

Encourage

Inspiration for IPHC Leaders

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We Have a 'Kingdom Responsibility' to Vote

Our kingdom is not of this world, but we must contend for righteousness when we go to the polls.



BY DOUG BEACHAM

DOUG BEACHAM is the presiding bishop of the IPHC. He has served in various roles in the church including Georgia Conference Superintendent, executive director of Church Education Ministries, and executive director of World Missions Ministries. You can follow Bishop Beacham on [Facebook](#) or Twitter [@DougBeacham](#).

We are citizens of two commonwealths: One is the earthly nation where we are citizens; the other an eternal kingdom that transcends time and space. The Bible tells us that God holds the nations “as a drop in a bucket” (Isaiah 40:15), and that government authorities “are appointed by God,” functioning as a “minister” of God (Romans 13:1,4).

The Bible also reminds us that there are points where these two commonwealths are in conflict. For example, government can be a “beast” when it has “a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies” (Revelation 13:5).

By the time you read this column, citizens of the United States will be a month from casting their vote for the next president of the United States and other governmental representatives. I remind you that the IPHC Council of Bishops sent a [public letter](#) to the Democratic and Republican party nominees expressing our hopes and concerns.

In light of that letter, and the larger conversations and debates surrounding this election, there are a few things I ask you to prayerfully consider as “citizens of two commonwealths.”

First, we have a privilege, right and responsibility to vote in this election. Besides the presidential election, there are congressional and state elections as well as referendums that require our active participation. If you have not registered, you can Google “voter registration” and it will take you to your state voter information. I encourage IPHC pastors to actively promote voter registration with your flock and encourage them to vote.

Second, besides the statements of candidates, be sure to read the platforms of at least the [Democratic](#) and [Republican](#) parties. I've heard people say that the platforms "don't really matter." Actually, that is incorrect. Party platforms reveal intentions as well as philosophies of governing.

A fully informed voter will take the few minutes needed to read these documents.

Third, while the IPHC does not, and should not, have a political litmus test for membership and leadership, there are certain [positions](#) we have taken through our General Conference that you should prayerfully consider when you vote:

WE ARE A PRO-LIFE CHURCH.

We are historically opposed to abortion on demand, and we believe in the God-given sanctity of all human life from conception to end of life.

WE STAND FOR TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE.

We believe that God established marriage between a man and a woman. We reject decisions and definitions contrary to what God has established.

WE PRAY AND WORK FOR RACIAL UNITY.

As a movement we have publicly repented of racism and seek to bring about justice and reconciliation according to God's Word.

Fourth, many are concerned about the future of religious liberties in the USA. The implications arising from court and government administrative decisions related to culturally accepted sexual practices,

and the rights of churches and church-related institutions who oppose those practices, are issues we are facing and will continue to face.

Fifth, in addition to these

issues, we face a large constellation of challenges that include: race, immigration, leadership character, national security, poverty, and economic policy. Regardless of the outcome of this particular election, the opportunities and tensions of those issues will remain.

As I reflect on these concerns, I have found myself drawn to the Apostle Paul's remarks in 1 Corinthians 5:9-13 (NKJV). I reflect on this, and current events in the USA and around the world, in light of our IPHC emphasis on holiness this year and on Christ's Kingdom in 2017.

The Apostle distinguished between the kingdom of God and earthly kingdoms. He recognized that people outside Christ's kingdom (unredeemed) live with values and lifestyles that do not reflect the holy character of God. But he also recognized that the redeemed are not expected to live isolated from such people. To live in that fashion is to live "out of the world" (5:10).

But followers of Jesus, people disciplined in the ways of the kingdom of God, are to live differently and hold one another accountable. Such accountability sounds harsh and judgmental to our ears: "not even to eat with such a person" who claims to be "a brother" (5:11).

It seems to me that this is the constant tension we face as we relate to the spirit of the world. A holy life is by nature a judgment upon a sinful life. Whether the sinner experiences that judgment as condemnation or as invitation depends on many factors. The body of Christ in the world should

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A place of hope. A people of promise.

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live in such a way that the ungodly find themselves reflecting and responding on what they encounter from and in us.

That means we must be willing to speak out against the foolishness of speech, practice, and policy we encounter. But it also means we must be willing to speak for that which lends itself to righteousness.

