

Encourage

Inspiration for IPHC Leaders

An Honest Conversation About **RACISM** and the **CHURCH**

WITH DEMETRIUS MILES, RACHEL FLOYD AND KEVIN DREW ROBINSON



In This Difficult Season,
Nothing Is Impossible
With God

BY DOUG BEACHAM

Why We
Prayerfully
Value Generosity

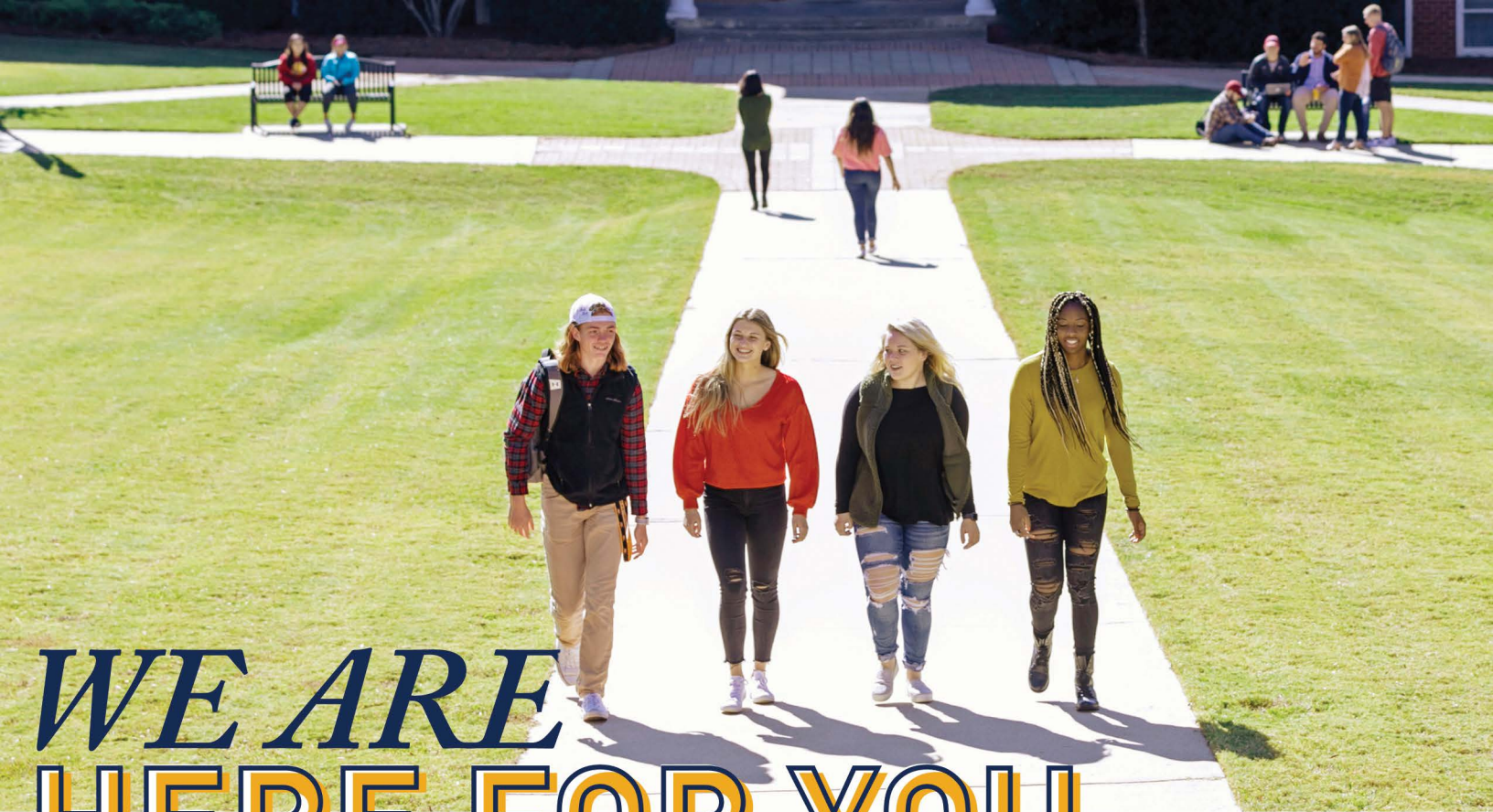
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God Used a Pandemic
to Recharge My Prayer Life

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Before We Repent,
We Must Lament

BY J. LEE GRADY



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In This Difficult Season, Nothing Is Impossible With God

God's promises are unchanged, in spite of a pandemic,
racial tension and financial strain.



