

Encourage

Inspiration for IPHC Leaders

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Do it again, Lord: A scene from the last General Conference in Dallas.

Please join the IPHC family as we gather in July for worship during our General Conference.



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](#).

This is the last issue of *Encourage* before the IPHC's General Conference, which will be held July 26-28, in Orlando, Florida. As we prepare for this quadrennial event, I draw your attention to some aspects of the General Conference that are important for us as a global movement.

First, we gather to worship the Living God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. We will begin at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, July 26, with a worship service and a celebration of Holy Communion. I hope many of you around the world will join us via live stream at <http://iphc.org/live>.

We will have three evening worship services, culminating on Friday night, July 28, with the installation of the new Executive Committee of the Council of Bishops and the message of the General Superintendent. During the days on Thursday and Friday we will hear the Word of the

Lord, we will hear instruction and we will join with IPHC leaders around the world for intercessory prayer.

It is important that we recognize that worship is the primary and foundational act of the General Conference. Worship draws our attention to God and His mission to redeem the world through His Son Jesus Christ. Worship draws our attention to the presence of the Holy Spirit and His mission to equip and empower us for ministry to the world. Worship draws our attention to the holiness of God and His desire that we be a people who manifest His holy love to this sin-damaged world.

Second, only through worship can we engage the business of the church. Worship reminds us that the administration of Christ's church is a gift of the Holy Spirit. In 1 Corinthians 12:28 (NKJV) Paul lists apostles, prophets, teachers, then miracles, gifts of healings, helps, administrations, and varieties of tongues as spiritual gifts operating in and for the body of Christ.

Notice the abundance of plural forms in this list. God is not limited to just one way to "help." The plural tells us that every believer has a role and every need has a supply!

The word translated "administrations" is a term used to describe a captain guiding a sea vessel. It denotes a journey and a goal. It implies a cargo and a purpose. It describes the kinds of decisions and wisdom needed to safely lead to the desired end.

Thus, when we gather for our business, we can rest assured that the Holy Spirit is at work "guiding" us. We can trust the Holy Spirit to give us the leaders we need for each season of the church's journey towards the return of Christ.

"The IPHC is part of what the Holy Spirit is doing in the world to expand the borders of Christ's kingdom."

The Spirit will give us the wisdom we need as we debate and determine various policies. The policy decisions are important, as they provide the spiritual, and legal, guidance we need as a church in this world.

Third, we will gather for fellowship. Many of you will enjoy meals and coffee breaks with friends you have not seen in several years. Others of you will make new friends that will enrich your lives by their wisdom, humor and grace. Still, others will participate in the numerous special event meals and receptions that will occur. Throughout, we will discover that common joy that one finds globally among followers of Jesus. We will also discover that special joy of our own movement and its spiritual DNA.

Encourage

A place of hope. A people of promise.

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At this General Conference, we will be reminded that we are "A Place of Hope and a People of Promise." We will remember our core values, especially the core value emphasis of 2017, "We Prayerfully Value Christ's Kingdom." We will reflect on the vision and mission the Holy Spirit is calling us to.

In light of Christ's Kingdom, we will remember that the IPHC is part of what the Holy Spirit is doing in the world to expand the borders of Christ's kingdom.

In the grand timeline of Christianity, our hundred plus years are but brief. When we consider that nearly 3 billion Christians live on this planet, our numbers are a small percentage. But we are nonetheless part of what the Holy Spirit is doing in human history concerning the kingdom of God. Therefore let us do our part with courage, truth, humility, love, compassion and great faith. ■

How to Run Your Race and **FINISH WELL**

If you want to win as a leader, you need these four attitudes.



BY CHRIS
FRIEND

CHRIS FRIEND is the national leader for IPHC Ministries in Australia and the senior pastor of Collective Hope, a cluster of congregations in Perth. He has a Masters of Arts in Theology and is an adjunct lecturer at Harvest Bible College. He and his wife, Natalee, have two children. Chris is passionate about Jesus, the Bible, leadership, people, architecture, kayaking and fast cars (not always in that order).

