

CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY

JOURNAL
of the
98TH INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY



BREAK THROUGH MXXIV

Orlando, Florida
July 30–August 3, 2014

Church of God of Prophecy

JOURNAL

of the
98th International Assembly
July 30–August 3, 2014

MANAGEMENT

Sam Clements: General Overseer

David Browder: Asia/Australia/Oceania

Tim Coalter: North America

Clayton Endecott: Europe/CIS/Middle East

Benjamin Feliz: Mexico/Central America and
Spanish-speaking Caribbean

Clayton Martin: Caribbean/Atlantic Ocean Islands

Stephen Masilela: Africa

Gabriel E. Vidal: South America

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ASSEMBLY TASK FORCE 98th INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY

GENERAL PRESBYTERS IN PLURALITY

Represented by 2014 General Presbyter Assembly Liaison

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Assembly Liaison to the General Presbyters
Production/Stage Operations

ASSEMBLY TASK FORCE CHAIRMAN

Paul Holt

Assembly Planning and Operations
Budget and Finance
Site Selection

DIVISION ONE

John Payne

Operations Coordinator
Audio/Video Operations
Lighting
Stage Setup
Decorating

DIVISION TWO

Eddie Hartman

Housing
Space Assignments
Registration
Move/Onsite Coordination
Delegate Shuttle

DIVISION THREE

Peggy Clements

Proxy System
Committee Reports
Registration Assistance

DIVISION FOUR

Mike Luithle

Audio/Video Taping
Website/Webcasting
Projection
General IT Needs

DIVISION FIVE

Joshua Lynn

Ushers/Security
Health & Emergency
Handicap Services
Parking/Nursery

DIVISION SIX

Todd Bagley

Michael Hernandez

Translation Setup
Translation Coordinator

DIVISION SEVEN

DeWayne Hamby

Clerks
Promotion & Marketing
Photography
Program
Signage

DIVISION EIGHT

Gene Browning/Team Advisor

White Wing Bookstore
Exhibitors/Food Service
CD/DVD Duplication & Sales
Decorating (Exhibit Hall)
Security (Exhibit Hall)

DIVISION NINE

Robert Davis

Host Overseer
Team Advisor
Hospitality
Liaison to Host City
Usher Recruitment

SUPPORT STAFF

Sarah Rising
Linda Humberd
Renee Rodriguez
Josh Roberts

Section 1

Pre-Assembly Activities

**98th INTERNATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2014
Business Decisions of International Presbytery Council,
Church of God of Prophecy July 27–29, 2014
Rosen Shingle Creek, Orlando, FL USA**

Sunday, July 27, 2014

International Presbytery Meeting

Bishop Clements, on behalf of all General Presbyters, welcomed all Presbytery to the meeting. A video was shown of worship being sung in many different languages. John Payne led a song, “Holy Spirit, Thou Art Welcome.”

Bishop Clements stressed the importance of prayer and fasting in seeking God’s direction for the Church. He shared a message with the Presbytery about relying on the Holy Ghost and being a spiritual body, not a secular business institute. He asked everyone to be able to discern the voice of the Lord through guidance by the Holy Spirit.

The General Presbyters—Bishops Clements, David Browder, Ben Feliz, Gabriel Vidal, Clayton Endecott, Stephen Masilela and Clayton Martin—gave a statement on their journey for the past 18 months since the resignation of former General Overseer Randall E. Howard. They opened the floor for questions from the Presbytery about the resignation, the journey since then and the selection of the new General Overseer. They also read a statement of appreciation from Bishop Howard.

The Bible Doctrine and Polity Committee was introduced with recommendations to the Governance Document concerning the vacancy of a General Overseer and future meetings of the International Presbytery. Discussion carried over into the next session.

During the afternoon, the counselors for the selection process were introduced—Clarence Williams, Adrian Varlack, Walter Doroshuk and Levi Clarke. From this group, Bishop Varlack was selected to serve as moderator for the business sessions.

During the evening session, discussion centered on the affirmation of five General Presbyters—Bishop David Browder, Asia/Australia/Oceania; Bishop Clayton Endecott, Europe/CIS/The Middle East; and Bishop Clayton Martin, the Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands. Bishops Endecott and Martin were affirmed for another four years. Members of the Asia/Australia/Oceania evaluation group were instructed to meet with the General Presbyters after evening dismissal.