BY DOUG
BEACHAM

DOUG BEACHAM is the presiding bishop of the IPHC. He has served in various roles in the church including Georgia Conference Superintendent, executive director of Church Education Ministries, and executive director of World Missions Ministries. You can follow Bishop Beacham on [Facebook](#) or Twitter [@DougBeacham](#).

In this issue of *Encourage*, we offer an interview with three African-American IPHC pastors: Demetrius Miles from Arizona and Rachel Floyd and Kevin Drew Robinson from North Carolina. I am grateful for the honesty and hope that is found in this vital conversation about race.

The African-American membership in the IPHC is not large. I'm praying the Holy Spirit will help us reach more brothers and sisters of African descent. Did you know the IPHC's largest membership is in Africa, with 1 million people? Their love for Jesus impacts our global family.

Issues of racism are always simmering beneath the surface, and they often rise to the surface. We have seen this in recent days. These tensions cause us to confront our national history. And most of all, racism in our culture challenges us about what it means to belong to God's kingdom.

In the 1990s, two events occurred that impacted the IPHC. In 1994, our denomination helped to form the Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches of North American (PCCNA), in which predominately white and black Pentecostal churches joined together in a show of unity. In 1996, the IPHC met at Northwood Temple in Fayetteville, North Carolina, and repented of the ways we had knowingly and unknowingly participated in racism.

Since then, the IPHC has addressed racism in various statements. Much was expressed in 2019 as the IPHC engaged in discussions related to our core value, "We Prayerfully Value Justice" (<https://iphc.org/corevalues/justice/>). In recent months, the Discipleship Ministries department of the IPHC provided a list of resources that help us to think, talk and live in ways that express God's redemptive purposes (<https://iphc.org/discipleship/2020/06/30/discipleship-ministries-recommends-resources-for-racial-reconciliation/>).

In 2013 the IPHC initiated a timeline for emphasizing each of our seven core values over a seven-year period. Though we could not see it at that time, I believe the Holy Spirit guided our timing. This year we have focused on the theme, “We Prayerfully Value Generosity.”

Through your giving to World Missions Ministries and its COVID-19 response, thousands around the world have received assistance (<https://iphc.org/missions/covid-19-international-relief-fund-report/>). Many individuals, congregations and even other nations where the IPHC has churches have contributed to this generous outreach. The needs remain, and the sharing of our resources is an important part of our witness to Jesus Christ.

I have heard from many pastors and superintendents that their income has remained relatively

stable, and in some instances, increased during this crisis. I have also heard that many of our smaller congregations are struggling financially.

Many of us are able to give online, or use the mail for checks, to contribute when we cannot be present for a corporate church gathering. But there are many unable to do that. I want to encourage congregations that are financially healthy to ask the conference superintendent if there is a congregation they can assist in this difficult time.

With 70 to 80 percent of our global membership outside the United States, many of our congregations have historically served Jesus in nations where religious freedoms are not recognized. Others are facing growing threats because of changing political realities.

In the United States, local congregations have had to adjust as civic authorities mandated limits

on public church services. In some places, such as California, restrictions even include a ban on public singing. Needless to say, discussions and controversies about health concerns and First Amendment religious liberties have risen to the surface.

The IPHC has encouraged local congregations to abide by best practice health policies mandated by local civic authorities. To my knowledge, the U.S. government has not prohibited the preaching of the gospel. We can freely use various media formats, and in some places outdoor services, to faithfully declare the Word of God even as we try to protect the most vulnerable people in our churches from the coronavirus.

Sadly, this pandemic does not seem to be slowing down. Life as normal has become life with COVID-19. Pastors and congregations

will continue to be tasked with being the body of Christ in unique ways. Doing the mission of Christ will continue to require adaptation, creativity and trust in the power and wisdom of the Holy Spirit.

The world is constantly changing, but the good news is that some things remain constant. Hebrews 13:8 tells us: “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.”

We know the Word of God will not return empty (see Isaiah 55:11). And we know, from Matthew 24:14, that our mission remains the same: “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.”

Whether we are experiencing a pandemic lockdown, racial conflicts or political volatility, our purpose is unchanged. For the IPHC, Isaiah 54:2-3 continues to shape our identity. We are a “Place of Hope” and a “People

“Our goals include being in 150 nations and having an IPHC congregation and/or house church in 75 percent of the counties of the United States by the year 2033.”

Encourage

A place of hope. A people of promise.

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of Promise.” Our ultimate hope is in God. God’s promises remain the foundation of our trust.

We also continue to pursue the IPHC’s vision of Arise 2033. Our goals include being in 150 nations and having an IPHC congregation and/or house church in 75 percent of the counties of the United States by the year 2033.

Both of these objectives are more attainable now than ever! We are discovering that through online services we are reaching people we never dreamed possible! This calls for active online discipleship, mentoring, training, equipping and releasing.

