

Encourage

Inspiration for IPHC Leaders

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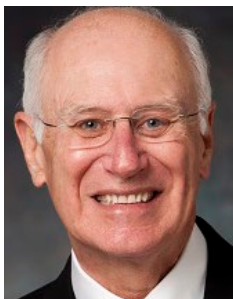
BY SAMSON AHMED





Proclaiming the Kingdom In a World of **FAKE NEWS**

We must preach the absolute truth of Jesus
Christ in a world of “alternative facts.”



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](#).

In this day of directional apps such as Waze and Google Maps, we have become accustomed to “alternate” routes and “recalculating.” To use an app that helps you avoid traffic snarls is indeed a blessing.

But we are now full speed ahead in a world that has no shame or embarrassment, nor offers any apology for its alternative facts and truths.

We are forced by court decrees to accept same-sex marriage as an alternative. Economically powerful interest groups punish us for not accepting gender-alternative bathrooms. Media news is so polluted that fake news and real news are hardly distinguishable. Each serves ideological biases.

Politicians from every political party, camp and spectrum intentionally quote one another out of context, and they intentionally slice and paste political commercials designed to do everything but tell the truth.

Even Christians find it difficult to discern between truth, fiction and lies as the seemingly limitless stream of propaganda floods our social media. In January, Ed Stetzer, who will be speaking at the IPHC

General Conference in July, warned evangelical Christians about our lack of discernment in this matter (go to <http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2017/january/facts-are-our-friends.html>). Our lack of discernment reflects negatively on the efficacy of our witness for Christ.

Our common social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter feed our insatiable hunger for juicy “news.” I can’t tell you how many times I’ve checked something and found out the story was either false or taken out of context. Stetzer is correct. We need to be careful what we post on social media or quote in our sermons.

Does it sound like I’m pretty fed up with this stuff? Yes. I. Am. Sometimes I feel like the Psalmist: “All men are liars.” But then I remember the psalmist prefaced his threatening cynicism with this remark: “I said in my haste” (Psalm 116:11, NKJV).

When I get over my temporary “haste,” I remember that alternative facts and truths have been with us a long time. Who does not remember the episode involving Jesus and Rome’s governor, Pilate. Jesus said to the representative of the greatest Empire of the time: “For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.” And we all remember Pilate’s reply: “What is truth?” (John 18:37-38).

But the problem goes farther back than 2,000 years ago in Jerusalem. It goes back to the origins of humankind in a garden. There the Tempter began with the statement that reflects the

origin of all our human agony: “Has God indeed said ... ?” with which the Tempter followed with an alternative “truth.” This lie led to our lost condition (see Genesis 3:1,4,5).

I mention all of this because it relates to the reality of the kingdom of God. It is well known in IPHC circles that we are focusing this year on our fourth core value: “We Prayerfully Value Christ’s Kingdom.” The phrases kingdom of God, kingdom of heaven, and Christ’s kingdom are synonyms of the same reality.

That reality began in the Garden of Eden where the kingdom

of God was first demonstrated on this planet. It was the place where God’s reign was acknowledged, affirmed and actively obeyed by Adam and Eve.

The goodness of God and the truth of God were at stake in the temptation. But Satan convinced our first parents that God is not really good; that God’s Torah (Law) is oppressive and against “our nature;” that truth does not reside

in God’s Word but in an alternative word.

Our first parents rejected the blessings and life promised in the kingdom of God. They chose instead an alternative promise they did not comprehend. They were blinded by deception and did not recognize that the kingdom of God had a gate through which one would leave this blessed place of God’s presence (Genesis 3:23, 24). They had chosen an alternative truth, and as painful as their experience was, there was no way for them to re-enter that particular place.

The good news is that God does not “recalculate” truth. There was never a “plan B” of redemption.

“In these crazy times in which we live, let us recommit ourselves to God’s truth, God’s love and God’s mercy.”

Encourage

A place of hope. A people of promise.

