

# Encourage

Inspiration for IPHC Leaders

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# God Is Using This Crisis to Make Us Better



In this difficult global pandemic,  
God's promises are brighter than ever.



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](#).

**I**t's April 20 as I write this column for the May *Encourage*. For more than a month many of us have learned how to work from home, communicate over video conferences and practice social distancing. We have discovered that we can still preach and hear the gospel of Jesus Christ, even when we are not gathering in our church buildings.

Who knows? Maybe we have learned how to do our jobs better, relate to our families better and take care of ourselves better.

I'll have to admit I have really enjoyed being home since mid-March. Numerous trips inside and outside the United States were cancelled. But I've learned I can communicate through various digital tools. One Sunday I even took a digital trip to preach in West Virginia! Who would have considered that two months ago!

I've rejoiced as I watched many of your online Sunday services. Never before have I listened to so many IPHC pastors feed their flocks online, and feed Susan and me! I listened to IPHC worship teams sing and worship as if hundreds and thousands of people were sitting in the auditorium. I've watched older pastors learn how to preach online and discover that the Word of God does not return void.

I've been grateful for the testimonies of IPHC congregations reaching out to help their neighbors, the staff at their local hospitals and people in different countries. Many of you saw the report in the *Washington Post* about Crossroads Church (IPHC) in Bluefield, West Virginia; they made face shields for health care workers. You saw the many reports from IPHC World Missions Ministries of efforts in Bethlehem, the Ukraine, and elsewhere as IPHC local leaders and missionaries have made a huge impact by sharing the love of Christ in the midst of a pandemic.

Many of you took advantage of IPHC Discipleship Ministries' resources for children and adults. And many IPHC pastors received weekly guidance from

EVUSA. I have found myself often thinking of the phrase Winston Churchill used in June 1940, following discouraging reports for Great Britain at the beginning of World War II.

Appealing to the indomitable British character, Churchill closed his speech with this famous line: "Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties, and so bear ourselves, that if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say, 'This was their finest hour.'"

I cannot help but think that for the IPHC, and perhaps the entire body of Christ around the globe, this has been our finest hour.

The only problem with Churchill's phrase is that it fails to capture the promise of what the late Bishop James Leggett said: "Our best days are ahead of us." My conviction is that our personal and corporate experiences of 2020

have been fine hours preparing us for what is to come!

The Apostle Paul captured this attitude when he wrote: "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

These past months have taught us that the world can turn on a dime, or better yet, a microscopic virus. But we have learned that we can function, and prosper, when the world turns upside down. We have also learned that God is up to something in our generation.

Thousands around the world have come to Christ through online ministries; now the challenge is leading them to grow in Christ. We must be ever sensitive to the lessons Jesus taught in the parable of the sower found in Mark 4:13-20.

I have confidence that the Holy Spirit will give us the measure of His presence that we need both today and tomorrow. Notice these verses:

- "For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by *measure*" (John 3:34);
- "God has dealt to each one a *measure* of faith," (Romans 12:3);
- "But to each one of us grace was given according to the *measure* of Christ's gift," (Ephesians 4:7);
- "... to the *measure* of the stature of the fullness of Christ," (Ephesians 4:13).

I've italicized the word *measure* in these verses. They are all from the Greek word *metron*. It denotes what fits insight a container or any form of measurement. The gospel passage is about Jesus, who received the Holy

Spirit without measure!

For us, as members of Jesus' body, we have received differing "measures" of grace as we do our part as belonging to the One without measurable limits. We are given "measures of faith."

Romans 12 is about how spiritual gifts operate within the body of Christ. Ephesians 4 is about the measure of the five-fold ministry gifts Jesus has given His church. Within the context of those gifts, the church is enabled to continue its historical and spiritual movement towards "the stature of the fullness of Christ."

The Romans 12 gifts include the gift of giving (Romans 12:8). The "give" in this verse indicates giving a share of what one already has, and doing so in a spirit of generosity and sincerity, an attitude that is without selfish aim.

"I cannot help but think that for the IPHC, and perhaps the entire body of Christ around the globe, this has been our finest hour."

# Encourage

**Place of Hope. People of Promise.**

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The principle of giving that is the IPHC core value focus for 2020 is particularly true for us at this time. I have heard from our churches that many of them have been blessed bountifully as members and friends have faithfully tithed and given. Many congregations have taken funds to help relief efforts in their communities and around the world.