This is not an easy task as ideologies press themselves against Christ's Kingdom, and holiness is decried as judgmental. But we must decide, speak, and act with conviction from God's Word and holiness of heart and life. And, we must do so with humility and with hearts committed to reconciliation as we await the fullness of a Kingdom that will only appear when the King Himself appears.

So I encourage all of us to prayerfully consider the candidates and policies as we vote. I ask us to remain in a spirit of prayer and hope regardless who is elected. I ask us to remember that people, parties, and policies are part of the world that is passing away, and that we are people of a Kingdom that shall never pass away. ☐



Do You Have Enough FUEL FOR THE JOURNEY?

Many leaders today are burning out because they have not learned to refuel. Don't crash your plane!



BY GREG
TERRY

GREG TERRY is an international evangelist, worship leader and Bible teacher. Ordained in the IPHC, he currently ministers in 20 nations and throughout the United States speaking at conferences, leading worship and training leaders. Greg and his wife Holly live in Greenville, Pennsylvania with their three children.

On May 1, 1960, Francis Gary Powers, a U-2 spy plane pilot, took off from a military base in Pakistan to fly a reconnaissance mission 70,000 feet above the Soviet Union. Unbeknownst to the American defenses, the Soviet Union had developed a surface to air missile that could reach the high flying U-2 and Powers' plane was shot down.

Powers ejected from the crippled aircraft and parachuted to the earth below. He was immediately captured, convicted of espionage and sentenced to three years in prison and seven years of hard labor. He was released in a prisoner swap after serving only two years of his sentence.

Later, Powers became a helicopter pilot for KNBC News Channel 4 in Los Angeles. Powers lost his life in 1977 when his helicopter crashed, also killing his cameraman.

Why did he crash? How was it possible that an Air Force pilot, a master of his craft with such a distinguished and decorated career, could come to this unlikely end? The answer was simple: After surviving a successful missile attack on his plane, Soviet prison and thousands of other flights, Gary Powers simply ran out of gas.

This story of Gary Powers' life illustrates an important point that leaders must pay attention to. Do you have enough fuel for the journey? What drains you? What fuels you?

After taking some time and meditating on these questions and interviewing leaders, the first thing I learned was that continually being around "unhealthy people" drains leaders.

A good pastor naturally responds to the call to help unhealthy people. But though we are called to help, we cannot continually be around people who drain us if we are not counteracting that spiritual and emotional strain by being around people who inspire and fuel us. I challenge you to surround yourself with mentors, colleagues and friends who will not drain you but will inspire and fuel you.

The second thing I learned from ministers and leaders was that dealing with unkind critics drains them of their confidence in ministry. We all face times when we encounter people who have the "spiritual gift" of criticism. Over time, layer by layer, critical words take a toll on our spiritual, mental and even physical health.

It is important to remember that the critic did not call you to ministry. The critic is not

your judge. We are called by Christ, strengthened and equipped for ministry through the anointing of the Holy Spirit and the work of Christ at Calvary. Spend more time with encouraging friends than you spend listening to your detractors.

The final thing I discovered is that ministers and leaders often struggle with proper time management. It has been said, “If you are burning the candle at both ends then you are not as bright as you think you are.” It is important to have times of rest, time with our families and friends, and personal time with God in prayer and Bible study. If these priorities are not guarded our ministry work will suffer as well.

Luke 14:28–30 (NKJV) states it very well: “For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it—lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish?’” Make sure you have what you need to do the job!

You have a responsibility to fulfill your ministry, but your responsibilities to God and family cannot be set aside. Plan well, establish priorities and goals for each part of your life and allow the Holy Spirit to be your guide.



Francis Gary Powers died in a helicopter crash in 1977 because he ran out of fuel.

Now, let's turn our focus from a model of ministry that is draining—that pushes us to be a candidate for burnout—to a model of ministry that is life-giving. We need to follow a model of ministry that fuels us to be who God has called us to be. Here are some simple steps:

1. YOU MUST INVEST IN YOUR OWN PERSONAL GROWTH.

Luke 2:52 (NLT) states: “Jesus grew in wisdom, stature and favor with God and all people.” Jesus would often take time to get away from the ministry and have time with His Father. This investment of his time was vital to the success of His ministry.

You have limits and boundaries, both spiritually and physically. You are not Superman or Wonder Woman! There is no phone booth you can jump into, instantly transforming you into a superhero of ministry. Make time your ally and not your enemy. Invest in your relationships with God and your family and this will lead you to a balance in ministry and an effectiveness you never thought possible.

