

Encourage

Inspiration for IPHC Leaders

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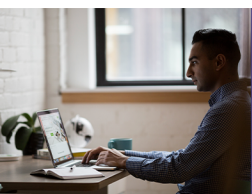


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In a Time of Crisis, God Calls Us to **GIVE**

When we look back on the 2020 pandemic,
may it be said that we were generous.

A generous heart: A pastor in Kenya shares food with a needy family during the COVID-19 pandemic.



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](#).

Rodney Stark's *The Rise of Christianity* was first published in 1997, and I read it soon afterwards. The subtitle captured my attention then, and continues to this day: *How the Obscure, Marginal Jesus Movement Became the Dominant Religious Force in the Western World in a Few Centuries*. Now that's a subtitle!

Stark describes how the followers of a Galilean itinerant preacher took over the Roman Empire over a 300-year period. Among the author's explanations was this: The love of God directed Jesus' followers to value the life of their neighbor more than their own lives. Because of God's love, many Christians were willing to risk infection, disease, sickness and death, in order to help sick neighbors.

It didn't matter if the neighbor was a Christian or not. What mattered was that God loved the sick neighbor, and Christians were commanded to love their neighbors as well as their enemies.

When the epidemics ended, the local pagan population noticed that it was Christians who often stayed and provided what forms of care they could. It was sacrificial love that led the recovering sick, or the families of the deceased, to want to know more about a God who would love like that.

About 20 years ago when I read that section of Stark's book, I read it more from the standpoint of historical reflection. The closest I could come to seriously reflecting on what it meant to stand with the sick during a pandemic was the AIDS crisis of the 1980s.

My reflections about my response were not particularly edifying. I realized that my responses were judgmental and harsh: “They got what they deserved,” “God will not be mocked,” “Sin is deadly” or “Make sure you don’t touch someone with HIV.”

Thankfully there were many who were more compassionate than I was. They were willing to be present with the dying, and to risk their own lives to show mercy, compassion and grace.

As the world is half-way through 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic reminds me greatly of what Stark wrote in 1997. All of us are trying to navigate through government policies of social distancing. We are trying to take care of ourselves and our families, and still show mercy to those who are ill.

For much of the world, COVID-19 patients are removed from neighborhoods and isolated. Yet, in other parts of the world, COVID patients are dying in homes, or their bodies are piled in the streets.

For many of us, our way of showing God’s love in this current crisis is through prayer, communication through social media and financial support. I am grateful that the IPHC has responded

generously to the global needs that continue to this day. IPHC World Missions Ministries has received several hundreds of thousands of dollars, all of which is going to a variety of needs around the globe. To learn more and to give, click [here](#).

Since the pandemic hit in early 2020, I have found myself thinking a lot about the generosity the Apostle Paul described in 2 Corinthians,

Philippians and Romans. Almost all of Paul’s comments about money are in terms of a severe famine that struck the Middle East during the reign of the Roman Emperor Claudius (AD 41-54).

Acts 11:27-30 tells of a Judean prophet named Agabus who came to the Jewish-Gentile mixed church in Syrian Antioch. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Agabus prophesied “that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world” (11:28). When Luke wrote this, he added that the famine did indeed occur during the reign of Claudius.

Luke then tells us that the Antioch church moved quickly to prepare for the famine (see Acts 11:29-30). That tells me several things: (1) the Antioch church had prophets and teachers who could discern

the times and offer prophetic messages (Acts 13:1); (2) the Antioch church was diverse, enabling the Holy Spirit to speak through different experiences; (3) the church did not wait for the famine to be fully manifested—instead they acted proactively to help; and (4) though there were tensions between believers in Jerusalem and Antioch, the love of God and unity of

the church were more important than competing personalities and theological differences.

I have concluded that Paul’s missionary journeys, recorded in Acts 13 and following, and in Paul’s letters, had several motives. Sharing the gospel through preaching was a major motive. But another motive was that the love of God, revealed in Jesus of Nazareth, had practical

“God, who is rich in mercy, has given us this year to be generous with our financial resources, our time, our energy and our love for Him and one another.”

Encourage

Place of hope. People of promise.

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application for how we care for one another.

The gospel is not my private ticket to heaven; it is God’s plan for caring for the world. Paul used the offering for the saints in Jerusalem as a way of showing the world something it had not seen: Jew and Gentile together for one purpose.