As I think about the great needs and opportunities in front of us, I cannot help but think about the apostle Paul who turned his world upside down. What the IPHC needs, what our world needs, is a bunch of modern day Pauls. We need people who will turn their own world upside down.

The real challenge is not the lack of potential people. The challenge is for those people to be willing to pay the price Paul paid. His dedication is clearly stated in Philippians 3:12-14: “Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me...I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (NKJV).

The Christian life is a race and we must run it to win it. Unlike every other race, the only person we are racing against is ourselves. One day our life on earth will be over and we will see what we could have accomplished. Let’s not make that day a day of great regret.

In order to run the race we have been called to—to lay hold of that for which Christ laid hold of us—we need four key attitudes:

1. WE MUST BE INTENTIONAL.

Is everything we are doing lining up with the purpose God has for us? As a movement? As a local church? As individuals? Are we being intentional? Whatever

is not lining up with God's will for you is a hindrance. Certain things can drag you down.

In the car industry, the science of aerodynamics is applied to car designs. As each new car is designed, they are tested in wind tunnels to measure resistance. The lower the drag, the more aerodynamic the car.

Being intentional is like being aerodynamic. It ensures that nothing is pulling you back or dragging you down—no sin, no distractions or past regrets.

2. WE MUST BE SELF-SACRIFICIAL.

One day Jesus said to Matthew, the tax collector, "Follow Me." In that moment, Matthew had a choice between all his gold, silver, house and possessions or Jesus. He has to make a choice—he couldn't have both. When he recognised that he was looking at the ultimate Treasure, he made a sacrifice that turned out to be no sacrifice at all.

We need to count the cost. But my prayer is that God will also teach us to count the gain. Paul said, "...I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, and count them as rubbish, that I might gain Christ..." (Philippians 3:8). The truth is nothing is as valuable as knowing Christ. Whatever interferes with your relationship with Christ is rubbish.

3. WE MUST BE RELATIONAL.

Remember that Paul wanted to lay hold of all that Christ had for him, but he needed others in his life to accomplish this. Paul said, "I hope in the Lord to send Timothy to you soon...I have no one else like him, who will show genuine concern for your welfare. For everyone looks out for their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 2:19–21 NIV).

There are those that let us down, but there are also those like Timothy. Paul added: "But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel." (Philippians 2:22).

And there are those like Epaphroditus. Paul said of him: "I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, co-worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs... honor people like him." (Philippians 2:25–29).

We are called to be relational and to work together. Let's learn from Paul. Let's work together. You must value those who work alongside you in the ministry. Let's be relational.

4. WE MUST BE ANOINTED.

As we endure and run our race, we are tested to see if our carnal nature still has any life left in us—like our own inner zombie, if you will. That zombie can rise up at the worst of times and scare you. But don't fret, Jesus

is the zombie slayer! Whenever I sense that old man rising up in me, I turn to Jesus. I need Him in everything and so do you.

In Christ, we have access to the wonderful anointing of the Spirit.

Have you noticed that difference between doing things in the flesh and in the Spirit? When we operate in our flesh, we are on our own; we are stuck doing it in the strength of a dead guy.

But when we let the Holy Spirit operate within us, we have His anointing; we have His ability poured into our capacity. When our capacity is filled with His anointing we have supernatural ability.

So, let me ask you: Are you walking in the anointing? Believe me, you

will know by the fruit in your life and ministry.

Think about Paul. Think about the early church. Think about all God did as the church moved from addition to multiplication.

Did the early church have buildings? No. Did they have the best books or seminars on how to grow the church? No. Did the early church have the internet, cars, planes or smart phones? They had none of these things. What they did have was the anointing.

I know we say that Christ's Spirit lives in us. It is also true that the very same Holy Spirit that lived in the apostle Paul lives in us. The anointing is there for us. The problem is that we are not intentional about daily submitting to Him and recognizing our need for Him. When we do, we'll turn the world upside down!