In this season, I find the angel Gabriel’s words to the Virgin Mary to be personally encouraging. Announcing that she would conceive through the power of the Holy Spirit, the angel declared, “For with God nothing will be impossible” (Luke 1:37).

May 2020 be a year of conception and birth of a great harvest for Christ’s kingdom! This is all possible because God is, according to Ephesians 3:20, “able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.” □

An Honest Conversation About **RACISM** and the **CHURCH**



We talked to three African American leaders in the IPHC about the path to racial healing.

These three seasoned pastors have paid a high price to serve the Lord in the IPHC. We are so grateful for their sacrifice and their commitment to reconciliation and healing. We talked to them about how we as a movement can overcome any inherent racism in the IPHC and how we can be more intentional about building racially inclusive churches.

ENCOURAGE: We hear a lot today about systemic racism in our culture, and especially in our law enforcement practices. But we need to talk about racism in the church.

How have you seen racism manifest itself in the church during your years in ministry?

RACHEL FLOYD: In my early years I was marginalized, not by the color of my skin but by my gender. I was not out to fight the system or my denomination; I just wanted to do what the Father called me to do. I know there is racism in the IPHC, but I have not experience or felt mistreated by those in leadership in the IPHC since I started in 2004 and joined in 2011.

KEVIN ROBINSON: I've seen and experienced racism in the church since the day first time I walked into a church almost 20 years ago. Racism is the act of marginalizing, discriminating, oppressing and or persecuting someone because of their ethnicity.

AN INTERVIEW WITH RACHEL FLOYD,
KEVIN DREW ROBINSON AND DEMETRIUS MILES

DEMETRIUS MILES: It has always been my desire to plant and lead multi-ethnic churches. I have witnessed God do some incredible things by bringing ethnicities together. And I have had the honor of leading a great church. However, I must acknowledge some harsh realities. I've seen many ethnicities come together weekly in our worship services, only to watch people go back to their separate lives and communities.

The first property we purchased was in a predominately white area. Some people in our community stopped by to question if I was the pastor and if we had purchased the property outright, or if we had multiple churches meeting in the building in order to pay the mortgage. When I have stood up to speak in church, I've seen first-time guests who were white walk out of the service because they didn't know I was the pastor.

I have been intentional about making sure my church's platform reflects the diversity of my congregation. I've had to do this at a very high price. It is significant and sometimes challenging for a non-black person to serve on the team with a lead African-American pastor.

I believe subconsciously, as an African-American leader with a passion for racial reconciliation, I was willing to do whatever it took to make that a reality. At times that meant being overly sensitive to the needs of my non-black team members and congregants.

It's not an easy task to balance the preferences of different cultures. I have endured all the complaints: "It's too loud," "It's too intense," "It's too emotional," "It's not intense enough," "It's too black," or "It's too white." I've also had to navigate through steering away from major political matters and walking the thin line of dealing with social justice issues without sounding militant.

ENCOURAGE: Have there been instances when you, or people of color you know, were mistreated or marginalized in the IPHC? Please be honest.

RACHEL FLOYD: It is often said that no journey starts without taking the first step. If we are to break remaining racial barriers in our movement, we as the church must be willing to step out of our comfort zones, turn back to God and love people where they are. I believe we will not just experience a little shower, but it will be great outpouring of holy fire and the powerful presence and anointing of the Holy Spirit of God!

DEMETRIUS MILES: My journey with the IPHC has been a great opportunity for me to foster genuine lifelong relationships that have been ordained by God. I believe many of our members have an authentic love for God and all of His people regardless of the color of their skin.

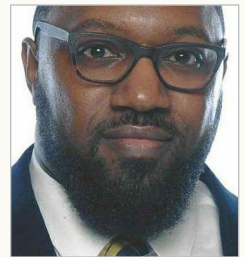
It's obvious that the IPHC is predominately white. As I have served in various capacities within IPHC, I have navigated with other African American and Hispanic leaders who were mistreated and marginalized.

Many times I have been the only African American person in a room, but I have been well received and honored by my IPHC family. I have always been aware that there are some people in our movement who still struggle with racism, and I have encountered some of these folks in different parts of the nation who were not fond of my presence.