It’s amazing to reflect on God’s timing. It was in December 2012 that the Holy Spirit gave the IPHC our seven core values: Scripture, Pentecost, Holiness, Christ’s Kingdom, All Generations, Justice and Generosity. We committed in 2013 to spend a year on each of them. We knew that Generosity would be the theme for 2020.

We had no idea that COVID-19 would be the defining feature of 2020. But God knew.

That is why the 2020 pandemic, as unsettling and sad as it has been, does not define how we will respond. We respond because God, who is rich in mercy, has given us this year to be generous with our financial resources, our time, our energy and our love for Him and one another. □



In the Age of Digital Ministry, **YOU MUST UNPLUG**

This pandemic has forced us to do ministry online.
But make sure you don't burn out!



BY TIM
LAMB

TIM LAMB serves as the Conference Superintendent of LifePoint Ministries, formerly known as the Georgia Conference of the IPHC. He formerly served as a Senior/Lead Pastor, and he has more than 34 years of experience in church planting, church revitalization and pastoral ministry. Bishop Lamb is in his 40th year of ministry. He serves on various boards and committees for the IPHC, including the Council of Bishops, Emmanuel College Board of Trustees, IPHC Finance Committee and the Falcon Children's Home and Family Services Board. Tim and his wife, Carissa, live in Milledgeville, Georgia. You can follow him on Facebook and Twitter @TimLPMinistries.

Online meetings have become the new norm for many of us, at least for now. I'm encouraged that so many church leaders have adapted to this new way of ministry during the COVID-19 crisis. The use of online tools in our local churches should continue and will benefit us greatly.

Online ministry can be fun, frustrating, and fulfilling all at the same time. It can also be intimidating for those of us who might be technologically challenged. It is time consuming, but it is also time well invested.

We have the greatest opportunity ever to fulfill the Great Commission of Christ through online platforms. Church leaders are finding creative ways of shepherding their people, and we are seeing a stronger allegiance between members and leadership. Church ministry teams are meeting online to plan and prepare ways to implement new strategies to minister.

Churches are offering online Bible studies, and youth leaders have stepped up to the challenge by offering online children and youth ministry. All of this is exciting, and this new format can also be exhausting.

People who have never attended church are viewing online services, and leaders are seeking answers on how to best identify new guests. Pastors are encouraging their listeners to engage in their services by commenting or sharing about their meetings with others. And the results are amazing! Churches are winning more people to Christ and discipleship is happening.

What amazes me is the new meanings to different words that have surfaced over the past few months. For example, "lobby" no longer just

relates to the foyer area of a church; it refers to a platform online where the congregation can come together for fellowship before or after an online service. I believe we are seeing the global church unify in ways that will launch the gospel to the ends of the earth.

During this period of rapid change, many of us are overwhelmed and overloaded because we have been learning new ways to minister. It's almost like the glass of milk illustration—is it half full or half empty? I believe it has everything to do with perception.

Is this pandemic season an opportunity, or is it a distraction? Personally, I believe it's an opportunity for the church to rise up. The terms “unchurched” and “house church” have taken on new meanings as we explore online ministry. This virus has caused a breakthrough for the global church!

And while exciting things are happening, the Holy Spirit reminded me of the need to stay healthy—not only physically but also spiritually and emotionally. The biggest challenge for many of us during this season has been finding time to unplug.

How do we find time to step away from the computer to relax, refresh and recharge? Yesterday, my phone alerted me with a reminder of my average “screen time.” And while I know this is a feature on my phone, it is almost as if the Holy Spirit used this to remind me of my need to unplug.

In the first week of our shelter-in-place order I was facing new challenges. I was working from early mornings to late evenings—working harder but quickly burning out. A good friend of mine jokingly asked me this question, “Tim, when the pandemic is over, will anyone have their sanity?”

I recognized my need to unplug and recharge. My body needed rest, my heart and soul needed refreshing and I needed space in between all these hours of online meetings, phone calls and video trainings. But how do we manage to do this during such a demanding season?

I began to intentionally decide which books I would read during my time at home. I purchased Chris Maxwell's new book of poems, *Embracing Now: Pain, Joy, Healing, Living* and I have enjoyed reading a poem each morning to start my day. I'm also reading *Rethink Your Life* by Stan Toler and *Sparking Gems (Volume II)* by Rick Renner. Each of these books deals with a different aspect of my spiritual and emotional health.

During this pandemic I've enjoyed studying the life of the apostle Paul and his letters to the churches. There is a parallel between some of the things Paul experienced and what we are facing today. Paul knew what it looked like to minister outside the walls of a church building.

