

Encourage

Inspiration for IPHC Leaders



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I REMEMBER WHEN GOD CALLED ME TO SERVE HIM

A recent visit to Emmanuel College reminded me of a powerful experience I had there in 1967.



BY DOUG BEACHAM

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

We are stepping into a new season! The IPHC's two flagship fully accredited institutions, Emmanuel College in Franklin Springs, Georgia, and Southwestern Christian University in Oklahoma City, both installed new presidents during September.

On September 9, I was honored to introduce and pray over Dr. Ronald White as the interim President of Emmanuel College. On September 19, I was honored to be part of the investiture of Dr. Reggie Weniyika as the 12th president of Southwestern. I encourage the alumni, friends and the larger IPHC family to continue

to prayerfully and financially support both institutions as they prepare young men and women for anointed service in their generation.

Those two events are important to the IPHC and to me personally, especially during the month of October, which is our denominational emphasis for Pastor Appreciation. Many of us were called into the ministry while students at these two schools, as well as others who attended Holmes Bible College and Advantage College. The campus experience remains important educationally and spiritually.

As I introduced Dr. White at Emmanuel College in early September, I could not help but reflect on something that happened to me 47 years ago, in 1967. Ron White and I were freshmen at Emmanuel that fall. He came with a ministry call already clear in his heart and life. I came with the intention of going to law school and perhaps one day being a politician.

Though I grew up in the wonderful home of an IPHC pastor and denominational leader, and though my personal experiences in both worlds were usually positive and affirming, I had no intentions of following the path of my father. It was not so much a rebellious response as it was a lack of interest.

But during the week of October 9-13, 1967, things began to change. In those days a highlight of the college year and of the eastern part of the IPHC was the King Memorial Lectures, named for the most significant IPHC leader in our first 50 years, Bishop Joseph H. King. This was the 8th annual gathering in Franklin Springs. Students were required to attend the main morning lectures as well as the evening services.

The main lectures were given by Rev. B.E. Underwood, then a young conference superintendent in Dublin, Virginia. Scholarly, passionate, and an effective communicator, Underwood lectured on the inspiration and authority of the Bible. Those lectures were published in 1969 as *The Spirit's Sword – God's Infallible Word*.

As I listened to Underwood, something about the power of the Bible began to stir in my heart. Issues of authority that dominate the landscape of life today were presented with clarity and a call that challenged my intellect and heart.

At first I thought the stirrings in my life were primarily intellectual, part of the atmosphere of being on a Christian college campus. But that began to change in the subsequent

services as Rev. L. Durant Driggers preached Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights. To the best of my memory, it was on Wednesday night, October 11th, that Rev. Driggers preached from Isaiah 6:1-8 about the call of the prophet Isaiah.

As he preached and the Holy Spirit touched my heart, I knew that the morning stirrings were more than intellectual. I sensed that God was asking me to change directions in life and to surrender my plans to His plans. God wanted me to be interested in what had earlier not interested me.

In other words,

I knew God was calling me into the ministry. Four years later, on June 12, 1971, Bishop J. Floyd Williams licensed me to the ministry. Two years later, on June 16, 1973, Bishop Leon Stewart ordained me.

I can show you the place on the left side of the altar in the Franklin Springs Pentecostal Holiness Church where I knelt that night in 1967 and told the Lord that I would serve Him if that were what He wanted. I asked Him to confirm it for me and He did—in a way that I'll perhaps share at another time.

There were times in the following years that I didn't understand why God did this. There were times when I wondered if I had heard



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Encourage

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October 2014

Vol. I No. 9

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

Him correctly. There were times when I came pretty close to missing His purposes. But at the end of the day, I always knew that if I trusted Him, this God of love and truth revealed in Jesus Christ would hold me in His hands and place me where He wanted to be.

During the week of October 9-13, I will be remembering what happened 47 years ago. And I am thankful for His grace, mercy, love and truth. In this year when the IPHC has focused on the theme "We Prayerfully Value Scripture," Bishop Underwood's lectures still resonate in my heart because of the impact of IPHC higher education.