Monday, July 28, 2014

Moderator: Adrian Varlack, Sr., CBL Instructor and Church Historian

International Presbytery Meeting, General Overseer Selection

Bishop Clayton Martin opened the morning session with prayer and a short message. Bishop Varlack and the counselors came to the podium to finish discussion on the affirmation of Asia/Australia/Oceania General Presbyter David Browder. Bishop Browder was affirmed for two more years of service.

Bishops Ben Feliz and Gabriel Vidal were also affirmed to serve four more years as General Presbyters to Mexico/Central America/Spanish-speaking Caribbean and South America, respectively. A suggestion was made to help stagger the affirmations in the future to prevent large leadership turnover.

Bishop Wayne Pense, overseer of Heartland Region USA, was given opportunity to address the room with a suggestion about evaluating the selection and affirmation process. It was accepted with overwhelming consensus that a review be conducted for the future.

The qualifying group vetting those for the office of General Overseer was received at the podium, consisting of Bishop Clements, Bishop Varlack, Bishop Endecott, Bishop Paul Holt and Bishop E.C. McKinley. They introduced the nominees one at a time, each of whom greeted the room and entertained questions from leaders. The nominees were each asked to return to a private place of prayer until recalled by the Presbytery.

Discussions with the candidates went into the evening session. Presbytery members were then asked for expressions. A second expression was then asked for the candidate who reached the particular threshold of votes, but that expression did not reach the level where a “one accord” agreement could be sought. The group was dismissed for the evening.

Tuesday, July 29, 2014

Moderator: Adrian Varlack, Sr., CBL Instructor and Church Historian

International Presbytery Meeting, General Overseer Selection

Bishop Feliz opened the third day with inspirational thoughts and led in prayer. The group sang, “Welcome Holy Spirit.”

Bishop Varlack and the counselors were welcomed back to the stage. Bishop Varlack explained that the threshold of 2/3 vote could not be reached as of yet. They had discussed with the General Presbyters the option for an Interim General Overseer had it been agreed by the International Presbytery. They also suggested the General Overseer candidates still be sequestered in another room to continue in prayer over the process.

A third expression was taken and still no 2/3 threshold was achieved. According to the IP Governance document, “It would be inappropriate to call for a one accord agreement,” the counselors concluded.

The Presbytery discussed for a long time and held times of prayer and praise, seeking God’s direction. The moderator and counselors declared an impasse and were thanked with a standing ovation for their efforts.

Bishop Endecott, at the request of the other General Presbyters, then moderated a time of discussion and prayer for direction. Several expressed disappointment that that the IP would not be able to present a candidate to the International Assembly for its approval.

Toward the late evening, one leader expressed that God spoke to him regarding Bishop Sam Clements serving as “first among others.” Another expressed that God had moved on them in a similar manner and requested that a vacant chair be placed at the front of the room. The Holy Spirit was leading the group toward one accord and they gathered around Bishop Clements to pray. The whole mood of the room seemed to change. Bishop Clements was then led by two brothers to the vacant chair, which had been placed in the front of the room.

The Holy Spirit confirmed the selection of Bishop Sam Clements as General Overseer as the group prayed. He was approved in one accord by the IP after two or three expressed why they had not stood but that they were not in opposition. As the session dismissed, they announced that a selection process to replace Bishop Clements as North America General Presbyter would take place the next morning. This was done in due order on Wednesday, July 30.

Wednesday, July 30

Moderator: Adrian Varlack, Sr., CBL Instructor and Church Historian

The Presbytery met to select a new presbyter for North America. Bishop Tim Coalter was approved by the full IP as General Presbyter with jurisdiction for North America.

Section 2

98th International Assembly Business Minutes

Assembly Journal

Wednesday July 30, 2014

Morning Session

Session Theme: International Assembly Business

9:00 a.m.—General Presbyter Clayton Martin opened the session with prayer.

9:13 a.m.—The Northeast Region worship team came to mic with Diann Cassell as worship leader. The group sang *Our God is Greater, Trading My Sorrows*, and *10,000 Reasons*.

9:30 a.m.—Bishop Martin returned to the podium. He charged everyone to remember the business session prayerfully and led a concert prayer. “You are a God who hears and answers prayer. You will show us great and mighty things which we know not. We pray for guidance and direction.”

9:34 a.m.—General Presbyter David Browder came to the podium and explained the concept behind the three symbols of prayer, harvest, and leadership development in the Assembly program and signage. He also gave instructions for the business proceedings and radio frequencies for translation.