In Acts 16 we read how Paul attended a prayer meeting on the riverbank in Philippi. A church was birthed out of that prayer meeting. I've also reflected on Psalm 57, when David found refuge in God during a time of shelter.

During this pandemic, I find myself declaring God's promises as well as repenting and praying for mercy for our nation.

I've also enjoyed prayer walks around my neighborhood, working in my yard and taking boat rides on the lake. All of these things have helped me to unplug and recharge. However, these vital moments of refreshing don't just happen unless I'm intentional in scheduling time off. I encourage you to find the hobbies, books and other activities that will help you unplug.

As some states are now opening back up and churches are starting to open their doors again, how do we continue to unplug? Here are things I've learned over the past several weeks that I believe will help us in moving forward:

1. Determine. I must determine what “tool of ministry” is working best

for me. Consider your electronic devices—they usually have more apps and tools than we will ever need. We only use the apps that are most beneficial, and disregard the others. You must streamline.

2. Improve. Whatever tools you are using for online ministry, learn them well. At first people are forgiving, but as time advances people will expect better quality with your online presence.

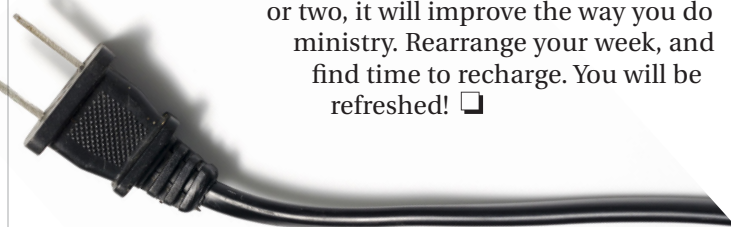
3. Schedule. I can spread my online meetings and online recordings over a seven-day workweek, or I can be intentional in scheduling time to unplug. Make time for needed breaks.

4. Everybody needs to unplug. These truths are not just for pastors. Everyone can have an online ministry presence. The need is great, the harvest is ready and we have been praying for workers in His field.

I encourage you to find time to rest and recharge. I promise you that when you make time to unplug for a few hours, or a day or two, it will improve the way you do ministry. Rearrange your week, and find time to recharge. You will be refreshed! ☐

“I promise you that when you make time to unplug for a few hours, or a day or two, it will improve the way you do ministry.”

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How My Church in Hong Kong Has Seen **GOD'S GOODNESS**

Our church has been able to give almost \$5 million to missions. Here's how.



By DONAVAN NG

DONAVAN NG is the Field Superintendent of the IPHC in Hong Kong. He is an Executive Member of the IPHC's Global Leadership Council, which is based in U.S. and has operations in more than 100 nations. He also serves on the Advisory Committee of the Pentecostal World Fellowship, which is a fellowship of evangelical and Pentecostal churches and denominations in 33 countries. Locally, Rev. Ng is the Consultant Pastor of Wing Kwong PH Church, which has 7,000 members.

People around me would know my fondness of the word “munificence” when it comes to describing the generosity of God. To me, our God is not only abundant in resources but also willing to give. If I am considered a generous person and my church is a giving church, it is just a natural response to God's giving nature. He has given us blessings beyond imagination. The apostle Paul understood this. He told the Corinthians: “You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.” (2 Cor. 9:11)

Wing Kwong Church has grown by giving. For instance, the “Five Loaves Two Fish” program has so far generated a total donation of \$2,253,310 in U.S. funds, and all this money went to support projects endorsed by World Missions Ministries. Wing Kwong Church has also taken part in the People-to-People program since 2002, and by now we have donated \$1,272,412 (U.S.) in support of children in need all over the world.

Combined with donations for special world missions projects, Wing Kwong Church has made a total donation of \$4,940,490 (U.S.) to the IPHC. These figures are quoted not to make our church look good, but to testify to the munificence of God. The amount of donations has been growing every year, even during times of economic crisis and political turmoil. The statistics speak of the unceasing love and blessings of our Lord.

Our church's commitment to persistent and consistent giving reflects how we value our roots. We are a church that was planted by courageous,

selfless missionaries. Our congregation simply would not exist in the first place without missionaries from the United States. We treasure the solidarity we have with our global IPHC family and will never give it up.

Some churches go independent and disconnect from their origins when they grow to a certain size. To me, this is stupidity. All pastors at Wing Kwong Church are required to hold firm the standpoint that we will stay a part of the IPHC. We cherish this relationship!