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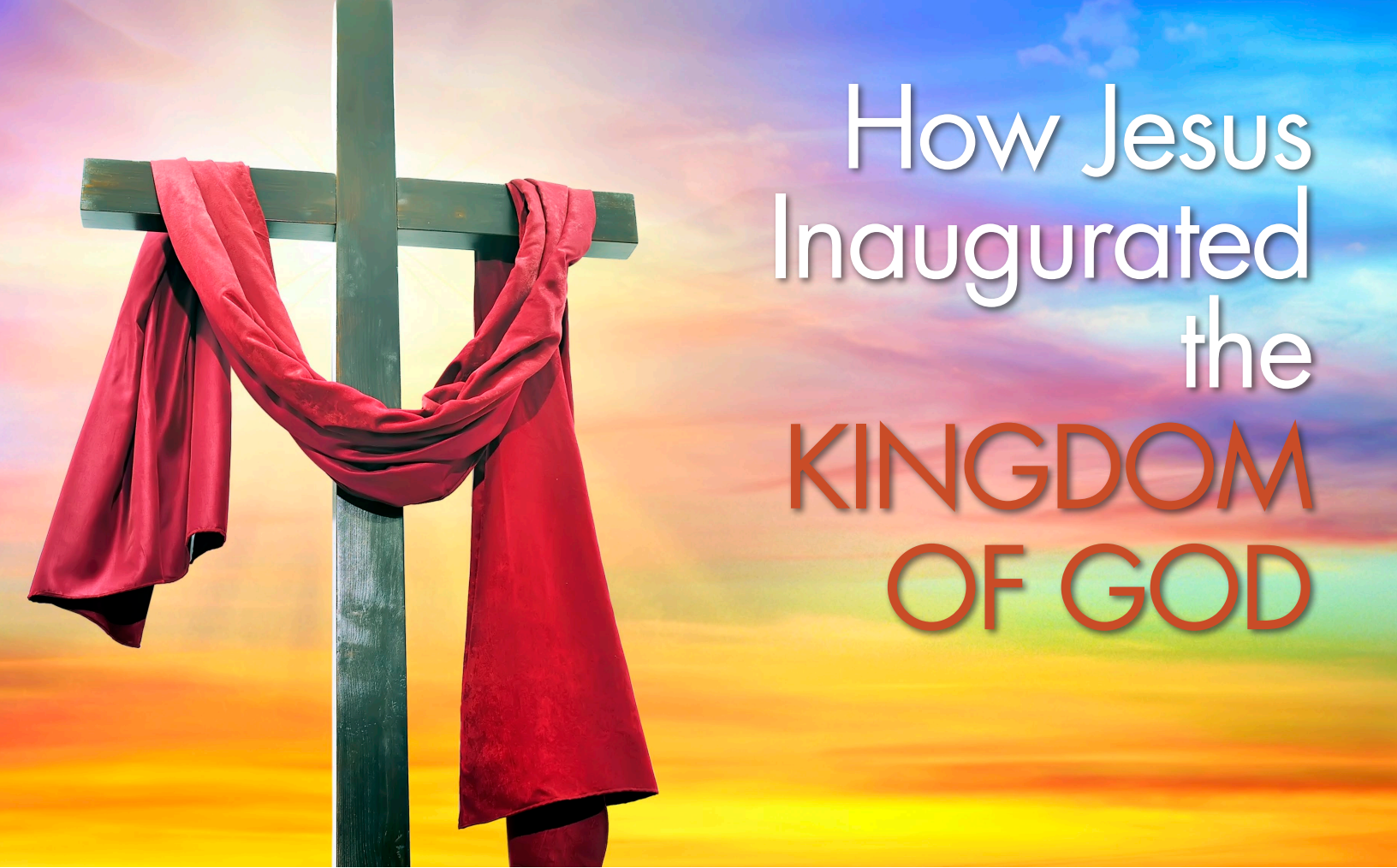
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Jesus, the eternal Son of God, was from the foundation of the world the “slain Lamb” of God (Revelation 13:8).

The gospel message that we preach, share and live out is an invitation to the lost to “recalculate” the way they are going. We preach because no one can enter the kingdom of God unless one is “born again;” that is, born from the truth that is above the deceitful “alternative truth” of our world (St. John 3:3,5,7).