May we take hold of that for which Christ has taken hold of us. May we be the intentional, self-sacrificing, relational and anointed people that God has called us to be. As we do this, we will run the race and receive all that God has for us. □

"In order to run the race we have been called to—to lay hold of that for which Christ laid hold of us—we need four key attitudes."



28th GENERAL CONFERENCE

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Place of Hope. People of Promise.



Leadership Lessons I've Learned in the Trenches

If you want to win as a leader, you need these four attitudes.



BY SUSAN
BAGLEY

SUSAN BAGLEY has served in ministry with the IPHC for more than 30 years. She is currently the assistant superintendent of the Pacific Western Network Ministries Conference (PWNM). This is her fourteenth year as senior pastor at Celebration Center, a multi-site church in Modesto, California. Susan serves as dean to Advantage College and on the governing board of the EVUSA Council. She and her husband, Craig, have three children and eight grandchildren.

After almost forty years of ministry I have seen firsthand how the Holy Spirit works to renew the minds of new believers. I have also learned valuable lessons from people who have literally come out from living under bridges or from the gutters because of homelessness, drugs, abuse and despair.

Through their dedication to God's Word and prayer and their openness to mentors, the Holy Spirit has shaped them into vessels ready to take on responsibilities for God's work. They have become true disciples. He works through them to bring others to the knowledge of Christ.

The lessons I've learned through watching this discipleship process are many. Experiencing the revitalization of a near-dead congregation has been an effective teacher as well.

The main church I pastor is located in a part of our city with the worst reputation. People like me would not want their children playing in that part of town. After generations of gangs and drug rings, it is not a safe neighborhood.

Through seasons of church growth, seasons of maintenance and even seasons of decline, God has taught several lessons that will help you survive in the hard times and to thrive in the good ones. Here are six lessons I've learned:

1. BE FULLY AWARE OF YOUR OWN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES. You should take those spiritual gift tests that are given in the disciple-making process. Ask those closest to you to evaluate you honestly. Look carefully at the areas you are truly successful in and the areas where you struggle. Make sure the fruit of the Spirit is part of that evaluation.

2. EMBRACE HIS DESIGN FOR BODY MINISTRY, WITH MULTIPLICATION AS PART OF THE GOAL.

No one person can succeed in building God's kingdom alone. Jesus invested in His disciples to grow His kingdom and ultimately in all of us for our generation and the generations who follow.

Survival in times of trials often affects that growth, but a prayerful, consistent body effort toward multiplication will produce new disciples. This is part of God's undeniable plan because of our Lord's command to make disciples and to teach them to obey Him. It is a key to surviving the challenges of ministry in each season of growth, maintenance or decline.

3. LOOK FOR GOD'S APPOINTED LEADERS.

Accept the fact that God sends the people who are gifted by the Holy Spirit to help lead the local church. It is critical to find and train up those who will embrace the vision imparted to us by the Holy Spirit.

Most members of my congregation are not educated to meet the standard of our culture; many are unable to read. Sometimes I may have overlooked people because of this, until I realized that God's standards are different from ours.

Once when whining to God in prayer, the Holy Spirit showed me that I was making comparisons to what I might call "The Book of Acts Church Era" that were incorrect. People did not have the New Testament to read in those days. Most of the people coming to Christ then could not read well or at all. And in many places in the world today that is still the case.

I refocused to see my congregation with a different set of glasses. They are chosen by God. My new perspective not only gave me more creative ways to teach and model Jesus but it produced more love and appreciation for the people.

Their tenacity and desire to please God—and me as their pastor—was genuine. Giving more affirmation and more direction to help them see that God has chosen them too became joyful. Those who were educated by cultural standards reaped that benefit as well.

"You should give most of your time and attention to those who are faithful, available and teachable."