Many people think that mission ministries are fruitless in terms of getting the investment back for another field. I think the testimony of Wing Kwong Church can serve as a counter example. It has always been my belief that churches planted outside the United States should have a goal to become self-sufficient financially.

The mentality that a mission church should depend on World Missions support long-term can kill a church. If we stay dependent, we will never experience the munificence of God's providence. On the other hand, when a planted church grows strong, it will never forget its origins and must try everything possible to work together with the team at World Missions Ministries.

I have always shared with my brothers and sisters that the Joe. E. Campbell Hall, which was demolished for the building of a new extension of Wing Kwong College in 2005, was initially built with funds donated by many believers of the IPHC in the United States. Most of these donors were not rich people. They could not even afford airline tickets to Hong Kong to see the building themselves. Yet they were faithful followers of our Lord. Their kingdom-consciousness of these faithful servants enabled them to share with us, even though they did not have much. Eventually a megachurch was planted in Hong Kong.

With this great precedent in mind, I fully understand why we should keep on giving to missions even under toughest circumstances. At the time of the construction of Wing Kwong Church's new building, we were in great financial need. Yet even then, we did not stop our donations in support of world missions. It is truly more blessed to give than to receive.

Now is a time of great potential in expanding the Lord's kingdom on earth. This is a stage prepared for us by our Lord. If only we could have the kingdom consciousness, like what our fellow brothers and sisters from the United States have been doing, our denomination would undoubtedly grow beyond imagination.

The organizational structure, bonding, connection and fellowship among the family of IPHC ministries under the leadership of the WMM around the world forms a strong basis for expansion. The more united we are, the more efficient and strong we will be.

I even think that our organizational structure sets an effective paradigm for the weak to grow strong, from few to many and from small to great. God can take a small lunch, bless it and feed a multitude. He can also take a

small mustard seed and make it a giant plant. He will multiply our gifts and bring great increase.

I am delighted to say that we in Hong Kong are proud to be a part of the IPHC. This is our global family and all of us believe in the same God, whose providence always exceeds what we ask for, wherever we are—in Hong Kong, in the States, or anywhere else on this planet.

As we study and celebrate our core value of generosity in 2020, let us remember the words of the apostle Paul to the Corinthians: "Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also

reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under

compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2Cor 9:6-7). May we both give and reap generously in this next season of growth. □

The IPHC's Wing Kwong Church is a beacon of hope in Hong Kong.

BELOW:
This Chinese word means "generosity."



慷慨大方



LET'S CONNECT

With Our Global Church Family

The essence of Pentecost is unity.
We are one in spite of racial and ethnic differences.



BY JOEL
DIBETSOE

JOEL DIBETSOE leads the IPHC in South Africa as National Overseer and Presiding Bishop. A third-generation member of the IPHC, he planted and pastored Mogwase Church from 1990 to 2002 while also serving as a youth leader. He served as a South Western Conference Superintendent from 2002-2015 and as an Assistant National Overseer for South Africa. He holds a Bachelor of Ministry diploma in Business Management and Trading and is an accredited DCPI trainer. Bishop Dibetsoe is married to Khumoetsile Deliah and they are blessed with three daughters.

Friendship, fellowship and unity are some of the key words that characterize the gospel. These words were by Jesus himself, and they are echoed and emphasized many times by the apostles. Unity is the hallmark of true Pentecost. The church is called to work together as a community because the Holy Spirit has made us one in Christ.

The modern statistics of world evangelism will increase, and we will achieve more, if all our efforts are brought together and the church operates as one strong united force.

This is what Jesus prayed for in John 17. He said: "That they may be one, just as We are one. I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them as You have loved Me" (John 17:22-23, NASB).

This scripture goes far beyond describing unity and fellowship, which are important. It explains that the world will receive uncompromised or undiluted messages of the cross from the Church when we are in unity with Christ and each other. We have been given one vision, one Christ and one Spirit.

The church of Jesus Christ must have unity in its foundations. This can never be over-emphasized! Unity is power, and there is power in working together. Inclusivity must be the character of the church. That means there can be no divisions among us—no divisions of race, ethnicity, class, politics, age, gender or economics.

The meaning of the word church in itself has the element of inclusivity. It means “called out ones.” We are called out to form His body. The apostle Paul said that the church must function together. Romans 15:6 says: “That *together* you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

I come from a nation that has known incredible division and conflict. But I have learned that true unity is possible in God’s kingdom. There are three ways we can achieve a greater unity, even across international borders:

1. BUILD BRIDGES TO REACH OTHER CULTURES.

The apostle Paul told the Galatians that Jesus has dismantled all divisions. “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28).