9:38 a.m.—General Presbyter Clayton Endecott came to the podium. He spoke about Genesis 38, when Tamar is pregnant. God did special things. One twin receded and the one that should be last broke forth. God is the God of breakthrough. For this same reason, David said God has broken through my enemies by a flood. Breakthrough is needed in our personal and spiritual life, in our witness and testimony, in ministry, marriage, churches, in this movement. Brother Endecott spoke about his excitement about the breakthrough that God is sending to these meetings.

98th International Assembly Business Minutes

9:40 a.m.—General Presbyter Ben Feliz declared the Assembly open for business and struck the gavel.

9:43 a.m.—General Presbyter Stephen Masilela presented the presbyters who had been confirmed for four more years of service; Bishop Browder, Bishop Endecott, Bishop Feliz, and Bishop Vidal. He asked for prayer for these presbyters. “Our God is a good God. It is good to stand in the presence and feel the presence of the Lord this morning. I stand before you at this time to present to this

International Assembly the discernment of the International Presbytery for the evaluated General Presbyters. Myself then, of course, will remain in Africa and Bishop Sam Clements, North America; there were only two General Presbyters who were not evaluated. Four of my colleagues were evaluated by their areas, their colleagues, other General Presbyters, and international ministry directors. I am happy to announce this morning that they were all reaffirmed by the International Presbytery to serve for a further four years. I want to ask them if they would please move up here so we can pray for them and see them. I want to call them to come with their wives as I call them. For Asia, Australia, and Oceania, I present to you Bishop David Browder. For Europe, CIS, and the Middle East Bishop Clayton Endecott. Of course, my colleague reminded me that he was reaffirmed for a further two years. For Mexico, Central America, and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, Bishop Ben Feliz. For Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands, Bishop Clayton Martin. For South America, Bishop Gabriel Vidal.

“I would like for this Assembly to stand with me at this time and stretch your hands towards them. We want to bless them, we want to pray for them, we want to pray for the anointing of the Holy Ghost to hit them so that they can continue to be a blessing to this body, so they continue to do their job. It is not an easy task. They are not the best men out there that we have, but they are chosen of God and they are great men of God that I respect and it is such a privilege and honor to work with them. Let’s stretch our hands towards them and pray for them this morning.

“Dear Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus, we come before You. We present these men, great men of God, anointed of You, God. We thank you Father for their lives, we thank You for their ministries and Father we pray as they have been reaffirmed for further periods down the line, I pray, oh God, that you would anoint them. I pray that the unction, oh God, to function in these capacities would be upon them. I pray oh God for their renewed strength. Give them a fresh anointing. Oh breathe upon them once again oh God. I pray that your favor and mercy would be upon them. Oh God as they travel oh god I pray that You cover each take-off and landing. My God as they walk into difficult situations may your presence be with them Holy Spirit Be with them as they go, be with them as they come, be with them as they minister be with them wherever they go oh God Let your presence be with them Oh God let your presence go before them. Just like Moses we pray this morning that your presence would go with them. Do not allow them to live without your presence. Let your presence with the assurance that all is going to be well as they perform these duties. Bless them now Father I pray in Jesus awesome and mighty name. Amen and amen. Alleluia.

“Brothers and sisters, I present to you our General Presbyters that have been reaffirmed. God bless you. Give them a cheer.”

9:50 a.m.—Bishop Endecott returned to introduce the Moderator from the International Presbytery and explain the General Overseer selection process in

the International Presbytery meeting: “We know that you have been praying for us over the last months as this Church is moving towards God’s calling for our lives. We felt as General Presbyters and we know that Brother Howard has felt throughout these months your great prayer for all of us and for God’s work in this Church. You will hear wonderful reports of what God is doing around the world on the field and we are grateful for that, that God is doing wonderful things. Sixteen months ago we began a journey that would in a matter of days move us toward the selection of a General Overseer. We have a governance manual that was initiated by a General Assembly several years ago. It was eventually placed in the care and administration of the International Presbytery. That is all the national and state overseers from all over the United States and around the world and some of the leaders from the International Offices, the trans-local leaders there. That document has had some developments along the way. Within it, it tells us how we are to convene as a body particularly as the International Presbytery and the General Presbytery. It particularly denotes how we evaluate our General Presbyters each four years or our General Overseer each six years. It particularly denotes how we are to select a General Overseer in the case of a vacancy. And we took that document along with the counsel to understand that it was being understood correctly of our Biblical, Doctrine, and Polity committee and carefully walked through it and abided by it in every area to be certain that names were brought forth from around the world as a suggestion for a nominee for a General Overseer.