To be honest, I'm not as interested in the financial bottom line as I am in the work of the Holy Spirit among us. I join with those who are praying that what we have experienced through the COVID-19 pandemic will be the fertile ground of genuine repentance and revival around the globe.

We have been reminded that Psalm 139:14 is true, we are "fearfully and wonderfully made." The verse calls us to praise the Lord because of the reality of both. Our physical frailty, which is so obvious during this global pandemic, beckons us to a fresh dependence upon God. I pray we will lean more fully on Him as we are reminded of His great promises about our future. □

# REMEMBER 1918:

## This Is Not Our First Pandemic

How Pentecostals in the IPHC responded to the 1918 Spanish Flu crisis



Photo Credit: Wikimedia Commons

Not enough beds: An army hospital in Fort Riley, Kansas, during the 1918 pandemic.



BY KAREN  
LUCAS

**KAREN LUCAS** is an ordained minister with the North Carolina Conference of the IPHC. She currently serves as Archives and Research Ministries Director for the N.C. Conference and as an instructor at Heritage Bible College. Previously, Karen has served as a social worker and counselor with Falcon Children's Home and Royal Home Ministries. She has regularly ministered in various local church ministry roles, as well as in conference and retreat settings for over 20 years. Karen has a B.A. in Psychology from Emmanuel College and a M. Div. from Campbell University Divinity School. She and her husband, Chip, live in Falcon, N.C. with their three children.

When the COVID-19 pandemic began, there were competing opinions about how Pentecostals should respond. Fortunately, the IPHC provided early guidance and support for pastors. As a denomination, we chose to err on the side of caution and cooperation.

Some might wonder how early Pentecostals, especially those from our tradition, would have responded to similar circumstances. History helps answer that question.

Rev. Ricky Nelms and I reviewed issues of the *Pentecostal Holiness Advocate* (PHA) published by our denomination from 1918-1920. (This was our official periodical during that time period.) Our goal was to learn how our denomination responded to practical and theological issues related to the 1918 Influenza Pandemic, also called the Spanish Flu.

That strain of influenza claimed up to 50 million lives globally and spread across the United States just as World War I was coming to an end. About 675,000 Americans died of the disease. Sadly, more lives were lost to the flu than the war.

Our research revealed three things. First, during the 1918 Influenza, no one worried about losing their civil liberties. Second, no one felt impeded from practicing their faith. Third, there was no printed discussion about whether or not churches should comply with quarantine measures.

However, popular evangelist R. B. Hayes traveled through Falcon and other towns in North Carolina and South Carolina just as the virus was peaking and reported that some church leaders wanted to hold services anyway. He said he prayed about the matter and felt drawn to read Romans 13:1, Titus 3:1 and 1 Peter 2:13-14—verses about obeying governmental authorities. Hayes wrote: "I like to see people with a big good lot of salvation, but it is a good thing to have a lot of mother wit and common sense with it."

We also learned that there were not uniform executive orders for quarantine in 1918-1919. Some areas of the country were hit harder by the virus than others. However, Rev. G. F. Taylor, editor of the PHA, captured the general



feeling by saying, “The Influenza seems to have set everything out of joint all over the country.... Many requests have poured into the *Advocate* office for prayer. We have been trying to take them all to God.”

The South Carolina conference planned to reschedule their annual meeting “on the account of sickness raging as it is, and all public gatherings forbidden by the State Board of Health.” In November, Taylor was reporting that during the month of October “this disease shut down all the meetings.”

However, the December 19, 2018, edition of the paper records Bishop J. H. King thanking God for sparing him from the virus and confiding that he had not wanted to be a burden to anyone. Because he was single and didn’t own a home, he sheltered with a local pastor. That didn’t impede him from going to pray for the sick, though. He also admitted that he had been grateful for the much-needed rest.

Two waves of the virus had already swept over the country. However, the second wave of the virus was much more destructive than the first.

“I had it on Thanksgiving day,” reported Taylor. “God touched my body that day and the fever left me that night, however, I have suffered from it a great deal until now. It has been extremely difficult for me to keep my work going. I have written my editorials for this paper under intense mental sufferings. ... I ask the prayers of all my readers, that I may speedily recover.”