In the world we live in, we are inundated with differences based on geographical demarcations, color, race, language, nationality, class and gender. These scenarios have become impediments to the work of the church, when they should have helped to make the church more progressive.

It is a given that we are different. We come from different countries, languages and cultures and ways of living; but the message of the Cross knows no bounds. In Christ we should avoid labelling people and profiling them. If God could trust me with this gospel, I should be in a position to entrust others with it. I must be an example of Christ’s love for all people.

Our church in South Africa sent a missionary to Madagascar. For ten years he and his family were there, in that foreign country. They studied their language and culture and tried to win the trust of the Malagasy people. On the tenth year there was a civil war and this family had to be evacuated out of the country.

By God’s grace one young family was identified to start the work after the missionary family was evacuated. Can you guess what happened? What this young Malagasy couple achieved in a short space of time surpassed by far what our missionary had achieved in ten years.

They were locals, they knew and spoke the language, and they knew the people. They did not have to deal with culture shock or adapt to different styles. All we needed to do was empower and support them. Today this church in Madagascar is growing.

2. WE MUST FIND UNITY IN OUR DIVERSITY.

I believe unity can be attained in diverse situations. But this will require a deliberate endeavor by church leaders to reach out and engage leaders from other nationalities. We must network and strengthen each other to achieve more for Christ. We must break walls of nationality and see other leaders as resources in areas we cannot reach.

Cultural differences can be a hindrance to the spreading of the gospel, but if we work with all people of different languages, races and genders and support them as they do the work, we can achieve more. We will also foster unity in the body of Christ. Instead of remaining divided, we can complement each others’ weaknesses.

Look at nature. The ants, even though they are some of the smallest creatures in the world, are able to bring down an insect 100 times their size because of their sheer numbers.

Lions are not necessarily the strongest, fastest, biggest or tallest animals in the world, yet a lion is referred to “king of the jungle.” Their strength and success is in numbers. They live as a pride—and together they conquer the largest, fastest or even the strongest animals around. One lion cannot survive a month in the jungle alone!

We find this principle in the Bible. Paul told the Corinthians: “For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ” (1 Cor. 12:12). Only when we work together can we reach maximum effectiveness.

“I come from a nation that has known incredible division and conflict. But I have learned that true unity is possible in God’s kingdom.”

3. WE MUST LEARN TO NETWORK ACROSS OUR BORDERS.

One of the most powerful tools the church has is networking. It is believed that more networks lead to more church plants. No church should endeavor to accomplish the Great Commission alone. We must learn to share resources, help each other and build strategic partnerships.

Networks centralize the recruiting, training, funding and planting of churches to increase success rates and leave fewer resources to waste. It is believed that churches in networks generally remain in relationship with one another and are led by a centralized leadership team.

I am thankful to the vision of the IPHC’s World Missions Ministries (WMM) and the annual Global Leadership Summit. This event brings all IPHC national leaders from the whole world together for training, equipping and empowering. Being together cements the relationships among all of us.

The Global Leadership Summit is networking at its best. Out of this network we are able to share the hearts of our leaders and make a cooperate decision to ensure the vision is achieved. For example, right now we are all focused on the Arise 2033 strategy, to see many churches planted around the world by that important date.

We could never achieve that goal in isolation. But together, as the Holy Spirit fills us with His power, we will reach the world for Jesus. □



God Has Pushed a Big Reset Button

We can't go back to last year's "normal" setting.
Prepare your heart for change.



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.

Unless you've been hiding under a rock for three months, you know gasoline has been at record low prices. I paid \$1.25 a gallon in Georgia in May. Some states have reported prices below a dollar a gallon.

There are two reasons for the price drop: Not as many people are buying gasoline because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and Russia and Saudi Arabia are engaged in a price war, causing the oil supply to swing up. Market analysts say they've never seen such a glut of oil.

As I pondered this situation recently the Holy Spirit spoke to my heart and said: "Now is the time to fill up." I knew He wasn't talking about my car's gas tank. Sometimes there are things in the natural world that send spiritual messages. I believe God is asking the church in this season of lockdown to fill our spiritual reserves.