“It was our obligation, according to the our decisions in the documents from years ago, that this International Presbytery, your leaders from around the world would spend time in the International Presbytery meeting just previously to the General Assembly in discerning the will of God about the next General Overseer or in this case about the evaluation of five of the General Presbyters. After we did that evaluation of five General Presbyters, and in fact in this case all five were confirmed, four of us for four more years, Asia/Oceania for two more years, as Brother David Browder will retire at that time. In that confirmation, in those decisions, then we moved toward the selection of a General Overseer. One of the things that has to occur for a General Overseer to be selected is that names first come from the field. Once a certain number of those have arrived and once they’ve received enough confirmation from different parts of the world, those men are contacted and asked if they would be willing to serve if indeed they were selected. And if they were willing to serve, if it was permissible for them to walk through a qualification process, we have a team that has been selected by the International Presbytery, it’s done at regular intervals, who help to qualify someone should they be selected to serve as a General Presbyter or in this case, a General Overseer. They do look specifically and very importantly at the record of that ministry, including the reports and the tithing as stewardship, and being in contact holding accountability are essential for every international leader.

But they look beyond that and ask questions about family and ministry. Once these men are qualified and in this case every nominee who was suggested who allowed their name to go forward, there are some who decided this was not their call or at least at this time it was not their time to be called and they asked that their names not go forward. To those who allowed their names to go forward, each one of them were well qualified to serve this body as a General Overseer. It would take the discernment then of the International Presbytery in these meetings. Their names and biographies were given out much in advance. At the beginning of our International Presbytery which we soaked with prayer again and again long sessions of seeking God. We do not want to vote we do not want to be political. We want to hear the voice of God. And after long periods of discernment we began to walk through that. We introduced all of those nominees to the General Presbyters personally. We have them to address us. We take time to ask them questions. And a myriad of questions were asked from the floor to see how men felt about serving in shared leadership among General Presbyters or about our world vision of the harvest or of prayer or of the training of leaders; about their families and how it would affect the. And each time we would intersperse times of prayer and discernment. Eventually a time of giving voice is taken where we have a system that has already been pre-decided, initiated in the General Assembly and eventually passed to the International Presbytery for its keeping our governance manual. In that governance manual it describes a series of percentages if one should be considered again or not they must reach a certain percentage of commitments from the body. And we walked through that process man for man and voice for voice. It is always our prayer that through that and in our time of prayer that we would come up with an overwhelming majority first where that all of the International Presbytery will confirm this could very well be the man that we need to present as our recommendation to the General Assembly. Because the final decisions and the most authority after Jesus Christ in this body is the gathering of this International Assembly. And so once we reach a decision, it is our desire and our obligation to bring that recommendation to you ask you if you feel in your heart you can confirm that decision. And we are coming to a time of confirmation today. As we walked through that process this time in prayer and discernment, several things developed that were not exactly in our minds and we hadn't anticipated that God would begin to move in this way. We continued to seek diligently and to hear the voice of God. One aspect of this process is that the International Presbytery selects men to serve as moderator and counselors. The General Presbyters, since it includes discernment about their lives and also those candidates those nominees for General Overseer, since it concerns their lives, they are not part of that moderation or part of those counselors. Those counselors are selected by your international overseers and your global leaders from the International Offices. In that selection process with several counselors, Bishop Adrian Varlack one of the fathers of this Church and statesman one who knows our church's polity and its history quite well and

he has much experience among us in working in these things was selected as the moderator for the selection process. And we as your General Presbyters have asked Bishop Adrian Varlack one of the fathers of this church, who served as moderator of our meetings of discernment to share with you the proceedings of that meeting.