God is still calling men and women to serve him as ministers in this church today. May a new generation of men and women hear His voice, respond through the vicissitudes of their lives, and most importantly, may Jesus Christ be praised! ☐

As we observe Pastor's Appreciation Month, I hope IPHC pastors will read *Pause for Pastors*, a new book written by Emmanuel College's campus pastor, Chris Maxwell. Chris also has an article in this issue of *Encourage* on page 4. You can order his book at the LifeSprings Resources website, lifespringsresources.com/pause-for-pastors.



WHY PASTORS MUST LEARN TO PAUSE



BY CHRIS
MAXWELL

CHRIS MAXWELL is the campus pastor at the IPHC's Emmanuel College in Franklin Springs, Georgia. A popular author and speaker, he is the author of several books including *Pause for Moms* and *Pause for Pastors*, from which this article is adapted.

Respected Christian leader Eugene Peterson wrote in his 2011 memoir: “In these early years when I was becoming a pastor, I needed a pastor.” I have learned this lesson as well. Pastors need pastors!

I remember my final Sunday as a lead pastor. Though I often forget things, I can't forget the faces and voices—the sanctuary and the pulpit—the memories of baptisms, marriages, funerals, prayers, songs, laughter, disagreements, meals, conversations, joy and pain.

As I think back to those experiences, rather than ask, “Did I succeed or fail?” I'm asking myself, “What did I learn that I can pass on? What stories can I share that might help a pastor and his family pursue help when the load they are carrying is too much? What might offer a little bit of peace in the storms of pastoral life?”

Do you know about these storms? There are storms of pain—that blow harsh winds, thunder loudly, and cause us to question our callings, our credentials, and ourselves. I think you know about the storms.

I invite you to pause and think deeply about the storms, and assess how your inner world has been damaged, how your roof leaks, how your trees struggle to stay attached to their roots, and how your heart aches. Consider what painful storms can teach us as we face realities and repair damages. Hopefully in the future your internal self might be healed—stronger than ever.

As pastors, we often can describe situations in ways that sound inspiring. We can tell each other stories and offer stats about our churches to convince people of our success. We can shove the taglines. We can sit at those pastors-impress-each-other luncheons and boast with the best of them.

Or, we can go to the other extreme and let the conversation include complaints about board members, attendance, lack of money, the staff's poor efforts, the doctrinal errors of other pastors or their moral failures or their methodical silliness, and

complaints about the complainers!

We can brag on our success or gripe about the reasons other people are keeping success from happening for us.

Or we talk about how we are really doing—not how our churches appear to be doing, but about our own insecurity, our own need to prove our value—and our tendencies to use church growth stats to raise our status. We can take off our masks. Let's talk about our deep wounds—our relational scars, our unanswered prayers and our doubts.

I'm not suggesting that we tweet our troubles for the world to know or share our misery in an unrelated sermon. I am suggesting that we just stop playing the game. Just stop. Stop by choice.

I am suggesting that we believe our personal worth and value isn't based on the world's meaning of success or whether we are on our way to being part of our movement's inner circle. I am suggesting that we find a few people to talk to about the condition of our true selves. I am suggesting we let it start by finding shelter with our Heavenly Father during the storm.

One Saturday night, when I was lead pastor, I found I was the only one in our church auditorium. I didn't turn the lights on. Sensing the night's reverence, seeing the night's darkness, and hearing the night's silence, after a hurried day I paused and prayed.

My busy day had been a mix of pleasure and stress. After watching our three sons play ball, I raced to a meeting with friends from our church, and then raced to visit another church member in the hospital. I read emails. One was from a woman in the church who instead of entering a

Gaze at the storm and face the realities of your life—but trust that the storm doesn't end your story.

healthy discussion about conflict and wounds, announced she was leaving the church because of what a Sunday school teacher said in their class—or, I guess, “her class.”

She was angry and leaving; she told me not to try to convince her otherwise. A missionary family

emailed me to say their support had cut in half. Could we help them more? If not us, whom could I suggest?

A family who recently started visiting our church let me know that they thought it was the best church ever and they would be there on Sunday—great, right? Except I previously received three letters from other pastors warning me about the problems that this family caused in their congregations!

Yet my sermon for the next day was about peace. The sermon had been planned way in advance—with scriptural passages to read and stories to tell and points to make with a clear conclusion—that was how I liked it. Did I experience peace that Saturday? I experienced hurry and noise and competition and events and conflict and needs and questions and disagreements. I needed to pray, to think of the next morning. I needed to think and pray and breathe peace.