By Christmas, the general sense was that the virus had nearly run its course. Some of the quarantines were lifted and the South Carolina Conference felt safe to hold a meeting in late December. One pastor remarked, “We couldn’t have any services for about six weeks but praise God the quarantine has been lifted, and most of the saints are able to come to church again, and the power is falling in the old-time way.”

There was also an impressive report from North Carolina boasting that “out of almost 1,300 members, there had only been 13 deaths” from the war and influenza. (Children may not have been included among deceased members.) Also, they were unaware that a third wave of influenza was to come. Sadly, within days, a shocking report came from South Carolina. Their conference superintendent and his young daughter had both died of influenza.

Florence Goff, a minister from Falcon, N.C., wrote that there were a hundred cases of influenza in Falcon but only two died. Other reports only mention one death.

Two deaths out of 100 certainly seem miraculous, and that’s how Goff interpreted it. However, we now know that one-third of the earth’s population was infected with the virus and approximately 2 percent of infections resulted in death. So, the 2 percent death rate in Falcon was in line with global statistics.

The number of infections in the tiny community

may have been higher than average because Falcon was centered around a school, orphanage and publishing house. It’s also possible that ministers unknowingly spread it as they prayed for the sick. Florence Goff reported

that she and her husband constantly answered calls to pray for others—even when five of her children were sick.

The general consensus was that the influenza should be viewed as a test. King used his monthly editorial in the *Advocate* to explain: “When He is our habitation we can rest in the assurance that He will suffer no plague to come nigh our dwelling. But this requires an extra degree of faith or a claiming the protection of the covenant. Holy people have sickness. It may be they do not enter fully into their privileges in Christ. However, it is wise to conclude that God may allow those that abide in Christ to be sorely tested through sickness.”

Most everyone embraced the idea that the influenza was a test of faith. Soon, obituaries were printed detailing how a person proved their faithfulness to God by refusing to see a doctor when got sick. Instead they gracefully accepted death as God’s will. There were also testimonies of instantaneous

healing, but most described a recovery of several weeks or months.

As a result of the 1918 flu, many people wrestled with their beliefs about divine healing. Conflicting opinions began to emerge that led to a change in beliefs about medicine. IPHC now accepts medical science as a method through which God provides healing.

There are lessons we can learn from the way our Pentecostal ancestors responded to the pandemic of 1918-1920:

(1) We can follow their example by setting aside worry about our rights and focusing on the greater good; (2) like evangelist R. B. Hayes, we can also favor common sense; (3) like Bishop King, we can rest and be thankful for it, but not neglect praying for the sick; (4) like Florence Goff and others, we can serve diligently and without fear, but also with safe practices; (5) we can believe that God answers prayer according to His divine purposes; (6) we can choose not to be contentious about non-essential points of doctrine; and (7) lastly, we can give thanks that whether by a great miracle or daily sustaining grace, God is always with us and at work. □

“There are lessons we can learn from the way our Pentecostal ancestors responded to the pandemic of 1918-1920.”



G.F. Taylor: “The fever left me that night.”

Photo Credit: IPHC Archives / North Carolina Conference



# In a Time of Quarantine, Take **TIME** to **PRAY**

Don't be in such a hurry to get back to work.  
God has given us this time to spend with Him.



BY DENISE  
GEDDA

DENISE GEDDA is an ordained minister with LifePoint Ministries, which is the IPHC's Georgia conference. She currently serves as WIN Director for LifePoint. Denise left her career in the legal field to pursue the call of God and to be a voice in the church. She and her husband, Gordon, have hearts to "minister to ministers" through prayer, encouragement and through the ministry of Shepherds Guide, Inc. They live in Kansas City, Missouri.

**E**arly in March my husband and I were in another country when the world seemed to shift abruptly. Because of the coronavirus pandemic we were asked to return home so the nation we were visiting could begin the process of quarantine to protect their citizens.

Since that day we have watched the unfolding of something truly unprecedented in our lifetimes. Like you, our lives were interrupted and almost everything stopped. Government leaders ordered everyone to "shelter in place."

We can be sure God has allowed this interruption for a purpose. These are not uncertain days; they are very certain days in His plan for this world and for His church. Indeed, I feel that those same hands that hold back the enemies of Israel are holding His church, while at the same time allowing her to be shaken free from the worldliness that has caused her to drift in some areas.