2. REMEMBER THE POWER OF WORSHIP.

Isaiah 40:31 (KJV) declares: “But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” This is a mandate from the Lord that all ministers and leaders must personally incorporate into their daily lives.

It is acceptable—even necessary—to wait. Patience is crucial in ministry. Allow yourself to personally rest in the timing and plan of God. Invest in relationships that will stand for a lifetime. Make time daily for the Lord, your spouse and your children. God, in His faithfulness and grace, will be our strength when we are weak and our wisdom when we are foolish.

3. SOAK IN GOD'S WORD.

I challenge you to unleash the power of the Word of God in your lives like never before. I have



“You have limits and boundaries, both spiritually and physically. You are not Superman or Wonder Woman!”

experienced occasions in my life when my priorities were out of order, my schedule was unbalanced or I was struggling with negative words that had been spoken to me.

During those times, I always found one thing that would bring healing and restoration to my soul—the Word of God. I can testify to you that at those times when my fuel was running low, an encounter with the Word of God brought hope and renewal to my soul that was not only refreshing but indescribable in its life changing power.

Ephesians 5:26 states that we are “cleansed by the washing of water with the word.” We also know that according to Psalm 23, the Lord is our Shepherd and He restores and refreshes our soul. It would be simple to write: take the time daily to be refreshed by the Word of God so that you do not run out of fuel. However, I believe so much in this principle that I would challenge you today to make the time. Make this refueling a daily priority.

Everything in the world runs on some type of fuel. Gary Powers, with all his expertise, crashed on that summer day in 1977 not because he made a technical piloting error but because he simply forgot to refuel the aircraft. You also need to make the time daily to fuel your physical, emotional and spiritual life so that not only will you not crash and burn—you will become the leader and minister God has called and ordained you to be. □

Embracing Your Times in the WILDERNESS

No one enjoys working in obscurity.
But God uses the lonely wilderness to
shape us into a leader He can use.



BY JOHN
CHASTEEN

JOHN CHASTEEN is an ordained IPHC minister who has been involved in leadership training for more than 30 years. He holds a Bachelor of Science, a master's degree in leadership, and a Doctor of Ministry in leadership development from Oral Roberts University. His life purpose and mandate is to teach, nurture, and coach 21st century leaders to discover and live out their life purpose. John currently serves as the director of Chaplain Services for a healthcare organization in Oklahoma City. You can read his blogs at heyccoachjohn.com.

It was a brisk autumn day as Tim and I walked into the restaurant for lunch and our weekly mentoring appointment. Tim was on the staff at a large church and by all outward appearance seemed to be doing well. He was a sharp young man who had moved to the area from out east to become part of a big pastoral staff. He and I were doing a book study centered on the topic of leadership.

As we sat down together, somehow discussing the book didn't seem to be the way we needed to go with our time. So I turned to Tim and said, "Where do you think we need to go with our time today?" He then proceeded to share his struggle.

I'll never forget the forlorn look on his face as Tim made a statement that I have heard many times over my coaching/mentoring career. "I'm so discouraged," he said. "Sometimes I wonder if anyone even knows I am here?" As he continued, he poured out his deep feelings of obscurity and how it seemed to be eating him alive.

He is not alone in his struggle. One of the biggest fears that many church leaders face today is what I call "laboring in obscurity." The very thought strikes agony in the strongest of leaders. The notion that God might set them aside for a season is unthinkable.

On the flip side, the irony of obscurity is that it is very often one of the methods that God uses to prepare his choicest servants. Dr. Bobby Clinton calls it "isolation." These times can refer to an actual time when God takes you aside for learning, or it can also be psychological isolation through which God shapes His man or woman.

So we find this tension that exists between the agony and the irony of obscurity.

The Agony—No period of estrangement from our calling and destiny is pleasant. It doesn't fit into a leader's drive to accomplish. Believe me. The typical response from the average clergy is, "I really don't have time for this," or "Things are going so well, why now?"

I have discovered that often when a leader is going through his or her time of obscurity it can feel like it is over for them. Discouragement, disillusionment and fear of the unknown leave the leader with the haunting trepidation that the end of their ministry could be near. Very seldom is that the case.

Furthermore, this mindset has produced an unusual aversion toward obscurity in today's church leadership. The result is typically an impoverished leader. Part of the disdain is tied to our culture. Success demands visibility, hence it is imperative for accomplishment; at least that's what our society teaches us.