That same gospel message comes to us as followers of Jesus and calls us to “recalculate” how we faithfully obey Jesus in our generation. It is through such “recalculation” of our directions, our motives and our purposes that we again discover how to live in the grace, presence and power of the Holy Spirit as citizens of Christ’s kingdom even while we live in the kingdom of this world.

In these crazy times in which we live, let us recommit ourselves to God’s truth, God’s love and God’s mercy. Let us walk as citizens of God’s kingdom amidst the nations and kingdoms where we live and serve. ■



How Jesus Inaugurated the KINGDOM OF GOD



BY RYAN
JACKSON

DR. RYAN JACKSON holds a Bachelors of Religion from Emmanuel College, a Masters of Divinity from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and both a Masters of Philosophy and a Ph.D. from Cambridge University. Throughout these academic pursuits, he has been actively involved in serving the church locally and globally. He currently serves senior pastor of The Capital Church near Raleigh, North Carolina. He lives with his wife, Emily, and their three daughters.

Jesus was far ahead of His time. Long before leadership gurus taught leaders to make clear mission statements, Jesus began His public ministry with a crystal clear declaration.

In a synagogue in the small town of Nazareth when Jews of the first century gathered for their weekly Bible study, Jesus took the revered scroll containing the prophecies of Isaiah and read: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor (Luke 4:18–19 ESV).”

What happened next would change the world. Jesus followed up with a shocking announcement: “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing (Luke 4:21).” If the kingdom of God had an inaugural address, this was it!

In the context of the Isaiah prophecies that Jesus read, “good news” had to do with restoration and deliverance (Isaiah 40:9; 41:27; 52:7; 60:6; 61:1). Isaiah spoke a message of consolation with a promise that God would deliver his people from foreign oppression and restore them to the place He had promised them. Jerusalem would be exalted, and God would rule over Israel and over the entire world.

These salvation promises of God come to climax in a way that renews creation itself—a new heaven and new earth (Isaiah 65:17). If there is any doubt about the connection between the good news and the kingdom, Jesus makes it explicit later in the same chapter where He describes His passion to “...preach the good news of the kingdom of God (Luke 4:43).”

Isaiah often refers to Jerusalem or Zion as another way of expressing the kingdom of God—with a new re-made and restored Jerusalem. The new creation would be the time when God’s rule would reverse the curse that affected the original creation.

So, when Jesus tapped into Isaiah's rich treasury for His inaugural address, He was making it clear that the kingdom of God had finally arrived and that it began with Him. Adam had failed in the Garden of Eden to establish God's righteous reign on earth, but Jesus was the new Adam (Romans 5:14, 17-18; 1 Corinthians 15:22).

As the first man of God's new creation, Jesus was the one through whom God would accomplish His original purposes of reflecting His glory in the world He had created. Adam failed to represent God's character and righteous rule over creation, but Jesus would perfectly reflect the character of the Father. He would be the perfect image bearer of God (Hebrews 1:3).

Jesus' mission on earth was the same mission that God had from the beginning of creation. The phrase "kingdom of God" is one of the ways the New Testament refers to this reality.

We know that this was extremely important to Jesus as He spoke frequently about the kingdom of God. It is highlighted in the earliest recorded statements we have about His ministry (Mark 1:15). It is the theological core of His teaching (Mark 4; Matthew 13); and it is the subject Jesus returns to in His post-resurrection appearances to His disciples (Acts 1:3). However, there are other ways the Gospel writers refer to this same truth. Two examples will demonstrate this point.

First, the gospel of Matthew frequently uses the phrase "kingdom of heaven." Matthew uses the phrase "kingdom of God" only five times, but He uses the phrase "kingdom of heaven" thirty-two times.

Is Matthew's Gospel less interested in telling us about the kingdom of God and more interested in teaching about another reality called the kingdom of heaven? No. As we look closer, we can see that Matthew simply prefers the expression "kingdom of heaven," probably because he is writing to a Jewish audience. It is used synonymously with "kingdom of God."

In Matthew 19, Jesus even uses the

two phrases together in reference to the same thing. Turning attention to His disciples after the rich young ruler walked away in despondency, Jesus said, "Only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 19:23 ESV)."