A friend recently told me that all it takes to drift is to stop rowing. The kingdom of God is always moving; it is never idle. If we stop rowing, drift is inevitable. But our loving Father uses storms as lessons and allows time to stand still to reposition His people so we can win battles. God is not going to let us drift. He will keep us on course!

God will use these unprecedented difficulties to propel His church out of comfortable places and to thrust us into strange and unordinary places. We are in such a time now!

As leaders, we are good at the busyness and joyful noise of ministry, but oftentimes it is at the expense of our quiet times with the Lord. Today almost the entire world is under some type of order temporarily prohibiting our gathering in church buildings.

How interesting that this time of "interruption" came at Easter, one of the holiest times of our faith. Is it possible that He wants to meet with us

individually during this time of being shut in with the smallest of ministry audiences—our own family members?

During His ministry upon this earth, Jesus encountered multitudes everywhere. Everyone wanted a touch or a moment of time with Him. But how many were comfortable in His presence?

Today, in this season of quarantine, He calls us to be with Him, to come aside and get comfortable in His presence again. He issues no greater call than the call to Himself; this is what his death paid for, to give us access to Him!

This day is specific in its calling. I find myself praying the words of Mark 4:34: "...and when the disciples were alone with Him, He explained all things to them." As I have quietly meditated on these simple words, He is explaining things to me that are necessary for this next season of harvest.

## PREPARE FOR A SEASON OF HARVEST!

Scripture is clear that the greatest evil will be revealed in the latter days (of which we are certainly a part). But Scripture is also clear that this same generation of wickedness and lawlessness will experience the greatest outpouring of God's promised mercy and power.

I am convinced that this next season of ministry for the church will look different than what we see now. As surely as the gospel first spread from Jerusalem on Roman roads built during extreme days, we will now see the church move forward into the next season of the harvest across bridges built by Holy Spirit empowered intercession.

For some time now I have been drawn to the pattern of intercession given to us in the story of Abraham when he prayed for his nephew, Lot. There is no purer motive than love—and no purer human love than that which we have for our families.

As you read through Genesis 18 and 19, it is clear that Lot had no idea that destruction was marching toward him and his family. But Abraham saw the coming judgment because he spent time with the Lord that day, and the Lord explained these things to him. He told Abraham what was about to happen, and He allowed Abraham to plead for the life of his family. The Lord listened to Abraham's words, but He also heard Abraham's heart of love.

When the Lord's angels marched toward Sodom with an assignment to destroy, they first went to Lot's house to lead him and his family to safety. The Bible never records one single prayer that Lot prayed for himself or for his family. Yet because of Abraham's intercession on his behalf, the angels literally took Lot and his family by the hand and yanked them to safety—even though they appeared to be in no hurry themselves to leave the evil city they called home (see Genesis 19:16).

I am convinced this is a picture of what our next season of ministry will look like in the church. We need intercession that moves the heart of the Father to action on behalf of those who have no idea the dangerous ground they stand on!

Church leaders, be encouraged! You and I are being given the greatest of opportunities during this pandemic. We have been given time alone with Him now to get comfortable in His presence again, to ask questions and have Him explain all things to us.

Make no mistake, this final season of harvesting will produce the greatest but most challenging "catch" of souls ever witnessed. These souls have been born into the "seen it all, done it all" era of the church—and church as normal is not going to impact them for eternity. Only the promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the earth will reach them.

Intercession is the "instrument" of God's choosing; it will direct and propel this outpouring forward. God's plan for His church has always been the same; He promised in Isaiah 56:7: "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations."

The conversations we have with the Lord in these days will redirect our drifts and reset our ministries for the next season. I am so very encouraged by the intentionality in which I hear His call to come aside with Him—and

to know that the IPHC is among those hand-chosen by His loving heart to minister life to this generation of souls.

These unprecedented times will yield unprecedented results, and the prophetic voices and intercessors all over this globe are having their vision and hearing fine-tuned as part of this unfolding plan. This next season of church ministry excites me!