4. LEARN TO DELEGATE. YOU MUST TRAIN UP CAPTAINS OF TENS, FIFTIES AND HUNDREDS.

This is essential. Part of this remarkable leadership adventure is consistently praying for God to send the right leaders and for us to discern who they are when they arrive.

Watching for those who might be called "people magnets" is one indicator. Do other people seek them out just to be with them to laugh, to share their concerns with and to hear their wisdom?

5. INVEST WISELY IN PEOPLE. You should give most of your time and attention to those who are faithful, available and teachable. My spirit rejoices when they are discovered or have reached this status!

The simplicity of making decisions regarding those who will labor closely with me are based on the criterion of this simple acronym FAT ("Faithful-Available-Teachable"). As a standard set for others, it also represents areas in my own life regularly requiring self-examination.

Each area represents a part of one's heart. Each area represents the choice of priority one places on serving the Lord and people.

- Are they *faithful* to the things of God and His church? Am I *faithful* to them?
- Are they *available* when called on or do they allow too many obstacles between them and accepting responsibilities for things of God and people? Am I *available* to things of God and people?
- Are they *teachable*? Do they seek and implement knowledge? Can they readily adapt to change and inconsistency that are regularly encountered in the ministry? Do I continue to seek and implement knowledge? Can I adapt to remain relevant to the generations God has graciously allowed me to serve?

Leaders, including myself, have succumbed to the urgency of placing people in leadership positions because of a skill set instead of how FAT they are. In the long run, it does them and the body of Christ a disservice to promote prematurely. It's only then that they are used by God to lead and be a positive influence for others in and outside the body of Christ.

6. TRAIN LEADERS TO PRAY AND READ GOD'S WORD.

Basic spiritual disciplines will keep your leaders sensitive to the Holy Spirit so that obedient, active faith is produced. He or she must continually scan the harvest field for those already prepared by God and for those who are hungry to learn the things of God.

God has given us the great privilege of discovering, loving and training up faithful, available and teachable ones to further the kingdom of God in this and future generations. The fields are ripe for harvest, and God has also raised up the leaders and laborers needed to work in those fields. □



How Losing **100 POUNDS** Made Me a Better Pastor

I had to face some wrong beliefs in order to change my behavior. And now the results are obvious!



BY TRAVIS
LOWE

TRAVIS LOWE is ordained in the IPHC and serves as pastor of Crossroads Church in Bluefield, West Virginia. He also leads Rebuild Revive Thrive, a think tank for local business owners. He and his wife Jessi have two children.

Three years ago I was invited to the gym by Doug Minnix, a longtime friend and mentor. Doug is a member of the church where I pastor and just happens to have a Ph.D. in Exercise and Health Promotion from Virginia Tech.

Doug knew that I had been struggling with some lower back pain, so he offered to teach me some simple exercises to strengthen my core. What Doug did not mention was the obvious fact that, though I was only in my mid-thirties and had no real health issues, I was extremely overweight.

I share this because I know the occasional anger, guilt and shame that I struggled with when I thought about my weight or when well-meaning strangers offered me weight-loss advice. If you are in a similar place in your life, this article will speak to you with the same care and grace that Doug spoke to me.

As Doug and I began going to the gym, he taught me some low-impact exercises and stretches. He would push me to improve. He celebrated every tiny accomplishment, as if I had scored a touchdown at the Super Bowl.

He also waited for me to bring up the issue of my weight. Then he asked permission to share some of his ideas. At this point I welcomed his advice.

Doug asked me to share one negative thing about losing weight. My answer: “I like food and I don’t want to give it up!” He then told me to go home and write down 50 positive things about losing weight.

After I had left the gym, I realized that this mental exercise was similar to something I learned when I was in banking. I was taught to never coach results. Instead, we should coach beliefs. If you only focus on someone’s results, you would never see lasting change.

Conversely, if you could change someone’s beliefs, it would automatically change their behaviors—which would produce the desired results. To be honest, this realization startled me. I had never applied these rules outside of a sales environment.