Also our obsession with Facebook, Twitter and social media has produced an unusual desire to be known and seen. (This is not an anti-social media plug. I use social media to the max). There are many other cultural norms that run counter to the biblical experience of obscurity—such as our preoccupation with celebrities. For these reasons, church leadership must take another look at how God uses obscurity with his leaders.

Obscurity and agony go hand in hand. It's often painful and frustrating. However, it yields great dividends to those who endure.

The Irony—As odd as it sounds, God does some of his deepest shaping in our lives during times of obscurity. For that reason, it is always important that we learn how to embrace it at all costs.

Moses set the example for leadership when he left Egypt and soon found himself in Midian, an obscure place (Exodus 2:16–21). There was nothing comfortable about Midian. As Chuck Swindoll states: "Moses seems to embrace the gift of the desert when in Exodus 2: 16–21 the scripture states, '...and Moses was willing to dwell with the man.'"

Think with me of other biblical leaders that exemplify this principle. Men such as Joseph, who spent three years in prison; Daniel, who was about two decades out of the king's service during the reign of Belshazzar; Moses, who spent forty years on backside of desert; David's fourteen years of fleeing from Saul; Elijah's time at the brook Cherith; and Paul, who spent fifteen years in Arabia and three years in prison.

Jack Hayford shares his story about God's dealing with him years ago while serving as interim pastor at Church on the Way. His greatest fear was that staying at a church that might keep him in obscurity. It wasn't until he was willing to serve God as an unknown pastor that God released the move of God that transitioned the church, and Pastor Jack, into a place of renowned leadership in the charismatic movement.

God often uses times of obscurity to bring adjustment and change. Virtually all leaders used by God have been shaped at one time or another through the gift of the desert place. You can never slay the giants until you've shepherded the sheep in the lonely place. Irony and obscurity are inseparable.

Remember that as you pass through obscurity it is important to keep a few things in mind. Here is a short list for starters:

- Obscurity is always a season.
- Never accept your desert exile as the final chapter in your life or ministry. As a matter of fact, most of the time it is just the opposite.
- Something new is transpiring, renewal is coming, and God is at work getting his man or woman ready. God never releases the ministry without preparing the man or woman.

- Obscurity always involves a shift in your paradigms.
- God wants to change many of our lenses that keep us from seeing and knowing Him. This is done through what I call "spiritual paradigm shifts."
- Obscurity has no shortcuts
- Time is no object with God. He demands quality at all costs. Chafing under the process only leads to a dead end
- The Prince of Egypt was changed to the Shepherd of Midian, and eventually he became Moses the Deliverer.
- Obscurity is designed to create intimacy with God.
- God grooms and shapes his leaders through intimacy. Obscurity drives you to God. It tends to produce fervency and at times desperation.
- You will be driven to intimacy with God by one of two ways; 1) through your own intentionality, 2) through your personal desperation. You choose.
- Obscurity always gives way to recognition.
- God's work in us is never in vain. He's taking us someplace. The season of obscurity is always for the purpose of preparation and promotion.

I love the statement of Louie Zamperini in the movie *Unbroken*: "If you can take it, you can make it."

In conclusion, let's recap with the story I started with. "I'm so discouraged," Tim said. "I sometimes wonder if anyone even knows I am here?" Yes, even people on staff in a mega-church can feel the agony and irony of obscurity. To Tim's credit, he embraced what God was doing and received a life changing experience in the end.

Maybe it's time we embrace once again this timeless biblical principle of growth and let God do His work in us. ☐

"Never accept your desert exile as the final chapter in your life or ministry. As a matter of fact, most of the time it is just the opposite."



Three **VITAL** RELATIONSHIPS Every Leader Needs

Ministry leaders cannot live in isolation. God wants to bring special people into your life.



BY J. LEE GRADY

J. LEE GRADY is an ordained IPHC minister who directs The Mordecai Project, an international outreach focused on confronting gender-based violence. For 18 years he served as an editor with Charisma magazine, and he is the author of several books including the newly released *Set My Heart on Fire*, a Bible study on the Holy Spirit. He and his wife, Deborah, live in LaGrange, Georgia. You can follow Lee on Twitter [@LeeGrady](#).

When Jesus began His ministry, He did not rent a coliseum for an evangelistic campaign, start a mailing list, or put billboards all over Jerusalem announcing His healing ministry. No, the first thing He did was assemble a group of close followers.