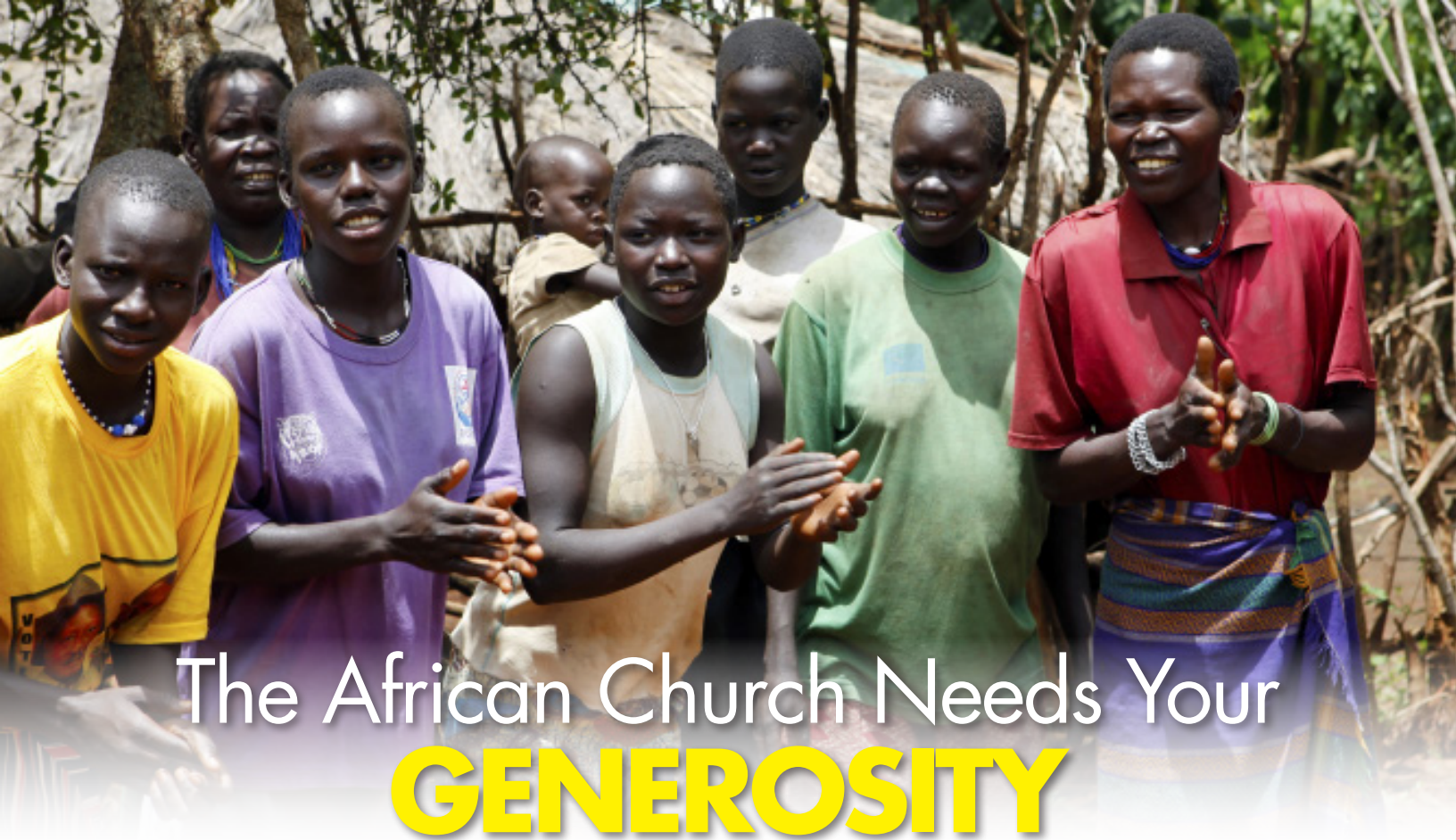
When we emerge from this time alone with Him, perhaps we won't rush to refill our time with some of these heavy things He has shaken free from us, but we will instead permit Him to streamline our ministries to continue to allow us time to seek the eternal. This is only found in His presence, in the secret place of communion with Him.

I am praying that in this next season of ministry, we will see prayer returned to the place of power that He intended in His church. The Architect of Salvation uses the tool of intercession to dispatch a supernaturally ordinary army throughout the world into battle.