And I experienced peace—not an emotional feeling—but an inner awareness, an assurance, an unexplainable calmness. It was the peace the world can't give, the peace of God that surpasses all understanding. That's where I felt, or sensed, or heard, or met—not really sure what word is best—peace.

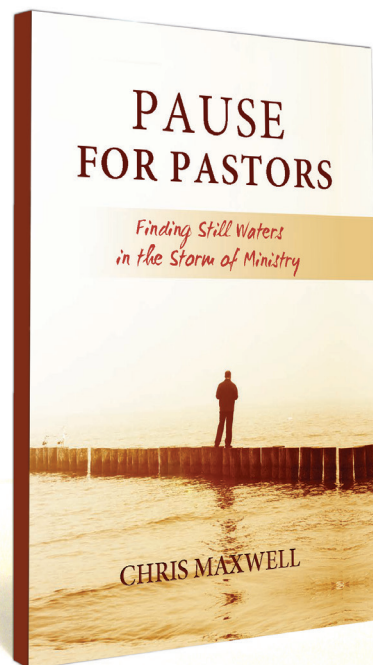
In that sanctuary, which soon would be a place of noise and crowds on the approaching Sunday morning,

I experienced silence, darkness, reverence and an awareness of Him. It ended up being one of my best Saturday nights alone in that place of hidden holiness.

We all need moments like these. We need moments when we pause and take a breath that will keep us sane and give us hope. So pause in your rush through life and take assessment of yourself. Visit your own stories of grief, of anger, of regret—the chapters of life and death and nothingness. Remember the times you've had—like I had on that Saturday when I received His peace.

Gaze at the storm and face the realities of your life—but trust that the storm doesn't end your story. Believe that He has something for you even in the storm. Know that what you receive you will bless others with.

For now, choose to stop. Read the nouns and verbs. Slowly. During the whirlwind of the storm, read and receive and rest. □



This article was adapted from Chris Maxwell's new book, *Pause for Pastors*. If you'd like to purchase a hard copy of the book, or bulk quantities for pastors, visit the Lifespings Resources website at lifespringsresources.com/pause-for-pastors. You can order the e-book version online from Amazon.com. Visit Chris Maxwell's website at chrismaxwell.me.

THERE IS JOY FOR YOUR JOURNEY

Pastors, you will finish your race well if you learn to practice these simple principles of spiritual health.



BY DEMETRIUS
MILES

DEMETRIUS MILES is the founding pastor of Tucson Church International in Tucson, Arizona, and the Arizona district director of the IPHC's Acts2Day Conference. A graduate of Southwestern Christian University, he and his wife, Angela, have one son.

Today church leaders struggle with weariness, fatigue and uncertainty. It's no wonder the suicide rate has increased among clergy. As I examine the current state of church leadership, I have discovered a significant characteristic that is missing among many leaders—and that is joy produced by the Holy Spirit. What happened to the joy?

In honor of Pastor Appreciation Month, which is being celebrated throughout October, I have chosen to use the acronym PASTOR to highlight biblical principles that can produce authentic joy for the journey and a determination to finish well. I hope this will help you rediscover the joy you need to sustain you through the ups and downs of ministry.

1. PRAYER MUST BE A TOP PRIORITY. I never assume because a person is a Christ follower or spiritual leader that they spend quality time in prayer. Prayer can be the most talked about subject but the least practiced.

If we are not careful as church leaders we can drift into a place where we function methodically and perfunctorily but not authentically. We can become so immersed with the workload of ministry that we drift from the source through which effective ministry is accomplished. My friends, we cannot teach, preach or lead apart from the Holy Spirit working through us!

It is critically important that we protect and guard our relationship with Christ. We must possess an intentionality to ensure prayer is a primary focus. Prayer is our lifeline and the means for abiding in Christ. Jesus said: "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me" (John 15:4, NASB).

Our prayer life is developed out of discipline, but it must progress to a place of delight. Make a daily appointment with God and keep it. Prayer provides continual refreshment when we live in a place of prayer. I Thessalonians 5:16-18 says, "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances" (NIV).

2. ACCOUNTABILITY is a word that is used frequently among church leadership today and yet we continue to see the lack of it in our ranks. You must determine that you will not walk this journey of life and ministry alone. My heart aches for the number of leaders who teach interdependence and yet live isolated lives. What a sad contradiction!