Then, Jesus immediately follows that verse with, "Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God." (Matthew 19:24). This is clearly a parallel statement, and it lets us know with certainty that Jesus thought of these two expressions as having the same meaning.

Second, the gospel of John only uses the phrase "kingdom of God" twice. Does that mean that John was not interested in what appears to be so important to Jesus? Absolutely not! It simply means that John speaks about that issue in another way. John uses the concept of eternal life to speak about the same reality from another perspective.

Life is a major theme in the gospel of John. It communicates the intense Jewish hope that the cursed creation will be restored. Darkness will be invaded by light, and death will be demolished with the power of life.

The connection between life and the kingdom of God is clear in Jesus' interaction with Nicodemus in John 3. Nicodemus, the learned teacher and prominent leader of Israel, was having a difficult time getting his head around how Jesus could tell anyone to be "born again." Jesus explained, "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God (John 3:5)." Possessing the life granted by the Spirit is the prerequisite for being part of God's salvific plan.

These examples demonstrate that there are various ways of speaking about the same reality

in the New Testament. According to Jesus, that reality had already begun.

Jesus said the kingdom of God is "within you" (Luke 17:21, KJV). This has led to the understanding that the kingdom of God is only in the hearts of people. While that is true in some ways, that's not what Jesus meant when He said this. He was talking to Pharisees!

He certainly did not mean that the kingdom of God was in the hearts of people He would call vipers and sons of hell (Matthew 23:15, 33). This is why virtually all modern translations of Luke 17:21 render the word as "among you" or

"in your midst." What Jesus meant was that the kingdom of God had begun to arrive. It was present not because it was in their hearts, but because He was present among them.

The kingdom was inaugurated

because the king was on the scene. Throughout His ministry, He began to set things right that had gone horribly wrong with creation. Every blind eye He gave sight, every leper He cleansed, every lame person He restored was a microcosmic reversal of the curse.

It was an invasion of the light of the new creation into the present. It was a demonstration of what the righteous rule and reign of God is supposed to look like. His death marked the defeat of every rule and power and authority that opposed Him, and His resurrection inaugurated the work of new creation that will one day expand to fill the entire cosmos.

Jesus inaugurated the kingdom at His first coming and He will consummate its reality when He comes again. In next month's article, we will explore how the church exists in this period between the inauguration and consummation of the kingdom. □

"Jesus' mission on earth was the same mission that God had from the beginning of creation."



FIVE WAYS the Church Can Influence Millennials

If you want to reach the younger generation effectively, you must be willing to listen to them.



BY SAMSON
AHMED

SAMSON AHMED is Men's Ministry Director at Refuge @ FPHC in Conway, South Carolina. His passion is to raise up strong men of God who are committed to evangelism and outreach. Samson and his wife are business owners and live in Myrtle Beach, S.C., with their two young daughters.

As a Millennial I have noticed that people are cynical about my generation. I believe this can be attributed to a lack of understanding and a hint of pre-judging us as a whole. Even though Millennials are faced with this, I have faith that our generation is poised to transform the culture of our church and the world for the better.

For many churches and leaders, however, Millennials can present a challenge or somewhat of a riddle. I believe the key is finding out what our interests are, and truly understanding our passions and viewpoints in regards to church and life in general. I have noticed many churches prospering with Millennials heavily involved. This has led me to do some investigation into what those churches are doing and how other churches can influence or be influenced by Millennials.

So what exactly differentiates a church culture that attracts Millennials from one that repels them? There are various dynamics, but I want to highlight what I believe are the five most important. If your church wonders why reaching or understanding the next generation is difficult, these following points might shed some light on the struggle.

1. A commitment to grow.

Former College Football Hall of Fame coach Lou Holtz once said: "In this world you're either growing or you're dying, so get in motion and grow." If you take a poll of churches in your area, you will see that the churches that are growing are the ones that focus on the next generation. Pouring into the next generation and building up leaders for the kingdom of God is essential to the vitality of your church.

2. Communicating vision.

A church that has a clear and compelling vision is another essential feature in captivating the hearts of Millennials. In Proverbs 29:18 (KJV) we learn: "Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he."