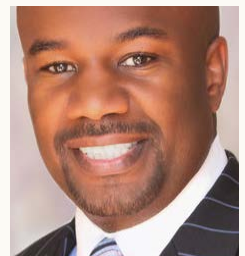
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RACHEL FLOYD serves as Senior Pastor at Refreshing Church in Asheville, N.C. In 1978 she was licensed as Evangelist Missionary and served as president of the Youth Department and Outreach Ministry for the Church of God in Christ (COGIC) in the Asheville, North Carolina District. She began pastoring in 1978 and she received her Doctorate of Divinity in 2009. Rachel has written two books including *Out of the Church Comfort Zone into the Combat Zone*. She joined the IPHC's Cornerstone Conference in 2010, and in 2015 she became the first black woman to be ordained as a pastor in that conference. She also was the first woman to become a regional pastor of 10 churches in the Western region. Rachel has three children, 10 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.



DR. KEVIN DREW ROBINSON was a Jehovah's Witness before he found Jesus Christ. He and his wife, Sheila, founded Divine Empowerment International Church in Fayetteville N.C., in 2006. Robinson joined the IPHC's North Carolina Conference in 2009, and he was ordained in that conference in 2010. He serves on the Executive Conference Council and the Evangelism Council, and he is the Multi-Cultural Ministries Director. He is a graduate of the Greater Mt. Zion Bible Institute and Seminary, with a Ph.D. in Religious Education and an honorary Ph.D. in Divinity. He is also a certified team member of the John Maxwell Group, and serves nationally as a public speaker, consultant and life coach.



DEMETRIUS MILES is founding pastor of Tucson Church International in Tucson, Arizona, a growing multi-ethnic and multi-generational church. He is a graduate of Southwestern Christian University Graduate School and serves as the president of Kingdom Life Ministries. He is the National Director of Multiethnic Ministries for the IPHC and serves as the Acts2Day director for Arizona. He and his wife, Angela, have one son.

KEVIN ROBINSON: I've seen racism manifested towards me and against others. White people have used a racial slur to refer to me on more than one occasion. Several of the African American pastors who were once connected with our organization have openly expressed feeling rejected, unaccepted and conveniently ignored when opportunities for fellowship were desired.

However, in several camp meetings and revivals where I have preached, I've met pastors in the IPHC who wanted fellowship with me.

ENCOURAGE: The IPHC was born in the early 1900s and was primarily a white denomination. What steps do you believe we must take to break remaining racial barriers in our movement? Are there spiritual forces we must address? What must we repent of and how must we shift our attitudes?

RACHEL FLOYD: Steps I believe we need to take: (1) Acknowledge that there is still a deep rooted issue in the movement of racism. This is a generational issue that goes back to our forefathers; (2) Confess our sins. Racism is a matter of the heart. It's like cancer that has spread through the body. We must call it what it is—sin; (3) We must repent, knowing that Jesus has made level ground for all of us at the foot of the Cross. (4) We must forgive. Jesus said in Matthew 6:15: "But if you don't forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses"; and (5) We must love one another. If we want to see the spiritual forces of the darkness flee, and if we want to see miracles, then the church must come together in unity. Jesus said: "By this shall all men know you are My disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35).

DEMETRIUS MILES: There must first be an acknowledgment of the problem. We cannot reconcile what we don't confront. If we who are known for being Spirit-filled followers of Christ would examine and acknowledge our own hearts, repentance would be a natural outcome if racism is present.

Racism is imbedded in the heart of a person. It can't be uprooted by superficial means. Biblical repentance requires us to change the way we think. I don't believe we need more public displays of repentance in which we wash feet or embrace and then walk off the stage unchanged.

We need to have some hard conversations. The church has witnessed success in bringing ethnicities together for worship, but I don't believe we have had much success in bringing ethnicities together for reconciliation, which would lead to real community.

Reconciliation requires all parties to participate and take responsibility for their actions in the past and present.

My hope is that the IPHC family will approach this issue

of racism from a biblical, spiritual and comprehensive perspective, with intent to address the root system of racism and not just the fruit.

KEVIN ROBINSON: The first step is simple yet challenging. We must have an open mind to repent of the prejudices that have caused us to hate or discriminate. That conversation has to happen between an individual and God. Once an open and pure heart has been reconciled to God, the individual must have honest conversations with their immediate family, close friends and church in efforts to touch the heart to repent as well.

We can't be on our best behavior in public and hold this spirit of Satan in our hearts. The spirit of racism is deeply rooted in idolatry. This is the worst form of idolatry because it points to self-worship. Self-worship originated with Lucifer. Isaiah 14: 12-14 is very detailed in reference to the 5 statements of self-exaltation made in scripture.

One of the statements Satan made was: "I will exalt my throne against the stars of God." The mind that believes in ethnic superiority is a mind that has the potential to dominate other groups.

Therefore, it is essential that this idea of racial superiority be destroyed. Our attitudes must shift. Once we can come to this place without reservation, we will be ready to sit, ask questions, listen and be open-minded towards Blacks who have been impacted or affected by racism.