I know we cannot have everyone in our inner circle. But the danger is to have no inner circle at all. Who holds you accountable? Who has the responsibility and right to ensure that your private and public life are in concert? With whom do you share your hurts, disappointments and struggles? Commit to meet with an accountability partner to preserve your legacy. The call on your life is

only as effective as the character of your life.

3. SCRIPTURE must be our source for everything—not just what we go to for sermon material. I know you are keenly aware of the value and authority of Scripture in the life of a follower of Christ. I also know that we teach, preach and exhort those within our sphere of influence to study and practice the Word of God.

But we must remain intimately engaged in Scripture for our own sake. Our responsibility to teach the Word is so constant that we must safeguard against engaging in Scripture primarily to teach it to others. Jesus told us: "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" (Matthew 4:4, NIV).

How often do you spend time in God's Word for personal growth? I want to encourage you to maintain a consistent intake of Scripture that serves as encouragement, healing, restoration and correction to your own life.

4. TAKE TIME TO REST and be refreshed. With so many voices and demands vying for our attention, all too often we find ourselves unintentionally neglecting our personal Sabbath. If you are not healthy, you will not have a healthy family or a healthy ministry.

Take time to unplug, unwind and disconnect for a day. Plan your Sabbath in a way that is uniquely designed for you, since the type of Sabbath you take is a reflection of your tastes and needs. There is no one-size-fits-all. For the sake of your

family, ministry and your own future take the time to be renewed, restored and reinvigorated!

5. ORDER your life for maximum effectiveness. One of the primary ingredients to living a balanced and rhythmic lifestyle is order. Chaos is the breeding ground for distractions and burnout, and it can lead to destruction.


The initial investment in ordering our lives may seem time consuming, but it is so worth it—as it saves time later. Order alleviates stress in my life. Together let's make a commitment to have our lives—body, soul, and spirit—in order for greater effectiveness and longevity.

6. REPRODUCE yourself in others. I find throughout the pages of God's Word that He wants you and me to experience the

highest dimension of living by giving to others. May I suggest that there are times when the antidote to our weariness, fatigue and uncertainty is reproducing in others the character of Christ!

Paul said to Timothy: "You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others" (2 Timothy 2:1-2, NIV). I believe the greatest joy of ministry is found when we invest ourselves in those we are discipling.

Pastor: You are significant, you are making a difference and I salute you! You can find joy in this journey. If you guard your inner life in the ways I've mentioned, you will finish your journey well! ☐



For the sake
of your family,
ministry and
your own future
take the time
to be renewed,
restored and
reinvigorated!



WHEN PASTORS BECOME TARGETS

All church leaders need supernatural prayer support to overcome the enemy. Here's how I pray for the pastors in my life.



BY J. LEE
GRADY

J. LEE GRADY is an ordained IPHC minister who serves as contributing editor of *Charisma* magazine and editor of *Encourage*. He also directs The Mordecai Project, an international missions organization based in Florida. He is a member of the IPHC's Sonshine Conference.

Often when I speak to a group of aspiring ministers, I greet them by saying: "Welcome to the war!" I also remind them that when they signed up to join the front lines of spiritual battle, a bright red target was painted on their backs. Ministry can be wonderfully rewarding, but let's not kid anybody: Most of the time it's a thankless job full of headaches, disappointments, conflicts, loneliness, frustration, petty complaints and tight budgets.

And while we might assume all pastors lead megachurches and drive new cars, keep in mind that the average church in this country has 75 members and the average pastor makes less than \$34,000 a year—and he or she may work an extra job to feed the family. The statistics are alarming: 90 percent of pastors work more than 50 hours a week; 70 percent say they don't have any close friends; and 45 percent say they've had to take a leave of absence from ministry because of depression or burnout.

And it gets worse: This past year I have known of several situations in which a pastor took his own life. Any suicide is tragic, but when a caregiver kills himself it reveals the deepest level of hopelessness. This shouldn't be happening to people in the ministry.

My friend Eddie Taylor, pastor of Church on the Hill in Dalton, Georgia, has

faced his share of ministry pressures and has looked burnout square in the face a few times. He dug deep in the story of Elijah (see 1 Kings 17-19) to learn how to survive, and he recently shared with me a message about how to pray for people in leadership. I decided to share his main points since October is Clergy Appreciation Month.