Millennials want something that we can buy into, something that is real and something that is challenging. We will refuse to invest in a church that does not challenge the status quo and dream big. After all, we know just how powerful our God is and that He can do miraculous things through normal people.

A church that is intentional about reaching others for Christ will reach more than those who are not. In order for churches to reach the next generation, they must be intentional in creating a clear and compelling vision.

3. Invite involvement.

Churches that provide opportunities to get involved will attract and influence the younger generation in a significant way. Millennials not only look for potential opportunities to get involved themselves, but also for their children. In order for a church to reach a generation that cares about their children, the church must focus on providing a strong children's ministry.

Churches must be willing to offer Millennials opportunities to serve and to lead. All too often in today's society, churches make Millennials "wait their turn." If churches and leaders intentionally took the time out to understand our generation, they would find out that we very hands on and eager for the opportunity to serve the kingdom of God. Churches and leaders can better involve millennials by entrusting us to lead in some form of ministry in the church.

4. Outreach Focus.

Another factor is the importance of outreach. Contrary to popular belief, our generation values helping to make our community and the lives of our neighbors better. Millennials want to partner with a church or organization that prioritizes ministering and witnessing to those outside the church walls.

We seek out churches that engage with the outside

"Millennials aren't searching for a perfect church. We are searching for an authentic church that provides an atmosphere for us to grow in Christ and get involved."

community because that proves that they care about all people rather than just "church people." Getting involved in the community is essential in the lives of Millennials because it keeps us focused and grounded. For those reasons, we want to smash the walls of complacency in the church and go out and make a difference in our community.

5. Teach the Bible.

Finally, the most important dynamic of all is a church that preaches from the Bible. This may seem like common sense, but I have noticed this foundational principle become watered down in order to grow the church. Every generation needs to hear the gospel and be taught the Scriptures.

Many of us have grown up in church, but still haven't developed that strong biblical foundation. In this day and age, we need more churches to preach and spread the true gospel of Jesus Christ rather than a watered-down, feel-good version. At the end of the day, we aren't going to be judged by the amount of people in our church, but rather on our holy living and by positively impacting the kingdom of God.

In summation, Millennials aren't searching for a perfect church. We are searching for an authentic church that provides an atmosphere for us to grow in Christ and get involved. We are seeking out a God-fearing congregation that has a strong vision and a servant spirit. In a society that is so superficial and fake today, we just want to be a part of something real and meaningful.

Church growth expert Ed Stetzer plainly says: "The harvest seems at least willing to listen while the workers don't seem as willing to talk." Millennials are often misunderstood, but churches should be embracing Millennials rather than excluding them. I challenge leaders today to evaluate any prejudice about Millennials and to reach out to this generation with God's truth and love so they are empowered to extend the kingdom in our world today. □



How One Generation Can **ENCOURAGE** the Next



BY WENDY
YAPP

WENDY YAPP is a member of the IPHC's national board in Australia. She leads several ministries relating to unity across denominations, cultures and generations. She loves coaching and mentoring young people and leads the Commonwealth Prayer Initiative and Advancing Women in Leadership. Wendy wrote *Desert to Destiny*, a book about empowering women for leadership and service. She and her husband, Kai, live in Perth, Australia.

When it comes to inspiring the next generation, it can be good to take some time to think of how others have inspired or impacted our own lives. Sometimes that impact has been directly through people. In other cases it has been more indirectly through our favourite Bible stories or the lives of believers we don't know personally.

I was raised in a beautiful part of Scotland in a small village that had a lively church that reached village kids and shared the gospel with them. We had all sorts of fun in that village church: camps, sleepovers, harvest thanksgivings and Christmas celebrations.

Christmas Eve was especially delightful because we would venture into the cold, dark night and sing carols around the village. We visited folks who were ill, lonely or bereaved that year, and others such as our local doctor, headmaster or retired minister.

One Christmas Eve was particularly pretty and quite cold. I was around twelve years old. I had gone out unprepared with no gloves to protect my hands from the frigid temperatures.

My high school English teacher, Jean, noticed I wasn't wearing gloves and gave me her furry mittens to wear. When I slipped my hands in, I noticed how warm they were from her own hands. It was a small act of kindness, but it warmed my heart as well as my hands. I was more than willing then to attend Bible studies in her home. Within

months she prayed with me to accept Christ.