Beyond that, I was now a full-time pastor. I was in the belief business. If this was the correct strategy that would help me lose weight, it meant some of my beliefs were wrong.

I began a long process of introspection. I did not begin losing weight for almost two years, but the list I was compiling—and the soul-searching questions—stayed with me. Slowly, almost painfully, areas of my life were exposed to the Light. I believe the process has made me a better pastor, husband, father and friend.

It has also made me 100 pounds lighter!

The first wrong belief I discovered was believing that God was not enough. When I had a particularly stressful day, I was convinced that I needed large amounts of food to bring me comfort. In this area of my life, God was not my source, and I was rejecting the desire of the Holy Spirit to be my comforter.

To be even clearer, food had become an idol that I worshiped. Food was a god I sought to meet my needs.

Facing this realization, I was greatly humbled. I recognized areas of spiritual pride that were now crumbling. I developed a new sense of grace for those struggling in the faith as I realized I was a fellow traveler on their journey.

The next realization came during a Bible study I was leading with some business owners in our community. In the process of studying the fruits of the Spirit, I gained a new understanding of the fruit of faithfulness.

In our study, I found this definition of faithfulness: “I remain true to God’s Word and calling, keeping my promises and persevering in the face of trials.”

Whenever I had used the word unfaithful to describe someone, it was almost always related to marital infidelity. This new definition reminded me of all the times I committed to losing weight and never followed through. I would always rationalize it by saying it was just a small thing.

I was reminded of the parable of the talents. Jesus stressed the importance of being faithful in the small things. I had to admit that I was an unfaithful person. My wife was married to an unfaithful man. My kids had an unfaithful dad.

This realization brought me the gift of sorrowful repentance. My heart turned to those around me who were blinded by their sin just as I had been. I began to

intercede with tears for their eyes to be opened.

My final example, though I could share more, came from hearing a sermon on Jesus healing the person with paralysis. The pastor asked the question, “Why did Jesus tell the man to take up his bed and walk.” The answer, of course, was that the man could walk. He had no use for the bed any longer.

The pastor said, “Jesus wanted everyone around to see that the thing that once held him, he now held.” He explained that self-control means we hold our passions and appetites instead of them holding us.

I realized my appetite was holding me. I also realized other people could see it. I realized that people I came in contact with, believers or not, could clearly see that I needed control in this area of my life. Almost certainly, my credibility and my witness have been strengthened as I took hold of what had held me.

Changing our beliefs is not an easy process. A former boss told me this could only be accomplished by hearing a consistent message over a long period of time from a reliable source. After months of reading my reasons why I wanted to be healthy, I became a reliable source to myself.


With the help of my Comforter, my beliefs are coming in line with God’s Word. My behaviors are changing. And the result is obvious to everyone who meets me! ■

“Food had become an idol that I worshiped. Food was a god I sought to meet my needs.”



Before and after: Travis Lowe is a changed man.

Don't Extinguish the Holy Spirit's **FIRE**



Pentecost is not a one-day experience. It should be a lifestyle for those who call themselves Pentecostals.



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.

How would we respond today if God wanted to repeat the miracle of Pentecost in one of our carefully scripted Sunday meetings? I wonder if we would embrace the unexpected wildness of that Acts 2 moment. Or would we tell the Spirit to “behave”?

Pentecost was an abrupt heavenly invasion. It wasn't planned in a staff meeting; it came “suddenly,” according to Acts 2:2. The noise of wind was not on the program; neither were flames of holy fire.

No one in that prayer meeting in the upper room in Jerusalem expected to speak a supernatural language. Certainly Peter did not expect to give his unrehearsed sermon, and I'm sure he was surprised when 3,000 people were converted. The church was born in a moment of unearthly, unimagined strangeness.