I'm sure all pastors would appreciate getting some nice greeting cards during the month, but most ministers I know would be doubly blessed to know that their congregation was praying for them. When I pray for my pastor friends I pray along these lines. You can use this list to pray for yourself, too.

1. PRAY AGAINST WITCHCRAFT AND MANIPULATION. As soon as Elijah stepped into the fray and challenged Israel's idolatry, Jezebel went into attack mode. We must never be ignorant of Satan's schemes (see 2 Cor. 2:11). The enemy targets Christian leaders, aiming to pull them into immorality, deception or pride; or he dispatches human messengers to control or discourage them. We can expose these demonic plots through prayer.

2. PRAY FOR COURAGE. Elijah had guts. He not only got in Ahab's face, but he also organized a public showdown to challenge Jezebel's false prophets. Yet right after the fire fell from heaven in response to Elijah's prayer, Jezebel threatened him—and the Bible says “he was afraid and arose and ran for his life” (1 Kings 19:3, NASB). Leaders are called to confront, but we can't do it without supernatural boldness from God. Ask the Lord to make you and your other pastor friends brave.

3. PRAY AGAINST DEPRESSION. After Elijah fled to the wilderness, he started acting like a burned-out pastor. He prayed: “It is enough; now, O Lord, take my life” (19:4). It's normal for leaders to have emotional highs and lows, but when discouragement becomes debilitating it can knock us out for good. Pray that you and your pastor friends will draw fresh joy from the wells of salvation daily.

4. PRAY FOR REST. After the intensity of Mount Carmel, Elijah went a day's journey from Beersheeba and slept under a juniper tree. Sometimes what pastors need most is a day off—yet many feel driven to perform, either because of people's expectations or self-imposed demands.

What makes matters worse is that many pastors have not empowered others to help with the workload. Not only do you need sleep, you need to make sure you get times of refreshing away from phone calls, e-mails and constant “emergencies” that can surely wait.

5. PRAY FOR THE TOUCH OF GOD.

Elijah found supernatural strength after his wearying experience on the mountaintop—not just because he ate and slept but because the angel of the Lord touched him twice (see 19:6-7). Pray that you and your other pastor friends receive a double portion of the Lord's presence. It is only the Lord's supernatural anointing that enables us to minister in the power of the Holy Spirit.

6. PRAY FOR DISCIPLES.

Even after Elijah heard God's voice on Mount Horeb, he was tempted to think he was the only true prophet left. But the Lord told him there were 7,000 prophets who had not bowed their knees to Baal, and He instructed Elijah to anoint Elisha as his successor (see 19:15-18).

God does not want leaders to do their work alone. We are called to a long-distance race that involves multiple generations! Pray that you can arrange your priorities correctly so you can invest your life in younger leaders.

P.S.—For those church members who might use this prayer list when you pray for your pastor: Don't hand this article to him next Sunday and tell him that you are praying these six things. (As in, “Pastor, I'm praying you will have the courage to confront the gossips in this church—especially Mrs. Clack!”) No one wants to feel manipulated by prayer requests. Instead, pray in secret—and ask the Lord to uphold your pastor with the same grace He gave Elijah. □



It's normal for leaders to have emotional highs and lows, but when discouragement becomes debilitating it can knock us out for good.

RETHINKING THE PURPOSE OF PASTORAL MINISTRY

Maybe one of the reasons churches aren't reaching our nation for Jesus is that we have the wrong job description for pastors.



BY RAY
WILLIS

RAY WILLIS currently serves as the superintendent of the IPHC's SonShine Network Ministries, a network consisting of 148 churches and 500 licensed and ordained ministers, mostly in Florida. He has been married for 45 years to his wife, Peggy, and they have two children, Chad Willis and Shelisa Hull, both of whom are currently in pastoral ministry.

The United States is now more unchurched than at any time in our history. I have come to an uncomfortable conclusion that much of the blame lies at the feet of those of us in pastoral ministry. My purpose in writing this is to challenge conventional pastoral thinking.

Paul wrote in Ephesians: "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, *for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry*, for the edifying of the body of Christ..." (Ephesians 4:11–12, NKJV, emphasis added).