He called them His friends.

Mark 3:14 says Jesus appointed the Twelve “so that they would be with Him and that He could send them out to preach.” Notice that His relationship with them was not just about the work of ministry. He was not just calling followers to perform a task. He was not a foreman employing hired hands. He wanted their fellowship first—and then he would let them preach out of what they learned from Him.

Jesus is all about relationships. And He specifically told His disciples that He didn’t want this relationship to be performance based. He said: “No longer do I call you slaves ... but I have called you friends, for all things I have heard from My Father I have made known to you” (John 15:15).

In many parts of the church we’ve forgotten about the essential need for fellowship and tried to build the church without it. We developed a sterile church model that is event-driven and celebrity-focused rather than genuinely relational. To make matters worse, many leaders are starved for healthy relationships, but they don’t feel the freedom to admit their need in a church that is obsessed with goal-setting and number-crunching.

We build theater-style buildings where crowds listen to one guy talk. The crowds are quickly whisked out of the sanctuary to make room for the next group. Many of these people never process with anyone else what they learned, never join a small group and never receive any form of one-on-one discipleship.

Because we lack relationships today, we have tried to fill the void with technology. We think if we can create a wow factor with cool video clips, 3-D sermons and edgy worship bands, the crowds will scream for more. I don't think so. Trendy can quickly become shallow.

I've had enough of this sterile religion. I've learned that ministry is not about getting big crowds, filling seats, tabulating response cards or eliciting raucous applause. It's not about running on the church-growth treadmill. Religion that focuses on externals cannot produce life. If our faith does not flow out of relationship with God, and result in deep relationships with others, then it is a poor imitation of New Testament Christianity.

Do you need to go deeper in your relationships? I tell Christians all over the world that they need three kinds of relationships in their lives, apart from family relationships:

1. "Pauls" are spiritual fathers and mothers you trust.

All of us need older, wiser Christians who can guide us, pray for us and offer counsel. My mentors have encouraged me when I wanted to quit, and propelled me forward when I lost sight of God's promises. In the journey of faith, you do not have to feel your way in the dark. God gave Ruth a Naomi, Joshua a Moses and Esther a Mordecai. You can ask the Lord for a mentor to help guide and coach you.

2. "Barnabases" are spiritual peers who are close, bosom friends. I meet so many pastors today who share that they have no close friends.

My question is always: "How are you surviving ministry?" I do not believe God ever meant for us to do ministry in isolation. We need friends to support us—and this is especially true of ministry leaders!

"If our faith does not flow out of relationship with God, and result in deep relationships with others, then it is a poor imitation of New Testament Christianity."

A Barnabas knows everything about you, yet he loves you anyway. He is also willing to correct you, bluntly if necessary! A Barnabas friend provides accountability in areas of personal temptation. He offers a listening ear and a shoulder to cry on. And he will stay up all night praying for you when you face a crisis.

Everybody should know the benefit of Proverbs 18:24: "There is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." But you cannot find faithful friends without seeking to be one first. Don't wait for your Barnabas to come to you—go and find him.

This was certainly modeled for us by David and Jonathan in the Bible. There were times in David's life when he had to encourage himself, but often Jonathan was God's instrument.