I see no greater use of my time than prayer. Prayer is my calling; it is also your calling as a leader. It is a high calling, requiring us to spend time alone with our first love. I hope you use this extra time we have been given to respond to His call. □

"Our loving Father uses storms as lessons and allows time to stand still to reposition His people so we can win battles."





# The African Church Needs Your **GENEROSITY**

The apostle Paul heard a Macedonian cry. A similar call can be heard today.



BY CHILUMBA  
CRISPIN ZULU

**BISHOP CHILUMBA CRISPIN ZULU** is the IPHC's National Overseer of Zambia. He was licensed in 1982 and later ordained. He has pioneered three churches, has been a pastor of four and is currently pastor of House of Prayer Worship Centre in Lusaka, Zambia. Bishop Zulu holds a bachelor's degree and a diploma in theology and international missions. He was the first Zambian principal of Duncan Bible College and has written five books. He and his wife, Alice, have five children.

The apostle Paul heard an unusual plea when he was on his second missionary journey. Acts 16:9 says he had a vision of a man of Macedonia—a region that now includes part of northern Greece. The man was calling to him: “Come over to Macedonia and help us.”

This “Macedonian call” can still be heard today—from nations that need to be plowed with the gospel for the first time, and also from places where young churches are growing but need nurture. Africa, where I live, has certainly seen the growth of Christianity at a rapid rate. But we still need missionary help.

As we focus on the theme of “We Value Generosity” in the year 2020, I pray American congregations will hear this call. It is a cry for partnership, not patronage. The dictionary says “patronage” is “kindness done with an air of superiority.” Instead, we want to partner with you in equality and friendship.

In Luke 5:5-7, Jesus told Peter to let down his nets in the deep water. When he obeyed the Lord, there was such a catch that the nets began to break and the boats began to sink! Peter and his friends signaled to his partners to help them.

This is how we feel in my country today. We need help with a great catch of fish!

Today the church in the African boat is asking the church in the American boat to come and help us. Without help a great harvest can be lost.

The greatest threat to revival in Africa is the Islamic threat from the north. The northern parts of Africa, which were once strongholds of Christianity, are now Islamic. Perhaps this happened because help that was needed was not rendered.

Traditional missionary thinking says we should send missionaries to places where the gospel has not yet gone. But I believe we should also pay close attention to where the harvest is taking place, so that we can help our brethren bring in the harvest and conserve it. If we carry out our work strategically, we can equip those in harvest fields to become missionary



movements that will eventually reach communities and countries that we cannot reach.

The world has become a global village. As our American brethren help their African brethren, we should practice what can be called “missions with a face.” By this I mean as we receive help from a sending nation, we do not want to see only the missionaries who were sent—we also want to see the congregations who sent them. We want to be in partnership with you!

How can an American congregation partner with a church in a developing nation in Africa to lift it up out of poverty? Perhaps the best way is for American congregations to “adopt” churches in developing nations. By sending not only money but trained professionals to help on short-term trips, you can provide what we need most:

- Leadership development (seminars, books and ongoing training)
- Biblical education (including theological libraries)
- Church facilities (construction and improvements)
- Training in church administration
- Assistance in health-care (such as mosquito nets, medicines and clinics)
- Environmental improvement (such as water wells)
- Resources for the elimination of poverty (including schools, literacy training and job training).

When churches ask me how they can help a local congregation here in Zambia, I share this list with them. Please consider identifying a church that you can adopt, and then raising the funds to provide any or all of these:

### **1. A milling plant to produce maize flour.**

A facility for grinding this essential food will become a great blessing to our communities.

**2. A fish farm.** Some churches are located in areas with large lakes or rivers which can be utilized through aquaculture to transform lives. Our country's fish stock is way below what we consume, so this presents a huge opportunity.

**3. Microloans for women.** In our nation, women have the potential to lift their families out of poverty—but they need a way to begin. An injection of capital, even a small amount, can give a woman the ability to start a small business that will grow.

**4. Fertilizer support programs.** More than 60 percent of our people in Zambia are small-scale farmers who need support. Even giving these farmers fertilizer to grow their crops can be life-changing. This kind of empowerment does not have to be ongoing; even a onetime investment can eventually bring sustainability and productivity.