9:55 a.m.—Bishop Varlack came to podium: “Greetings to this 98th International Assembly of the Church of God of Prophecy. I have been blessed and honored of the Lord to be able to serve among you along with my brothers and sisters, and I’m grateful for how God has sustained us and helped us throughout our ministries as well as during the last three days. The authority the Assembly gave to the International Presbytery and how that functions has been explained to you by Bishop Endecott. I and three others were chosen without our own participation or our own request to serve as the counselors as he mentioned. Those were Bishop Levi Clark, who serves in Africa, Bishop Walter Dorushuk, who serves in Western Canada, Bishop Clarence Williams, who serves in the Turks and Caicos Islands and yours truly. I was again in session with the IP chosen to moderate the session for the selection. We went through the process as outlined in the authorized general principles of our governance twice. Included in those principles was a provision for an interim General Overseer from here forward if we were not able to conclude a one accord agreement and understanding in our discerning of the nominee. Twice we reached the same place where we did not reach the one accord concerning the nominee. What that would have done, of course, was then to bring into play the section of the document that deals with the interim General Overseer. That would have been the end of the process as far as our moderation was concerned. We had great cooperation during the process. Great respect was shown to us as counselors and moderators. I want to just say thank you to our counselors who shared with us. Thank you to our General Presbyters. Thank you to the International Presbytery who selected us and a thank you to the nominees who at the stage when we had not reached the one accord, we asked them to rejoin us because at that stage they become normal participants to the IP process. So what is about to be explained to you from here on those brethren who were present to see and hear and to be participants in what went on from there. We are thankful to the Lord for His divine guidance. Provision for an interim would have been among the General Presbyters themselves they would choose one of them to serve as interim according to the document until the next General Assembly. We reached that place by the process and we did go over it twice. I would like to mention that in speaking with the General Presbyters this morning, some of them that were in the room with us we will have a private session with the nominees later to explain some of the process that went on when they were not with us. And so with that I conclude our part in that process. And we give God thanks for His grace and the strength that He gave, for the mercy that he showed, for the patience of the brethren, their love and their care. And now I hand back to our General Presbyter, Bishop Clayton Endecott.”

9:57 a.m.—Bishop Endecott returned. He explained the process that took place after no ‘one accord’ agreement was reached: “It was a moment of seriousness for us as we had walked through the process twice. In both cases we very clearly came to the same results and a decision was not brought forward. Excellent men all who could have served and perhaps someday will serve you. Some of them are young. And we still were not able to discern through that process a clear sense of who God would like us to present for you to consider and make a decision about as to whether you would confirm him as your overseer or not.

As one of the vice-chairs I was selected to moderate the next session after Bishop Varlack and his counselors had finished and exhausted the documents did everything they could from that process to select a leader. It was an interesting interval for us because historically often a General Overseer who was leaving has moderated that time and the General Presbyters served as counselors for that event. However in a previous International Presbytery meeting the decision had been made that it would be best and we as General Presbyters so agreed it would be best if the General Presbyters would be removed from that and that a set of counselors and a moderator be chosen from among the International Presbytery to officiate the discernment process should we select a new overseer as well as to officiate a discernment process about the evaluation and confirmation and possible changes of a General Presbyter. In that sense when they asked me to moderate the next section of the meeting I had no authority. I had been placed in a position of being one voice among many and the process had ended. But there was a burden on the heart of every man and woman in that room that we needed a leader of leaders we needed a first among equals. We all realized the sense and role of a General Overseer has been broadened, that he no longer leads completely alone but he does that in harmony in a shared format with the other General Presbyters, and the seven of us in the absence of a General Overseer the last 16 months served collectively to maintain the office of General Overseer for this church. But we felt as presbyters throughout those 16 months that this that the Lord had put on us as an Assembly in our hearts to have shared leadership but to have a first among equals needed to be fulfilled. We felt deeply that the seven of us alone was not the way that God was leading. We like to embrace shared leadership in every aspect of our church and we as General Presbyters encourage every national and every state overseer to have a strong shared leadership team not just counselors but selected men of God that can help you in making your decisions and can administrate your nation or your state. We also encourage every local church to work towards having a shared leadership team where your pastor has specific people he or she can turn to in order to discern the next steps with your church. But we confirm as General Presbyters very clearly the need in that shared leadership for a first among equals. And in this case we believe very clearly that that first among equals has deference somehow their voice and their input should be regarded and respected highly, and our documents suggest very clearly that