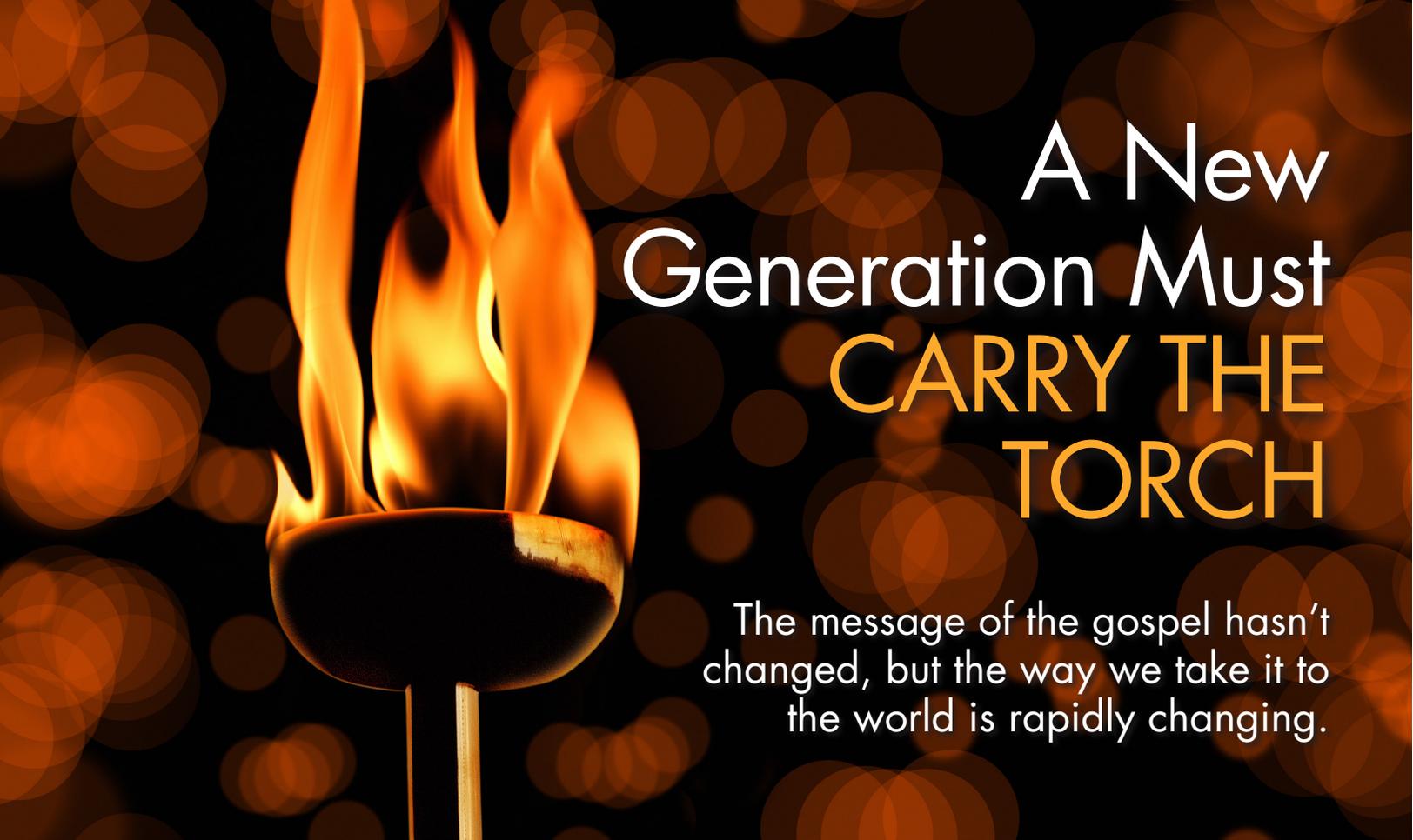
When David was fleeing from Saul in the wilderness, Jonathan traveled to Horesh to cheer up his friend (1 Sam. 23:16). This is what true friends are for! If you allow the Holy Spirit to speak life and hope through you, your words can propel your friends into their destiny.

3. "Timothys" are the younger Christians you are helping to grow. Jesus never told us to assemble crowds, but He did command us to make disciples.

Relational discipleship takes a lot of time and energy, but investing your life in others is one of the most fulfilling experiences in life. Once you have poured your life into another brother or sister and watched them mature in Christ, you will never settle for superficial religion again.

Like Paul, we must go out and find our Timothys. We must invest in them personally. It's not about preaching to them; they want a relationship with us that is genuine. They want spiritual moms and dads who are approachable, accepting, affirming and empowering. If we don't mentor them now, there won't be anyone running alongside us when it's time to pass our baton.

The Christian life is a vibrant, love relationship with God—but it doesn't end there. That love spills over into your relationships. I pray you will open your heart and invest in the people around you. □



A New Generation Must CARRY THE TORCH

The message of the gospel hasn't changed, but the way we take it to the world is rapidly changing.



BY MATT
BENNETT

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Our mandate to preach the gospel is spelled out clearly in the Great Commission of our Lord, who said: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:18-20, ESV).

This call to carry the good news of salvation has been passed down through every generation like a torch in the darkness. Unique challenges have always faced every generation of Christ-followers, whether it was Roman idolatry, the barbarians of northern Europe or the discovery of the New World. Each generation derived relevant solutions to carry the gospel forward.