**5. Donations of farm animals.** Providing goats or cows to church families can provide jobs and income for them.

**6. Feeding programs for children.** Many IPHC churches in Zambia operate community schools. Providing daily meals for children from destitute families can go a

long way to alleviate poverty. This also lifts the children's concentration levels and overall classroom performance. This program can have a lasting impact on children because they will excel in their studies and become a blessing to their families and the nation.

### **7. Short-term or summer volunteer workers.**

Our churches are full of people who are miserable. Many of them are passing through humiliating circumstances and living in the worst conditions imaginable. Many of them do not know when they will get their next meal. When our American friends come to bless us, we shed tears of joy knowing that a brother or sister in Christ cares for us. We are ready to welcome you!

Paul told his disciple Titus to encourage the believers in Crete, so they would “be careful to engage in good deeds” (Titus 3:8). It is not enough just to preach the gospel. We must teach our disciples how to thrive and break free from poverty. When you partner with us, and help our people both physically, economically and spiritually, we will be able to take the gospel to other nations.

“When our American friends come to bless us, we shed tears of joy knowing that a brother or sister in Christ cares for us.”

### **8. Volunteer**

**teacher allowances.** We have many volunteer teachers who give their all without any help financially. These teachers have a great burden to help others. But if we provide something for their labor they will be more motivated to serve.

### **9. Provision for children's school**

**uniforms and supplies.** The children in our schools are in dire need of shoes, uniforms, chalk, books for teachers and pupils, flip charts, pens, pencils and other resources. Your investment in a classroom, a playground or a library could change a community in one generation.

### **10. Daycare and early childhood learning.**

The young children in our communities need toys and other resources that will aid in their development. If we can reach the youngest kids in our communities, we can reach their parents. And we can assure that the most vulnerable children will have a chance to go to school and live productive lives.

Please be generous. Please ask the Lord how you can adopt a church in Africa or in another part of the world where people are struggling to survive. We believe all the resources we need are within the family called the worldwide IPHC. I know that when show generosity, an abundant spiritual blessing will come to the churches of America. □

# During This Pandemic, We Need More Aggressive Prayer



The Holy Spirit told me in April:  
“Remember Rees Howells—and pray like he prayed.”



BY J. LEE  
GRADY

J. LEE GRADY is an author, traveling minister and former editor of *Charisma* magazine. Author of several books including *10 Lies the Church Tells Women* and *Set My Heart on Fire*, Lee leads The Mordecai Project—a missionary organization that focuses on bringing the healing of Christ to women who are abused and marginalized. Lee has been ordained in the IPHC since 2000, and he and his wife, Deborah, live in LaGrange, Georgia. You can learn more about his ministry at [leegrady.com](http://leegrady.com).

**W**e are living in one of the most uncomfortable times I’ve ever known. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought the world to its knees. Workplaces are closed. Hospitals are overcrowded. The global economy teeters on the edge of collapse while everyone shelters in place. And fear is spreading faster than the virus itself.

Meanwhile, the normally bustling congregations of America are eerily quiet. All gatherings are canceled—including funerals. Many churches are conducting outreaches and food distribution, but social distancing makes any event challenging. Pastors are preaching their Sunday sermons into video cameras while their auditoriums are empty.

It’s a strange time—and the anxiety has triggered so many questions. People are wringing their hands and asking: *Is this the end of the world? Is the coronavirus God’s judgment? Are globalist world leaders going to take over the world with vaccines and computer chips?* People are making themselves sick by listening to doom-and-gloom predictions and negative news reports.

In early April I asked the Holy Spirit to help me understand what’s going on, and how He wants the church to respond to this crisis. As I prayed in the spirit, I sensed He spoke to me: “Remember Rees Howells—and pray like he prayed.”

Rees Howells was a humble missionary who established the Bible College of Wales in 1924. He was greatly influenced by the holiness movement, the same movement that shaped the IPHC.

During the years leading up to World War II, and during that awful conflict, Howells led his students to pray for the defeat of dictators like Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini. They also prayed fervently for Allied forces during the Battle of Britain, Dunkirk and D-Day. (Howells even wrote a book in 1939 called *God Challenges the Dictators*, in which he prophesied the defeat of Nazi and communist regimes.)



Before his death in 1950, Howells became a model of what prayer can accomplish. Like Daniel, Ezekiel and Elijah, Howells believed God can use one person's faith-filled prayers to change history. And like the apostle Paul, Howells taught that Christians must engage in intense spiritual warfare against invisible demonic forces.