ENCOURAGE: During this national conversation on race, it has been said that white silence equals complicity in racism. We as a Christian movement do not want to be silent, but some white Christians feel unsure about what to say. What do you really want white leaders in the IPHC to say in this time?

RACHEL FLOYD: They need to call racism what it is. They need to say it is sin, and that it is unacceptable. The church is loud on issues such as abortion, homosexuality and same-sex marriage, but we are not loud enough on racism.

KEVIN ROBINSON: We want white Christians to listen, hear, be educated and speak out when there is evidence that this behavior is in operation.

DEMETRIUS MILES: I want to say that I appreciate all of my IPHC leaders who have reached out to me over the past several weeks during this season of racial tension. I acknowledge the struggle many of our leaders face when it comes to responding to matters of race. I would encourage leaders to allow wisdom to reign supreme in times like these, and don't think you have to solve the problem with your response.

My encouragement is to express empathy over elo-

“ If we who are known for being Spirit-filled followers of Christ would examine our own hearts, repentance would be a natural outcome if racism is present. ”

quence, and compassion over complicity. Sometimes showing up and saying, “I am with you, or “I am here for you,” is enough. You do not have to understand all of it. Racism may not be your experience. But we all can express love and compassion.

ENCOURAGE: How would you counsel a white, black or Hispanic pastor in the IPHC who really wants to grow a multi-cultural church? What steps must he or she take?

RACHEL FLOYD: I would offer this list of action steps:

Develop a vision. We can't accomplish reconciliation if we don't have a vision for multicultural ministry.

Make it a priority of prayer. Train intercessors to pray for you as the leader and for the vision.

Develop your outreach ministry. Become a church that knows no racial walls.

Show love and compassion at all times.

Prepare for harvest.


As a leader, be an example of love, prayer and faith in God's Word.

KEVIN ROBINSON: The concept of multiculturalism is very challenging. The church planter must have a heart for Christ our King, His kingdom and the citizens of the kingdom. No racial or ethnic culture can dominate the culture of God's kingdom.

Social, cultural or political preferences cannot take precedence. It is essential that the core values, mission statement, vision statement and inner workings of the ministry be established to serve, love, and develop people from all ethnic groups.


DEMETRIUS MILES: In my previous years of experience, I would give you what the experts have suggested or what I have seen work successfully in my own ministry. However, today I believe everything around us has changed. God is as work in our nation, and what has been hidden and laying at the root system within the house of God is being revealed and exposed so we can experience an authentic move of the Holy Spirit.

I would encourage every leader who wants to grow a multi-cultural church to get on their face before God in prayer and fasting and know that it is more than having the right music and teaching styles to get ethnicities to worship together. It's about experiencing the power of God to bring about reconciliation. This is what will transform families, cities, states and nations.

Pray earnestly, prepare yourself to reach other cultures and races, partner with mentors and churches that are like-minded, and persevere through all of the challenges associated with this assignment. 

“The church is loud on issues such as abortion, homosexuality and same-sex marriage, but we are not loud enough on racism.”





God Used a Pandemic to **RECHARGE** My Prayer Life

When I was stuck in quarantine,
I rediscovered the importance of spiritual intimacy.



BY DAYTON
BIRT

DAYTON BIRT is the Bishop of the IPHC's Redemption Ministries, with 65 churches in eastern Virginia, Maryland and parts of North Carolina. He earned a B.A. in Religion and a M.A. in Christian Ministry. He has served as a Christian school administrator, youth pastor, senior pastor, Conference Discipleship Ministries Director and the founder and director of Redemption Ministries School of Ministry. He has traveled to over 15 nations, preaching, teaching, training and evangelizing. Dayton and his wife, Lynn, have three grown daughters and five grandchildren.

I was in Alabama when I first heard the news that the United States was being overwhelmed with the coronavirus pandemic. I was very concerned for my family.

When I arrived back home in Virginia, my wife and three daughters informed me that they were putting me in “time out.” I was quarantined from my family! I was not allowed near them or our five grandchildren.

Although I didn't see the need for such drastic measures, I submitted to the precautions. For 14 days I stayed at my house with very limited human contact, other than my wife. And she wouldn't even kiss me after I had been gone for seven days!

I soon realized it was just going to be “me and Jesus” on the back porch drinking coffee every morning. Within a matter of days my relationship with my heavenly Father began to change. My prayer life became more intimate, transparent and powerful. Since those 14 days in mid-March, my relationship with the Lord has grown so much deeper. All because of a virus!