My parents owned a seaside holiday cottage in another part of Scotland, and we went there every chance we had. My parents weren't Christians then, and they weren't too impressed with me attending church. The cottage was miles from the nearest church so I used to conduct my own services on a big rock overlooking the sea.

One day, I asked the Lord to send me a believer I could talk with. Within a short time, a couple of Christian hikers with backpacks walked past the cottage and we invited them in for a cup of tea. As they left, they passed me some books, including *God's Smuggler*. It was the first Christian book I ever read.

It was another small act of kindness by strangers to a young teen, but it began a journey for me. I began reading about missionaries, old saints and church history. I felt strongly connected to those who had lived courageous, vibrant, faith-filled lives.

The Scriptures tell us: "Let each generation tell its children of your mighty acts; let them proclaim your power." (Psalm 145:4 NLT). When I think of this verse, I often remember those gloves and books and what God did through those older believers.

There are three stories in the Bible that I love to think are strongly linked. One is the account of the five daughters of Zelophehad. This story is so important that the girls' names are mentioned five times in the Bible. (Numbers 26:33; 27:1–8; 36; Joshua 17:3–6; 1 Chronicles 7:15)

Zelophehad had died leaving only daughters. It seemed his sizeable inheritance was about to be lost. The story is set very near to the end of the 40 years in the desert; Moses was gathering the leaders of the tribes and families to give them their portion of the land. It was not an event you wanted to go to uninvited, but the sisters decided to break with cultural and religious norms and make their appeal.

They said to Moses: "Give us our inheritance!" And God said they were right in their appeal. Finally, in the desert, there was a bold new generation ready to take risks! So the girls got what they asked for and they became the most eligible young women around.

When I learned about these five sisters, I kept wondering how they knew they were on firm ground with their request. After all, it seemed most folks who issued challenges in the desert ended up diseased or dead! What spurred them on?

I have often preached about the courage of Zelophehad's girls and how we need both men and women on board to shift the nations. But I kept wondering: Was there a legal precedent? Who inspired them?

A few years later, I found a family story tucked away in one of those little read lists in Chronicles, in fact in the same chapter where the girls were mentioned. "His daughter was Sheerah, who built both Lower and Upper Beth-horon, and Uzzensheerah," (1 Chronicles 7:24).

Sheerah was Ephraim's daughter, Joseph's granddaughter and she would have been born in Goshen, Egypt into a family of shepherds. When she got to Israel she built not only one, but three cities. Sheerah was a real forerunner!

Building cities isn't easy. You need land. You need a team. You need to build fortified walls. You need courage, determination, wisdom and strategic leadership.

The five daughters of Zelophehad would certainly have known about this woman who was related to them through Joseph.

Can you imagine the sisters in their tent the night before their great appeal?

"Can we do this thing? What if we get rejected?" "What if they say we

aren't allowed?" "Will we be punished and perish?"

"But Sheerah.... she got land ... she built houses ... she built *cities*!"

Sheerah's voice was booming down through the generations, "Build girls! Build!"

Sheerah's story is about land, the daughters' story is about land and the next mention of a specific woman in the Bible, is also about land.

Acsah was the daughter of Caleb and she would have known the story of the daughters of Zelophehad, or

perhaps even knew them. Like the five sisters, she also made a bold appeal (Joshua 15:13–19; Judges 1:12–15).