We will celebrate Pentecost this year on June 4. But Pentecost is not a one-day experience. It should be a lifestyle for those of us who call ourselves Pentecostals. Would we have room for this miracle today if God wanted to do it again? Would we welcome the interruption?

I fear we have enacted so many human controls that the Spirit is totally left out of our Sunday experience. If we don't give Him free reign, worship can become a man-made ritual that is stripped of God's power.

The apostle Paul warned us not to “quench” the Spirit in 1 Thessalonians 5:19. “Quench” means to extinguish a fire. I fear that today our trendy churches have been equipped with state-of-the-art fire extinguishers that do a professional job of eliminating any risk of a holy outbreak. Let’s be mindful of the most common ways that we quench the Holy Spirit.

1. WE IGNORE THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Many churches today make no mention of the Spirit. He is, as author Francis Chan says, the “forgotten God.” We play it safe by focusing on Jesus and salvation—yet we forget that Jesus talked incessantly about the Spirit.

Jesus told His followers that they must be “clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:49). He told them to get ready for Pentecost. We are not being faithful to Christ if we don’t take people into the deeper waters of the Spirit that He Himself promised.

2. WE LIMIT THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

There are thousands of churches in this country that teach that the gifts of the Spirit no longer function. Even though the apostle Paul said, “Do not forbid speaking in tongues” (1 Cor. 14:39) and “Do not despise prophecies” (1 Thess. 5:20), speaking in tongues and prophecy are off-limits—along with healing and miracles.

It was a lack of faith that created the doctrine known as cessationism. Respected Bible teachers have convinced whole sectors of the church that God no longer operates supernaturally. Christianity has been reduced to an intellectual argument, devoid of power.

And even in churches that wear the Pentecostal label, we have created such tight controls on our meetings that the gifts can’t function. Some of us actually practice a form of “Pentecostal cessationism.” We say we believe in the Spirit’s power and spontaneity,

but our actions show that we don’t expect Him to do anything unusual.

3. WE MISUSE OR ABUSE THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

We Pentecostals and charismatics have sometimes quenched the Spirit more than the evangelicals who deny His power. We have whacked people to the floor or waved our sport coats in the air to prove our “anointing,” manipulated audiences with mood music, used fancy titles to fake apostolic authority and manufactured counterfeit miracles to con people to give in offerings.

God forgive us. We cannot use the Spirit or His gifts to achieve our selfish agenda. Either we submit to His plan, or He withdraws and lets us play our silly games.

4. WE MISREPRESENT THE HOLY SPIRIT.

How often have we heard, “Thus says the Lord,” or “God told me this,” when the Spirit had nothing to do with the message we cooked up on our own. When we give the Spirit credit for messages that did not originate from Him, we take the Lord’s name in vain.

There are many popular “prophets” given platforms today, but some of them bring lying words and false visions. Never let a charming false prophet mislead you with flattery, manipulation, exotic visions or promises of wealth. And never let such a con artist in your pulpit!

5. WE DIVIDE THE HOLY SPIRIT.

When the apostle Paul corrected the Corinthians for quenching the Spirit, he addressed sexual sin and the abuse of spiritual gifts. But first He challenged them on the way they were treating each other. “Has Christ been divided?” he asked in 1 Corinthians 1:13.

We grieve the Spirit when we judge each other, build walls, divide ourselves racially, follow personalities or create camps according to doctrine. The secret of Pentecost is

“Pentecost was an abrupt heavenly invasion. It wasn’t planned in a staff meeting ... The noise of wind was not on the program; neither were flames of holy fire.”



found in Acts 2:1: “They were all with one accord in one place” (KJV).

Can that be said of us today? We are divided between black and white, white and Hispanic, Republican and Democrat, Protestant and Catholic, denominational and non-denominational, evangelical and Pentecostal, old-school and hipster. We are fragmented and weak. We have quenched the Spirit with our disunity.

Please join me in praying for a new Pentecost. Let’s throw away our fire extinguishers and invite a fresh heavenly flame to engulf the church. ■