You, too, can use this prolonged pandemic to refocus and refuel. Here are a few steps I took to go deeper with Jesus during this crisis:

1. SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES BY READING, MEDITATION AND LISTENING.

I found a simple app called Abide that plays background sounds or music while Scriptures are read. This had a profound effect on me during the days before Easter. Reading the Scriptures during Holy Week is not something new to me, but hearing the Bible read at a time when I was pulled away from the “noise” of life had a transforming effect. The lesson I learned is that I must not only listen to the Word, but I must let the Word read me.

2. BE TRANSPARENT IN PRAYER.

I have many casual friendships, but I tend to keep my friends at arm's length. Often, I am not totally transparent or honest. I am careful how open I am with my real emotions. I am unsure if I should risk being "real."

Sometimes I do this with the Lord, too. Although I know He is present everywhere (Ps. 33:13-14), and that He can see everything and knows everything (1 John 3:20), I sometimes think I can camouflage my true heart. What I have learned is that the Lord laughs when I try to hide.

Psalms 139:11-12 says I can't hide anything from the Lord. I don't act like this all the time, but when I do I notice my prayers become empty. I felt the Holy Spirit urging me to move beyond the casual prayer to something deeper. I realized that I could no longer hide behind my own "fig leaves" that I used to cover my naked soul.

The lesson I learned during my pandemic "timeout" is that I can't hide from God's presence. Brutal honesty is a delight to the Lord. He knows me inside and out! I want to ramp up my prayers to a place where I am totally honest.

3. DRAW CLOSER IN PRAYER.

I can still hear my mother playing the classic hymn "Just a Closer Walk with Thee." There are many other modern worship songs that call us to be closer to Jesus. The Bethel song, "Closer," says: "Pull me a little closer, take me a little deeper, I want to know your heart."

During my 14 days of quarantine, and in the months following, I experienced more affection from God. Around the same time, I began to read several books by Doug Small, including *Prayer – The Heart of it All*, *The Great Exchange* and *Intercession: The Uncomfortable Strategic Middle*. These books have opened up the Scriptures to show the beauty and power of prayer.

The author quotes John Bunyan as saying: "Prayer is the sincere, sensible, affectionate pouring out of the heart or soul to God, through Christ, in the strength and assistance of the Holy Spirit." This sweet communion is the foundation of all other aspects of prayer that I am familiar with, such as petition, supplication, intercession and spiritual warfare.

After studying Scripture on all forms or expressions of prayer, I realized another lesson that changed my prayer life. I learned that communion with God demands words.

I have practiced quiet, contemplative for more than 20 years. I let praying "in my heart" or mind, with no words, take the place of private vocal prayer. But when I went into quarantine, with no one else to pray with, I began to realize that prayer is spoken! Hosea told Israel, "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say to Him; take away all

iniquity and receive us graciously" (Hosea 14:2).

Something happens when thoughts are spoken, even alone in prayer. As I sat on the back porch drinking my coffee, I rediscovered the experience of hearing myself saying a certain thing that just thinking alone does not produce. And yet prayer is beyond words. It is deeper than words.

When my life was slowed to a crawl because of the coronavirus, I became more aware that prayer begins in my heart before it is formulated in words.

"I pray this pandemic crisis will also make a way for you to rediscover the adventure of a close, intimate friendship with God."

4. DEVELOP A FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD IN PRAYER.

When I reconnected with my heavenly Father during this pandemic, I regained a new connection, confidentiality and intimate partnership with God the Father through Jesus Christ.

My wife Lynn and I will celebrate 40 years of marriage in September. She is my best friend and companion. This year I am also celebrating 55 years of my new life in Christ, since I accepted Jesus at the age of 8. I preached my first sermon when I was 16 and after a few years of living as a "prodigal son" I went to Emmanuel College and started serving in full time ministry at age 22.

From then to now, I have grown to love my Lord and Savior more and more.

Both my relationship with my wife, and my friendship with God, cannot go deep without intentionality. I must make an everyday choice to live in intimacy.

I intentionally walk in covenant with my wife and with Jesus. I am reminded that the Lord called Abraham "His friend," because Abraham obeyed God and kept His commandments (see Is. 41:8; James 2:23). But the Lord also confided in Abraham (Gen. 18:17-19). There was a mutual loyalty in their friendship. Likewise, Jesus told His disciples He had a desire to be open and confide in them too, because He wanted to reveal God's will to them (see John 15:15).

My prayer life continues to grow as I intentionally spend time in intimate, honest and vocal prayer that is focused on the Scriptures. I read the Word and let the Word read me!

In addition, the IPHC's recent prayer emphasis during the month of May, "10 Days to Pentecost," and the follow-up, "Arise in Prayer: Journey Through the Book of Acts" in June, provided even more help to focus my prayers.

I pray this pandemic crisis will also make a way for you to rediscover the adventure of a close, intimate friendship with God.