Unlike the daughters of Zelophehad, Acsah's

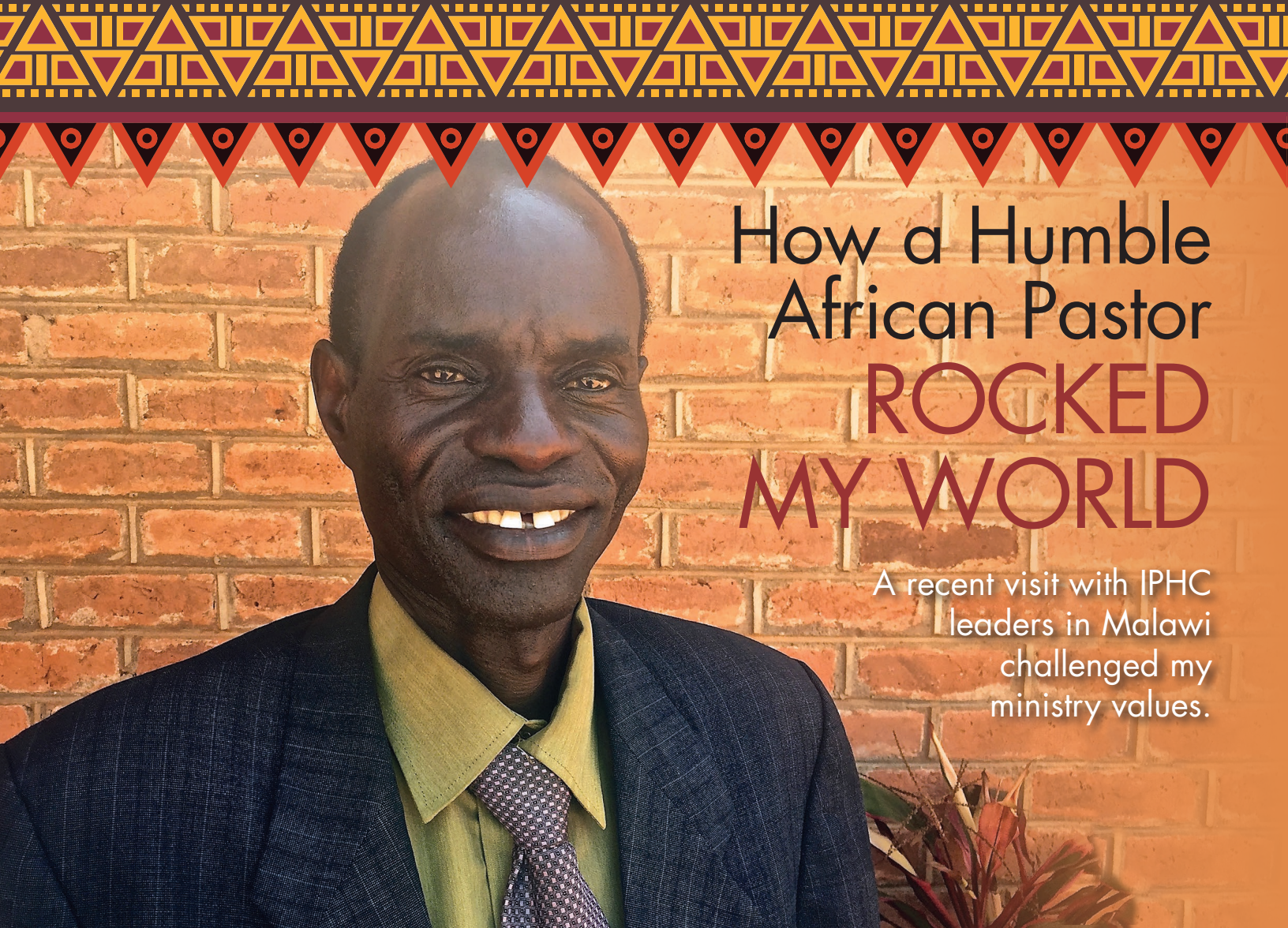
father was still alive. She had brothers and even a husband. But her husband had inherited land in the dry, barren Negev. Acsah wanted more. She knew she had favour with her father and so she asked for an inheritance.

Acsah wanted water instead of desert and she knew she had been promised flowing milk and honey, not more sand. Sheerah built upper and lower cities and Acsah received the upper and lower springs. Acsah then went onto to be the first lady of the land as her husband Othniel was the first judge of Israel (Judges 3:9).

The daughters of Zelophehad show us how they were influenced by the generations before even as they inspired the generations to come. As we remember those who have inspired us, we must live faithful lives that will inspire others.

That inspiration might come through our big and bold decisions, or through small acts of kindness—like gloves and books. Either way, let's choose to inspire those who follow us! ■

"As we remember those who have inspired us, we must live faithful lives that will inspire others."