they're to be regarded highly among us and that we should work humbly but next to them in their service. And so we stood at that empty moment with all of us in an aching heart but we have great leaders, five great leaders who had been presented. And we know many other great leaders around the world but a moment of discernment had not come. And I and the General Presbyters had no authority in some ways because of decisions to proceed any further. But there's an aspect that comes in our governance documents it comes at least twice perhaps there or four times that says that this is our plan this is our document this is a format as to how we shall proceed. However, in all of our proceedings we must be open to the work and development of the Holy Spirit. For He is sovereign. It is Father and Son and Holy Ghost who are to speak into our hearts and indeed above even this General Assembly is Jesus Christ, who Paul says is the head of the church. And we felt compelled to seek the Lord in times of sharing and and discernment. And we allowed we asked for voices that had asked for a moment to speak to share their hearts and again and again there was a confirmation we know we've exhausted the documents and we know that we should move now to the Assembly and we should be able to give them a name. But we know that in all of our proceedings we have not but we feel that God wants to but we haven't reached it. Many of them said that we feel like the letter of the document has been good but it has not been sufficient and we need the life of the Spirit. And voice after voice came that they felt that we should find in this wonderful Church filled with excellent leaders throughout the International Presbytery and into your local churches and beyond one of those who was a nominee was a local pastor and I believe in years to come that will become more and more often that a local pastor would also come among those the recognition of the hand of God to be considered and perhaps to be nominated and perhaps to even be brought as the General Overseer of this Church for your confirmation. At this time in all that we had done we hadn't found it but the Holy Spirit began to work Brother Hutchinson said he had a song in his heart could he sing it. Do you know what Paul says? Paul said sing hymns one to another. Sometimes we need to sing of the grace and the mercy and of our, testify in song of our obedience to Him. As he sang we began to worship. Well, the Church of God of Prophecy is a Pentecostal church, many of our decisions, and our hearts and our understandings and even our moments of knowing come in moments of worship and the Word. As we began to worship and to pray, we heard biblical passages that would come to some about reconciliation and cleansing. Passages would speak to us about seeking the Holy Spirit or 1 Samuel 16 passage which spoke to us very clearly about God looking at leadership differently than we do and that He has the one that He will confirm. We also had a sense of the prophetic word a time or two and it was done with such decency and in order. They would come to elders and they would ask them I have this on my heart but I submit to you. If you want to share it you may. If you discern it as not of the Lord, I am happy. And in clear moments of discernment each of these words

came, some prophetic telling us that an enemy would stand against us but that God had found an opening in the armor and that the enemy would be defeated and that God would bring in fact a time of joy and plentifulness to this Church and to the harvest. WE had many words and sometimes perhaps as we see in the Scripture a prophetic act. You remember there was one in the New Testament with the name of Agabus who came to Paul bound in ropes as Paul was considering to go to Jerusalem and it was very much a time of persecution. Do you recall the story? And so he came to Paul to show him if you go you will be bound and if I would have been discerning that moment I would have said Paul there's your answer. He's telling you don't go. But Paul said I know now if I go there will be bondage but it's a comfort, it's a confirmation; I shall go. Amen? And he went to the city. And we see such prophetic acts and moves of God and one of the members of the International Presbytery just in sharing a word of personal commitment God has asked her to clear some things in her heart and speak with some others but also on their heart was to just place an empty chair in our midst. No comment, just place a chair. As we were singing and worshipping and praying a brother from among the nations, from Asia weeping and praying went to some and prayed. He specifically went to one of the members of the International Presbytery who was not one of the five candidates. According to our documents and what we had tried had not found discernment though they are wonderful leaders and perhaps someday they would serve you in that capacity, we had not found discernment there. And on the heart of this Asian leader who leads several thousands in a Muslim part of the world, in an Islamic area of the world, he shared from his heart that he believed God had His hand on one among us. And we confirmed among ourselves did we understand him correctly. I was moderating that meeting. We were seeking God. We took the Pentecostal understanding of Acts chapter 2, whether it is a good exegetical understanding or not, I believe it is a good and a fair hermeneutical understanding and in the passage it said, "They tarried on the Holy Spirit." We used to do that in the Pentecostal church, it wasn't instant and it wasn't proclamation but we tarried, waited on the Spirit. And we waited on the Spirit. And so this young Asian leader suggested that one among the International Presbytery he believed had God's hand for this hour. Others began to gather around and to pray. We were seeking God in discernment. There was a deep spiritual moment. It was a breakthrough moment for us. Some of us would like more clarity and business and voting and orderliness. And in my case I am of two minds. I have my Pentecostal self and I have my German self. I let you think of how that might work in my mind now and then. There are moments when we are not in control. And as a General Presbytery we did not have control of that moment. We were already exhausted, we had already been taken out of the picture and we think it was God's hand to do so. We should not be the ones to lead this discernment time. And our wonderful, wonderful team of counselors and excellent moderator had led us to the place that we looked like would come without a

