shouldn’t use reverend, minister or even bishop to identify their roles in the church. (I am honored to have Bishop Doug Beacham as a close mentor, and he wears his title with dignity even as he insists that I call him “Doug.”)

But can we please dispense with the insecurity, and the childish “I’m more important than you” appellations, and get back to the simplicity of the gospel? Let’s get over ourselves!

Jesus is the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the Son of David, the Prince of Peace and the Apostle of our Confession. Yet when He came into this world He laid aside His heavenly glory and took on the lowly name of Jesus. He wore no fancy robes. He demanded no titles. He did not come to be ministered to, but to minister.

If we want to serve Him honorably, we must forsake our need for fame and cast our crowns at His feet. □



NEW SEASON, NEW TEAM: UNDERSTANDING EMERGING LEADERS

They don't see things like you do, but they are valuable players. Let's try to understand the younger leaders God has given us.



BY JOHN
CHASTEEN

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I'm a blessed man—I've lived long enough to see the younger generation that I've pastored grow into maturity and pick up the torch of leadership. Many have the potential of going much further than we have gone. I say this because I've become quite intrigued with the new generation of church leaders.

God has graciously allowed me to hang out with a group of younger leaders over the last couple of years to study and try to wrap my head around their theology. So, why do they think differently than many of us and what can we learn from them? It is time we took a look at what makes them tick and why many of them are moving to the forefront in church leadership.

For starters, I am going to call this new generation a "new tribe" simply because their leadership styles are striking similar to each other, but different from the previous generations in key ways, regardless of geography, religious affiliation or church size. Here are a few observations of their leadership behavior:

1. THEY DEMONSTRATE AN UNPARALLELED LEVEL OF AUTHENTICITY.

Today's leaders bring with them an authenticity that is unparalleled by the church in recent years. By authenticity, I mean an openness and transparency that knocks down barriers, walls, and levels the playing field in the body of Christ.

Leaders in this tribe often talk of themselves as a work in progress. They are also quick to catalyze authenticity by taking the plunge and sharing their

personal struggles—using their own lives as examples. This is a far cry from previous generations of clergy that came to the pulpit as polished experts who never showed any sign weakness.

I might add that their desire to being authentic at all costs is by no means a lowering of the bar for themselves. It is an expression that is intended as a connection point and surprisingly sits well with the postmodern generation.

2. THEY SEEM TO BE VOID OF RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES.

Most new tribe leaders are very non-religious in nature. Some of the things we would call sacred are considered by them to be sacred cows! I've discovered that this is in no way intended to be a manifestation of disrespect for biblical values; rather it is simply a mindset that refuses to separate the sacred from the secular.

For instance, they don't feel out of place with sinners, and they don't consider one day more sacred than another. Their tastes for various genres of music is a bit edgy to many of us, and not much is considered off limits in their conversations. We could go on—tattoos are cool—piercings too, and Jesus is okay with it all.

It might seem strange, but this attitude provides open doors to non-religious people and gives them access into the hearts and minds of this generation.

3. THEY SEEM TO HAVE A RELATIVELY SHORT UNLEARNING CURVE TO DEAL WITH.

Today's leaders don't seem to be weighed down with many of the unfruitful traditions of former ministry eras. There are several reasons for this but primarily one stands out as unique—many of them were called right out of the business community straight into ministry.

Keep in mind that Jesus recruited his initial band of ministers out of the business arena. One advantage of this method is that by and large, they have a



The Holy Spirit is doing a new work with these new tribe leaders. They are experiencing a 21st century Pentecost.

better feel for the culture, allowing them to navigate it with ease.

Could it be that we've forgotten the art of interacting with our culture and that God is sending fresh workers into the field that know how to engage it in a more effective way than we've ever dreamed?

4. THEIR LEADERSHIP TRAINING STEMS FROM AVENUES OTHER THAN THE TRADITIONAL CHURCH AND SEMINARY.

It is important again for me to clarify that this is not a criticism against church training systems, Bible colleges or seminaries. I have been personally involved with them for over ten years.

I've found that new tribe leaders tend to learn from each other's leadership styles. They readily collaborate together in order to do their own conferences and training events. Much of their training is a carry over from the corporate arena.

If there is anything that rings true to this group, they have a common affinity that drives them to develop people. They also place a high emphasis on

one-on-one systems of learning that include mentoring, consulting and coaching.

Finally, it's worth noting that this group also has an uncanny way of eliminating many of the hoops that the traditional church requires leadership to jump through. This results in a fast track for processing already seasoned leaders into the church.

5. THEY HAVE AN AVERSION TO SPIRITUAL EXTREMISM, BUT ARE DEEPLY HUNGRY FOR SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND THE SUPERNATURAL.

For many in the new tribe leadership, the idea of biblical charismata (the Greek word used for spiritual manifestations of the Holy Spirit) is not a new concept, however, it is a new experience. Many of them are second and third generation charismatics or Pentecostals that for whatever reason, never quite understood spiritual manifestations of gifts and consequently it is fresh and new to them.

Another earmark of this group seems to be that they are on guard against the abuse of spiritual gifts and a have distaste for fanaticism. But for the most part, I have found them to be cautious—yet very open.

As a matter of fact, many seem to possess an unusual openness to the Holy Spirit and are easing into the flow of what the Spirit is doing today. God is working ever so gently with them as they navigate this newfound experience. I am witnessing the Holy Spirit doing a new work with these new tribe leaders and many feel as though they are experiencing a 21st century Pentecost.

A new tribe is emerging in the body of Christ. Do they still need those of us from the older tribe? Absolutely! However, a little reverse mentoring is also in order. It's time for us to learn from this generation of new leaders. □