Before We **REPENT**, We Must **LAMENT**

The book of Lamentations reminds us that we won't change our attitudes until we cry.



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.

On a Sunday afternoon in June, a group of black, white and Latino Christians gathered in the central downtown square in LaGrange, Georgia, where I live. We met to address the pain people were feeling in the aftermath of George Floyd's tragic death in Minnesota.

Our Christian mayor spoke. Then we heard a short message from the chief of police, who is also a Christian. Then a dozen pastors—black and white, Baptist and Pentecostal—shared from their hearts about the ugly sin of racism.

My 34-year-old daughter, Margaret Grady Turner, who is an ordained minister, stood on the platform toward the end of the event. Her voice quivered during most of her brief message. A hush came over the crowd when she talked about the awkward challenge of raising an adopted black son in the United States today.

"Racism means to me that my black son was scared to be alive this weekend, and my white son wasn't," Margaret said.

She also told us that the American church has some unfinished business. "We haven't cried yet today. It might be time to allow the Holy Spirit to break our hearts," she said. "If we can't get together and cry about this, there is something deeply wrong." (You can watch Margaret's full message [here](#).)

Margaret's message helped me determine how I, as a white man, should respond to the racism that has been a part of my culture since before I was born. I've felt helpless, especially because I didn't know what to say to my African American friends who've felt fear when they were pulled over by cops or experienced discrimination on the job. The Holy Spirit showed me

where I have to start if I want to be a part of the healing in my nation.

Have you wondered what you can do to help the situation? Shedding tears is the best place to begin. “We have to lament and repent,” Margaret told us.

Lament? That’s a foreign concept in the modern church. In some cultures grieving is viewed as crucial, but in America we rush everything—even the mourning process. We are quick to tell people to “move on” and “get over it” when they experience loss.

And yet we have a book in the Bible called Lamentations. Honestly, I don’t enjoy reading it because it’s so negative. Jeremiah describes Israel’s sins—and the horrible consequences. Then the prophet actually commands the people to cry.

He says: “Let your tears run down like a river day and night; Give yourself no relief, Let your eyes have no rest. ... Pour out your heart like water before the presence of the Lord” (Lam. 2:18b-19a, NASB).

Did you know God actually commands us to cry? Lamentation allows God to download His emotions into our hearts. Tears have the power to soften our arrogance and neutralize our bad attitudes.

George Floyd’s death triggered many different reactions. We’ve seen peaceful protests as well as riots, looting and destruction of property. We’ve seen policemen shot, elderly protesters pushed to the ground, protesters zapped with tasers and businesses burned to the ground. And of course we’ve listened to politicians on both sides of the aisle arguing and blaming people for the racial problems we can’t seem to solve.

But in all the newscasts I’ve watched over the past two weeks, I’ve seen no tears.

There are many things we can do to address racism. We need to have honest conversations. We need to change laws. We need to address past mistakes. We need to make reforms.

But if we do these things without first lamenting, our words will sound cheap and hollow. We will still address the issues with anger, superiority and self-righteousness. Only if we break up our fallow ground first will we be able to speak with God’s tone of voice.

When my daughter Margaret spoke on Sunday, she said: “We are all here because we think that racism is wrong and we think that injustice is wrong. But we need to sit in that lament, because through our mourning the Holy Spirit leads us to movement.”

Too often we try to bring change before we ourselves have been changed. Please cry first. Cry for all black families that have lost loved ones because of racism or injustice. Cry for our divided nation.

Let God marinate your heart in His love. And then, with a heart that is full of compassion, go out and work for justice and healing. □



“Lamentation allows God to download His emotions into our hearts. Tears have the power to soften our arrogance and neutralize our bad attitudes.”

THREE THINGS YOU CAN SAY TO END RACISM

A lot of my white friends have admitted they don’t know what to say to a black friend when racial tensions are high. Here are three things I’m saying to help the healing process:

“I’m not a racist, but I do come from a racist culture. I want to be part of the healing process.”

I’m not going to deny the fact that I grew up with some form of white privilege. The black people my dad knew as a young man could not even vote. Our culture abused African Americans for decades and decades, first with slavery, then with Jim Crow laws and later by refusing to grant equality in education, banking and police protection. Today, with all of our progress, racial justice is moving about as slow as molasses on a cold morning. That needs to change.

“How are you feeling? I want to hear about your experience.”

One of my young black friends, Marcus, told me recently how some cops in California bullied him when he was 18 and made him feel like a criminal—even though he wasn’t doing anything wrong. A pastor friend in Baltimore described an incident in which he was pulled over by cops just because he was driving in a neighborhood looking for a new house.

A black missionary I know was bullied incessantly on her school bus every morning, and even at age 65 she still can’t talk about it today without crying.