Jesus talked about the importance of having enough oil. The five wise virgins in His parable in Matthew 25 made sure they had enough oil for their lamps, while the five foolish ones weren't prepared. They were locked out of the wedding feast because they didn't consider oil an essential commodity. Right now, during this coronavirus pandemic, God has hit a "reset" button because He wants us to be ready for what's coming.

We've been much like the foolish virgins. The oil of the Holy Spirit hasn't been important to us. We can take it or leave it. We don't think we need God's supernatural power because we have technology, comfortable church buildings, economic prosperity, eloquent preachers and slick contemporary worship.

We figured out a way to do church without God's help. We even have books and church growth gurus to teach us how to manufacture a cool

vibe, entertain people for 60 minutes and get them out quickly. Revivalist A.W. Tozer said it this way: “If the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the church today, 95 percent of what we do would go on and no one would know the difference.”

Many churches today are devoid of the Holy Spirit’s raw power. Conversions are rare. Baptismal tanks are dry. Altars are empty. We don’t hear many testimonies of healings. And how long has it been since someone was freed from a demon? Our processed version of Christianity doesn’t resemble the book of Acts.

This must change. What if God wants to send a global awakening of the Holy Spirit after this coronavirus pandemic? Do we have enough oil in our lamps to handle the next revival? We have the term “Pentecostal” in the name of our denomination, but do we really live up to the true meaning of the word? Here are three things you should do immediately to prepare your heart for what’s coming:

1. PRAY FOR A SPIRITUAL RESET.

When the pandemic started in March, my schedule was canceled, and I realized how busy I’d become. As uncomfortable as it was to adjust my routine, I knew I needed the break—even if it meant less income. I asked the Lord to change my habits, purify my thoughts and attitudes, and give me more hunger for Him. I wanted personal revival.

As I began soaking in God’s Word, I realized the day of Pentecost was May 31. The Lord told me to read the book of Acts every day in May leading up to that date. Reading about the early church stoked my hunger for God even more. I don’t want to settle for anything less than New Testament revival. The book of Acts is still God’s template for how He works, and we need to adjust our lives to it.

2. LET GOD REFINE AND PRUNE.

Before Jesus came, John the Baptist had to prepare the way. That process requires repentance and a washing away of the old. Whenever God is about to do a new thing, He recalibrates us so we don’t go back to our old ways. He can’t put new wine in old wineskins.

The way we did things in previous seasons won’t work in this next move. Ask God to trim away the dead branches of stale religion—in your life and in your church.

3. SEEK A REFILLING.

Dependence on the Holy Spirit was the early church’s secret. The Spirit anointed the first disciples to heal the sick, discern evil spirits and carry the gospel boldly to difficult places. How did we ever think we could do ministry without that power?

When Paul went to Ephesus he met some men who believed in Jesus in an intellectual way, yet they had never been born again. In fact they didn’t know there was a Holy Spirit (see Acts. 19:1-7). This reminds me of many American churches. We go through the motions of church, but we are clueless about Pentecost.

Now is the time to ask Him to fill you. Don’t wait until your regular routine resumes. The last thing we need is to go back to last year’s “normal” setting. What God has in store for us in 2020 is unprecedented. Only those with full tanks will be able to handle it.

Do you have the fire of Pentecost? The apostle Paul tells us that all Christians should have a spiritual temperature that reaches the boiling point. In Romans 12:11 he commands us to be “fervent in spirit.” The Greek word for “fervent” is *zeo*, which means “to boil like hot liquid or to glow like hot metal.” I challenge you to use this extra time to examine your heart in these areas:

- Am I fully surrendered to God in all areas? Is Jesus truly my Lord?
- Have I allowed the things of the world to steal my passion for Jesus?
- Do I need to repent of any hidden sins or unhealthy habits?
- Is spending time with the Lord a priority, or have other things become more important?
- Am I using my spiritual gifts to serve others?
- Am I bold enough to share Jesus with others? Or am I ashamed of my faith?



“What if God wants to send a global awakening of the Holy Spirit after this coronavirus pandemic?”

If you are willing to take this risky journey, please join me as we pursue a fresh Pentecost. You can say this prayer as you begin:

“Lord, please set my heart ablaze. Send a fresh wave of the Holy Spirit to my church, my city and my nation. We need another earth-shaking revival like the great awakenings of past generations. Do it again, Lord. Let the Book of Acts be repeated in my lifetime. Unleash the full force of Pentecost, and let me be a part of it. I don’t want to be a spectator in this movement. I want to be in the very middle of it! Let me heart burn with the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and let me carry that fire everywhere You send me.” □