nominee, without our recommendation for the next General Overseer. In that time of prayer the man that the Asian overseer had indicated he felt God's hand was upon. Some went and asked a person to sit in that empty chair. There was praying, there was discernment. There was confession, there was testimony. There were some who came and said many months before in praying in our nation I felt like God may have His hand on someone. It wasn't perhaps part of the system that God would do something different among us that He would bring breakthrough. There had been a decision by every General Presbyterian at the beginning of this 16-month journey where we served together without a General Overseer that none of us would allow our names to go forward in the process. The reason we had done that in our hearts was the speaking of the Holy Spirit to us. When we prayed, we arose from prayer, after we realized that we would be serving you corporately without a General Overseer we prayed and arose from prayer and confessed one to another without discussion or any sense of a time to find an agreement we immediately began to confess to one another, 'I believe that I should not allow my name to go forward.' And that's the way the process began. Some were very happy and told us that was wise. You weren't political, you didn't seek position. That isn't why we did that. We did it trying to find God, purely. Others were disappointed and said, 'We see you as great leaders and we know you and you've proven yourselves among us. And you've excluded yourselves from a decision.' But we felt God had led us to that time. That this is the way it should be. However as the evening developed and God spoke to us, ultimately, in the early hours of the morning or late hours of the night perhaps around the midnight hour, it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us that God's hand was on this person who had not been nominated in official way in any way, who was now seated in that chair and many praying and there were many testimonies. And as moderator of the meeting I asked in counsel from the General Presbyterian I spoke also with the moderator of the International Presbytery selection counselors and I asked the International Presbyter may I call for a voice? Is it time to ask? Is the Holy Spirit speaking? May I call for a voice of the International Presbytery to see how they feel? Shall we move forward towards not presenting you a name and serving as General Presbyters, eventually selecting someone to serve in interim for you to moderate or serve as a General Overseer for two years as we await the next assembly? Or is God speaking to us about a new General Overseer? And the conviction of those who stood before me and large groups was that the Lord was speaking that His hand was on one, on this gentleman in the chair and that it was about becoming the General Overseer of this Church. There was no discussion about interim, but serving as your General Overseer that we should at least present him to you as to whether you would feel in your hearts to confirm him or not. I presented that question in that fashion, very clearly, in my German side, the Pentecostal weeping and rejoicing beside and said I will ask the clear question I want you to sit down. Let's make a decision. Is this the way we shall proceed? Shall we nominate, shall

we bring this man as our suggestion of the General Overseer of the Church of God of Prophecy for the next six years? And I asked the question and almost every person in the room stood. There were a few seated because we had a few guests who did not have a voice. They were there because they are moving into a position of ministry or because they are learning about our Church and its ways. Those were seated, they did not have a voice. There were three of the General Presbytery who have a voice, four actually all together. One of those was one of the team advisors of the counselors I mean, for the selection process. It was our dear moderator, Brother Adrian Varlack who said, that while he was in agreement with our decisions as the chair of the process before he would prefer to abstain. There were three who were cautious but we never asked, it's in our documents that once we reach just two-thirds of a majority, just two-thirds we would ask if we could move toward unanimity. If we get close to that we could ask would some be willing to submit. A unified decision in the Church of God of Prophecy has often called for submission by some. It's not new to us. In this case we never called for submission. Without any ado we asked if there were those three that were uncertain that in fact they all stood and expressed themselves that they had areas of uncertainty but without any questioning or provocation they within their own sharing said 'we submit to the Spirit that's at work in this body and we trust the lord is at work here.' So we had a very clear presentation a very open presentation of a person we feel that God has laid their hands on. But it is up to you, brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, members of the Church of God of Prophecy at this International Assembly to discern with us if he shall serve as your General Overseer." I will ask at this time the man who came to that chair and that we have decided as the International Presbytery of this Church to be considered for your consideration, Bishop Sam Clements to join me."