African Americans know racial profiling is real. Let’s talk about it. You may be surprised when you ask your neighbors or church friends to share their horror stories.

“When can you come over to my house for dinner?”

These are the most important words we could ever say. We need to sit at the table together. I’ve seen many racial forums on Instagram recently, as well as televised panel discussions. But celebrities in front of cameras are not going to end our racial tensions.

We need everyday people to talk to each other in their homes and on their porches. And after we chat and drink some iced tea, it would be amazing if we could cry and pray for each other.

Why We Prayerfully Value Generosity



A special message from the IPHC's Foundation on how God provides for our ministry dreams.



By SCOTT JOYNER

SCOTT JOYNER is the Executive Director of the International Pentecostal Holiness Foundation, which has provided financial services to IPHC churches and ministers since 2001. For seven years he served as Vice President for Institutional Advancement at Newberry College in Newberry, South Carolina, where he spearheaded several million-dollar fundraising campaigns. You can contact him at sjoyner@iphc.org, or call 405-792-7166.

It's easy to see the results of generosity. We might see a new ministry established because of someone's generous financial gift. We might watch the construction of a new church building because someone gave a tract of land. We might see the spiritual impact on a whole community because of the hard work of a group of volunteers.

But where do those results come from? How does generosity begin?

Generosity takes many forms. It can be in the form of time, talents or treasure. As the new Executive Director of the IPH Foundation, my work is concerned mostly with "treasure," or financial gifts. So I want to suggest three ways that generosity begins, and then offer some advice about how our foundation can help you and your church on the journey to radical generosity.

Sometimes generosity begins with a decision to give, even if the kind of gift hasn't yet been determined. Imagine you are a pastor. After a recent sermon, a dedicated member of your church catches you after a service as says, "I want to do something nice for our church." They want to bless your ministry, but they don't know how to designate the gift.

What do you do? How do you determine whether "something nice" is \$500 for a new laptop computer, or \$5,000 to underwrite the costs of youth week? What if it's \$250,000 for a new sanctuary, a piece of land near the highway or a gift they will leave in their estate plans or will? How would you answer someone who has the means to give a large gift?

At other times, generosity begins with a simple desire to help, even if the way to help isn't clear. How do you get started helping college students who are called to the ministry? How can your potential gift help the IPHC start new churches in underserved areas, one of the goals of the Arise 2033 initiative? Or how could your gift help to open a new church overseas, or construct a Bible college in a nation where new leaders are needed?

Occasionally generosity begins with a donation itself. As a potential donor, you might have property to sell, and desire to make a gift to your church from the sale's proceeds. Maybe, like Barnabas in the Book of Acts, you have considered selling some land so you can give a gift to your church (see Acts 4:36-37).

Should you sell the property yourself and give the money? Or would it make better sense to gift the land to a foundation to sell? These are questions I and the International Pentecostal Holiness (IPH) Foundation can help answer. We are here to make sure biblical generosity makes the maximum impact.

The IPH Foundation is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization that exists for the exclusive benefit of the IPHC, its subsidiaries, affiliates, institutions, conferences and local churches. We currently manage nearly \$13 million in assets that support the church and its affiliated partners, including Emmanuel College, Falcon Children's Home and all IPHC conferences in various regions of the country.

The Foundation's governing board works closely with me, as the Executive Director, and I work directly with IPHC staff and conference leaders. The foundation is here to support you locally, regionally, nationally and globally. Stewardship and generosity will support Arise 2033. Together we can make an impact!

As Executive Director, I am available to help you answer questions like those above, encouraging and facilitating radical generosity that builds the kingdom.

The IPHF can be a source of information, guidance or assistance at every stage of the giving process.

In the coming months, I will be preparing a series of articles on some of the topics above for the IPH Foundation website (<https://iphc.org/gso/iph-foundation/>). In the meantime, feel free to contact me directly with questions, concerns or ideas.

I can help explore possibilities and opportunities with you. I will work with you to set up future gift planning seminars or estate workshops, or I can help you prepare an estate or financial plan. And I can work directly with you in a face-to-face approach or provide suggestions or guidance from afar by phone, videoconference or email.

As far as we can see, generosity begins in a variety of ways. But we

know that generosity ultimately begins with a God who has been generous with His presence.

In these challenging times I often lean on this verse from Joshua 1:9 to help me: "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." God does not abandon His people. He goes with us, and He generously provides what we need to accomplish His goals.

And the end goal of generosity is that we will give without fear because God is with us, and He is for us. I look forward to hearing from you soon. I know that we are going to see an abundant display of God's generosity in this next season of growth in the IPHC. □



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He goes with us, and He generously
provides what we need to accomplish
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