Our generation is no different. The church of the 21st century faces seemingly insurmountable obstacles—from the increasing cost of missions, to the rapidly growing economic disparity between the extreme poor and the rich of our world, to the threat of radical Islam. However, our generation will not be defined by the challenges, but how we combat these "giants of our time"—and by our ability to implement solutions to overcome!

In order to equip the church with the proper tools to reach a 21st century world and pass the torch to the next generation, we must be reminded of these five truths:

1. THE WESTERN CHURCH IS NO LONGER DOMINANT.

Over much of the past 150 years, the gospel has been carried from a prosperous Western church to the impoverished pagan masses. This era was characterized by unprecedented Christian growth, but also by paternalism created by the colonial era with which it coexisted.

This paternalism brought resources and materials to build churches and establish hospitals and orphanages. But it also created an unhealthy

dependency and a structure of manipulation and control. Consequently, Western missionaries supplied funds, made decisions and controlled evangelism efforts.

That day of Western control has passed. Not only does the Western church no longer possess the ability and appetite to fund the Great Commission, but it also lacks the missional fervor and fortitude to inspire the coming generation.

But not all is lost. The strength of the church now lies within the formerly impoverished masses that paternalism once controlled. The same gospel that redeems the lost from death in sin to victorious life is also lifting the global church from its economic despair to a place of blessing.

As a result, old structures of colonial paternalism are now being replaced with structures of partnership. As we train, resource and empower the global church, we assist in the redemptive lift of the gospel. Only then will it be prepared and resourced to propagate the message of salvation to the ends of the earth as well as pass the missional torch to next generation.

IPHC missionaries Kevin and Summer Sneed, Jamie and Jessica Dunning and Michael and Tammy McRae are doing just that in Kenya. By training leaders; building greenhouses; establishing fish, rabbit and poultry farms; and digging wells to provide water for drinking and irrigation, the IPHC in East Africa is being empowered to break dependency and take responsibility for building the church locally, regionally and even globally.

2. MISSIONS IS NOT A PROFESSION BUT A CALL TO THE WHOLE BODY OF CHRIST!

It has been said that some are called to go and some are called to send. The truth is that the entire church has been called to make disciples! As we work collaboratively,

“The same gospel that redeems the lost from death in sin to victorious life is also lifting the global church from its economic despair to a place of blessing.”

we “go” with synergy! The greatest resource of the church is us, the body of Christ!

This past year I had the privilege of traveling with Owen Thomason, an agricultural specialist. While in East Africa he conducted an agricultural seminar on soil management, grazing practices, aquaculture (fish farming), poultry farming and much more. Owen visited various projects and gave invaluable advice to our leaders as they work to create wealth and alleviate poverty.

This man is one example of a leader in the marketplace who is engaged in missions work. You do not have to be a full-time minister to take the gospel to nations!

3. GOD IS CALLING A NEW GENERATION OF NON-PROFESSIONAL MISSIONARIES.

This generation is not typified by age or nationality but by passion and commitment to completing the task. These are skilled and educated individuals willing to not only give up their profession for missions but to give their profession to missions.

The agricultural seminar at the East Africa Bible College drew a different group from the community and opened conversations and relationships that did not previously exist. The participants were not merely church leaders by profession but Christian farmers, social workers, teachers and agricultural novices who understood the important role they play in building a successful missional church.

4. TRAINING IN MISSIONS IS ESSENTIAL.

Missionaries today need instruction in cultural awareness, intercultural communication, and how to apply our knowledge and success in a different context. Missionaries must be able to identify available resources and work with local people to take ownership of their problems. Only then will real, sustainable solutions be created!

5. WE NEED RENEWED PASSION TO REACH THE LOST.

If Christ’s love for us compelled Him to the cross, then Christ’s love in us should compel us to sacrificially serve those that have never heard. The apostle Paul prayed: “And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another” (1 Thessalonians 3:12, NKJV). Strategies and methods may change, but one thing stays the same: We must be filled with God’s love in order to carry out this vital work of world evangelism.

If we are called to change a world that despises Christianity, we must radiate God’s holiness and be compelled with Christ’s unreserved love. We must be people running hard after Him. We must not only proclaim the good news but also live the good news!

Let us follow the countless generations that have gone before us and respond to the call to proclaim Jesus Christ to our generation. And in the midst of a dark and troubled world, let us not flee from the darkness but rather let us be a light exposing the evils of our time. Let us be a torch in the darkness. ☐