Richard A. Maton, who wrote a biography of Howells' son called *Samuel Rees Howells, A Life of Intercession*, said: "Rees Howells was taught by the Holy Spirit that any person, government or international situation that hindered the spread of the gospel would become a legitimate target to be challenged and defeated through intercession. It was the Lord's will for the gospel to go to every person, and anything that got in the way of God's plan had to be confronted."

If there were ever a time in modern history when we need the faith of Rees Howells, it is in 2020—when so many dark spiritual powers are conspiring to stop the third great spiritual awakening that has been prophesied. All hell has been unleashed, and our comfortable Western churches cannot hope to defeat this enemy with our coffee bars, 20-minute sermons and moral compromise. We must become a praying church again. If we hope to engage the enemy, we must allow God to shake everything that can be shaken.

I don't feel qualified to be an intercessor of the same caliber as Rees Howells, but I'm asking God to train me for battle. I'm willing to be deployed in this crisis moment. Are you willing to be a spiritual warrior? The Spirit is urging us to run to the front lines. Here are a few ways you can begin:

## 1. BECOME MORE AGGRESSIVE.

Status quo prayers won't be enough in seasons of spiritual battle. There is a time to go to war in the spirit, and it requires a militant attitude toward the enemy. When Elisha told King Joash to take arrows and strike the ground, in preparation for a battle, the king halfheartedly hit the ground only three times. Elisha said: "You should have struck it five or six times. Then you would have stricken Aram until you had finished them" (2 Kings 13:18-19). Too often we are satisfied with small victories because we didn't pray with enough intensity.

## 2. ASK BIG.

We can limit what God wants to do in the earth by praying in a puny way. Why would we settle for less when God can do the impossible? Elijah asked God to withhold the rain, and the rain stopped for three years. Then he prayed again and the rain returned. Rees Howells and his small band of prayer warriors in Wales asked God to remove Adolf Hitler from power. We must stop being so timid and begin to ask for global miracles.

## 3. COMBINE FASTING WITH PRAYER.

Fasting is not a way to bribe God. You do not need to forfeit food to get His attention. But fasting helps you focus on the Lord—and it intensifies prayer power. There are certain spiritual obstacles that need an extra push. When speaking of a demon that needed to be cast out, Jesus told His disciples: "But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting" (Matt. 17:21). With all of us sheltering in our homes, this is the perfect time to fast and pray.

## 4. DO A NIGHT WATCH.

There are moments in our lives when the Lord may woo us to spend time with Him in the night hours. In Song of Solomon, the bride hears her beloved calling her to get out of bed (5:2-6) and she doesn't respond quickly enough. Many of us are too distracted by the busyness of life to hear God call us to a season of prayer. Yet the Lord is looking for people who will listen to His battle secrets. Will you let Him pray through you?

## 5. GO TO THE DEPTHS OF PRAYER.

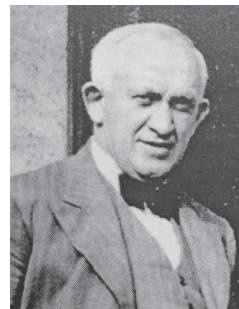
People who have allowed God to use them in intercession know that certain situations require travail. This is not easy prayer—it is the spiritual equivalent of childbirth! When Elijah prayed for rain to end a seven-year drought, the Bible says he "threw himself down on the ground and put his face between his knees" (1 Kings 18:42). It is travailing prayer that will bring a true, world-changing outpouring of God's Spirit.



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The apostle Paul also knew this level of agonizing travail, and he told the Romans that the Holy Spirit "intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words" (Rom. 8:26). We are invited to know the depths of prayer, but too often we are too busy, too lazy or too distracted to venture into the unknown realms of true spiritual maturity.

When Rees Howells engaged the spiritual forces operating in Nazi Germany, he said: "This is the battle of the ages, and victory here means victory for millions of people." We, too, must know that millions of souls are hanging in the balance. If we really want the world to find Jesus in the midst of this dark crisis, we must allow the Holy Spirit to pray through us in a deeper, messier and noisier way. Please enlist now. □



Welsh prayer warrior Rees Howells