Let me base everything I say on this premise: There is no other place in Scripture that so specifically defines the purpose of pastoral ministry. Obviously there are other offices mentioned in that passage, but for the sake of this discussion I am dealing specifically with the role of the pastor.

If you are asked, "What is the biblical role and purpose of a pastor?" there is one clear answer, based on this passage in Ephesians. A pastor is called to *equip people to do ministry*. To simplify it even more, the biblical purpose of a pastor is to produce other ministers. That's it!

In my opinion, we've gotten off track.

The Greek word for pastor means *shepherd* or *herdsman*. Over the years, the pastoral ministry has evolved into a ministry of caretaking—shepherding the sheep. The purpose of the pastor was to preach on Sundays, visit the sick, stroke them when they don't feel good, heal them when they get wounded and counsel them through difficulties.

But here's the problem: The term shepherd suggests one thing, and the charge to equip suggests another. In reality, the two things are not at all contradictory. We interpret the word shepherd to mean caregiver, but the main purpose of a shepherd is to *lead*. Psalm 23:1-3 says: "The Lord is my shepherd...He *leads* me beside still water...He *leads* me in paths of righteousness for His name sake" (emphases added).

Leading people to get out of their pews and into a life of ministry is the great call of a pastor! Yet what we've developed in the body of Christ are the roles of a performer pastor and an audience of spectators. That is not scriptural!

I believe God is returning us to the original paradigm of a pastor. The Lord is shifting us out of a maintenance mentality into an equipping mentality.

Think about it. The reason we have been so ineffective in filling our churches with new converts is because our churches are structured to be audiences. The sheep come once or twice a week and get fed and then leave until its time to get fed again.

The early church did not assemble just to be fed. They assembled to glorify and worship God, and for each to share reports of the ministry that had gone on since the last time they had assembled. The early church was a well-oiled ministry machine! The early church spread the gospel like wildfire because once someone committed themselves to Christ they became a minister. They did not sit in a pew expecting a professional clergyman to feed them.

Think about who typically brings the most people into your church: It's usually the person who just got saved and can't quit telling people about Jesus! So the job of the pastor is to change the mentality of the church to understand that real ministry doesn't happen just in church on Sunday, it happens every day of our lives.

Jesus used this model. In three years He started a movement that has swept around the world and will last for eternity. So what was His strategy? He equipped His followers for the work of the ministry. When He ascended to heaven, He left His kingdom in the hands of the people He equipped to do the work.

Pastor, if you are going to effectively reach your community, your church has to produce ministers. Can you imagine what will happen in your city when the church becomes a collection of fire-baptized, anointed and unashamed ministers? This sleeping giant called the Church must wake up and fulfill the Great Commission!

Let me suggest five ways to begin changing the culture of your church. These are practical ways to become an equipper of the saints and to begin to produce ministers.



Leading people to get out of their pews and into a life of ministry is the great call of a pastor!

1. Producing ministers must become the purpose of your ministry. This can't just be an addition to your ministry—it must be your ministry. Producing ministers is what you do now and it will be what you are doing 10 years from now. Think about it—how else will the church grow?

2. Preach sermons that challenge your members to accept the scriptural mandate to view themselves as ministers of the gospel. Give them plenty of examples of how they can live the gospel out in service to their families and community. Preach it, and when you are through preaching it, preach it again!

3. Provide discipleship and training classes specifically designed to equip and train people for ministry. I

am not referring to discipleship classes that only teach personal growth and maturity. I am talking about a discipleship program that requires people to accept ministry as their scriptural mandate.

4. Start a campaign called "Each One Reach One." Encourage those who are being discipled to follow the Holy Spirit and win one person to Jesus over the next 30 days. When you start getting reports every Sunday about ministry that took place in Wal-Mart you are going to create a buzz!

5. Identify the people in your church who have the most potential and spend time with them on a weekly or biweekly basis. Use this time specifically to equip. Pour your life and ministry into them—just as Jesus modeled for us. We must make disciples—and true disciples make more disciples.

Pastor, if you accept this challenge it will revolutionize your ministry and your church will grow. This paradigm shift will take time. Becoming an equipping church is a process, but your church must become a place where disciples are trained to fulfill our mandate.

If you rethink your calling as a pastor and make this shift, I promise your job will be more fulfilling, you will see the results you have dreamed about and your joy will overflow. □