How a Humble African Pastor **ROCKED** **MY WORLD**

A recent visit with IPHC
leaders in Malawi
challenged my
ministry values.



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.

In Malawi, one of the poorest countries in the world, Christians suffer from a severe lack of resources. But that doesn't stop them from sharing their faith or planting churches. In fact, their wholehearted sacrifice sometimes puts America's well-funded evangelistic efforts to shame.

I witnessed this last October when I met Donald Kuyokwa, a 60-year-old Pentecostal Holiness pastor who has done more on his shoestring budget than some American denominations do in a year.

A retired teacher, Kuyokwa and his wife live on a \$200 monthly pension. They raised their eight children in a three-bedroom house with a corrugated iron roof and concrete floors. Their toilet is outside.

Kuyokwa's small congregation in the village of Misuku collects an average of 600 kwacha every week. That comes to about 83 cents. Yet the pastor has planted four branch churches in the past 16 years, relying mostly on the strength of his legs to walk long distances.

A few years ago the lanky pastor decided to target the village of Chikando, which is located in northern Malawi near the border of Tanzania. There are no roads to Chikando, only a rocky path through a dense forest. It takes Kuyokwa six hours to make the hike.

No one in Chikando had heard of Jesus when he visited the first time. The people worship spirits and rely on the superstitious magic of witchdoctors to help them grow rice. Young girls suffer horrible abuse and are forced to marry when they are barely teenagers. Polygamy is common.

But slowly people began to convert to Jesus as a result of the pastor's visits. Today the congregation has built a church with a grass roof. They use kerosene lamps during worship services because Chikando, like most of Malawi, doesn't have electricity.

"At first we were threatened by witches," Kuyokwa told me of his missionary adventure. But today a growing group of first-generation believers worship Christ. They have renounced their animistic and polygamous traditions.

Pastor Kuyokwa walks to Chikando twice a month. In the past he rode a motorcycle, but it fell into disrepair. He can't ride a bicycle because the footpath has too many steep hills. So he buys cheap tennis shoes until they wear out, then he buys another pair.

He really doesn't mind the walk, but he's a bit nervous about the huge pythons that lurk in the forest. "I have heard that pythons have eaten people on that path," the pastor told me. "But God has always protected us."

This man's courage and commitment challenged me to the core after I heard his story. How could someone his age walk so far twice a month to reach a village that few people—even Malawians—know about? Why would a man care about a place that is so remote it has no telephone signal?

Kuyokwa says he gets his inspiration from the apostle Paul in the Bible. "Paul went to places where no one had taken the gospel," he says. "Evangelists

don't visit my area. They only go to the big cities."

I was also struck by this man's bright smile. Supernatural joy obviously sustains him. He's one of the poorest people I've ever met, and he has never known suburban comforts such as air conditioning, indoor plumbing, hot showers or television. He doesn't even own a car.

But when I asked him what makes him happy, Kuyokwa didn't even pause to answer. He smiled again and said: "I'm looking beyond this life. I want to meet Jesus. That's what keeps me encouraged."

And what keeps him motivated to keep reaching these forgotten people? "No one had heard of Jesus in these areas before we came, so it is always exciting when the people decide to follow Him," he says, noting that no white person has ever visited Chikando.

I had to do some serious soul-searching after my conversation with this humble hero. Could I smile like Pastor Kuyokwa if I didn't have access to hot water or a wi-fi signal? Would I spend my own money to evangelize a village if I only made \$200 a month?

Most of us have no idea how much the poorest Christians in the world sacrifice to obey the Great Commission. There are many

anonymous champions like Pastor Kuyokwa walking miles through jungles and across mountains and deserts to take God's Word to the ends of the Earth. They throw their entire widow's mite into the offering basket for missions while we dig out a few dollars from our bank accounts.

Jesus said: "For to whom much is given, of him much shall be required" (Luke 12:48). Our blessings come with responsibility. We shouldn't feel guilty that we are blessed, but we can't forget that we have been blessed to be a blessing to others. Let's use our abundance not to enrich ourselves but to finish the task Jesus gave us. □

"I'm looking
beyond this life.
I want to meet
Jesus. That's
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—Donald Kuyokwa