10:10 a.m.—The General Assembly stood and applauded. Bishop Endecott: "So as much as you have been so kind to stand, I would like for the sake of our understanding in this body today as we do not have papers for you to fill out, could I ask you to be seated for a moment? My German side is coming out. I'm seeking a sense of clarity. Let our yes be yes, the Scripture says, or our no be no. And so as I prepared this question and shared it with our (was interrupted by David Browder) It would be helpful if I could by my counsel here by one of our General Presbyters, It would be helpful if we could have some house lights up so that there can be some discernment, we can see. The Scripture also says, 'Know those that work among you,' amen? Amen? Know those who serve among you. I would like to ask Bishop Varlack to also help us as we discern this motion, Bishop, to look with us and to watch this set of decisions. Brother Varlack will join us, Thank you, sir. You can stand there and watch and I'll move this way. Here is the question, Brothers and Sisters. Our International Presbytery felt in their hearts that we should bring Bishop Sam Clements to you as our recommendation

for your next General Overseer who would serve for six years. All those who are in favor of this, would you stand?"

"It is understood that if you are not a member of the church that you do not have voice and so some are seated because they do not have voice and that is good so those who are members should be standing if you are in agreement.

Bishop Endecott: "Thank you so much for standing. Could you be seated please? We are always seeking what we call a one accord decision. If there are some who are opposed we know this is not personal. We understand that and we know that. It's your convictions. If there are some who are opposed, however in order to move forward, I would ask you also to stand."

Bishop Endecott: "There are some who are elders and who are helping us and that is the reason some are standing. There are a few standing. It is a very, very few. Very, very few. I have taken counsel with the General Presbyters and have been asked to state the question in the following way: In view of the conviction of so many in this process, are those of you who oppose are you willing to submit? Are you willing to submit and say, I have some convictions but I will follow this Assembly? If you're willing to submit, then you may be seated."

After a moment he said, "Those of you who have convictions in your heart who are willing to join the counsel of this General Assembly. Those who are standing now, as we understand it are all in service of this Assembly. We've asked them specifically and they've shown me their tags so if you see some standing it's because they're helping us and they are not opposed. In that sense we have a clear sense of one accord at this expression." There was applause.

Bishop Endecott then said, "We thank the Lord. I tell people all over the world when I travel to other movements that this church makes one accord decisions and they won't believe me. But God is able to do a great thing among us when He speaks. We are grateful. We are grateful. Bishop Sam Clements, we are glad to welcome you as the General Overseer of the Church of God of Prophecy."

General Presbyters hugged the Clements.

Bishop Endecott: "We asked Sister Linda to come and join Brother Clements for this moment and we would like to ask you as the Church of God of Prophecy, our family, our brothers and sisters, to join with us as we anoint and pray for them for God to give them wisdom and strength direction of the Holy Spirit and understanding of the times. Anoint where God should lead us as they work together with those who serve with them as General Presbyters. We ask you just to join us. We want to bless Sister Linda Clements as well, that the Lord just strengthens her as she supports her husband in ministry. Let us pray."

The Clements knelt for prayer by the General Presbyters. Bishop Endecott: "Let us pray together."

The General Assembly prayed. Prayer was offered on stage by International Presbytery.

10:20 a.m.—Bishop Endecott: “Our International Presbytery is assembling to show their support and we will pray again with you. Brother Tim, thank you. We want together as the International Presbytery to anoint. Please lay your hands on them. Anoint them today we pray.”

The Assembly applauded. The IP prayed.

Bishop Endecott: We are sure there are several here who just are greeting and showing their love. To the International Presbytery, we will need all from the International Presbytery to meet again. This morning the North American area of the world met to discuss the selection of a new North American presbyter, who will serve as our General Presbyter to serve in North America as well. And we need as an international body to make confirmations of this. So we are locating a place and we will give you that in moments. (To Bishop Ben Feliz) You have it? Tomorrow morning at 7 a.m., we will ask you as an International Presbytery to join with us. We know you love to rise early and pray, so after you’ve prayed two hours, join us at 7 for this meeting. We will be meeting near where we met for our International Presbytery meeting. The name of the room for 7 a.m. tomorrow morning all of the International Presbytery whether you serve as overseers or some of the women as well who serve in that group we need you to be at that meeting in the room Sebastian J at 7 a.m. All international presbyters Sebastian J. Selection has been made and we need to meet at 7 o’clock to confirm and discern among us the Lord’s hand in this.

We rejoice together. Hallelujah! As some are sharing their greeting just before parting let me just mention a detail. It always requires some shifts when such a decision is made. In the early days you made it in 24 hours. We remember those days. You came to a convention and didn’t know if you would go back to your church. Or you came to the Assembly. In our documents that the Lord has led us to produce over the years initiated by this General Assembly, it stated that there is an official time for the General Overseer to take his office. I am being told you cannot hear. I am a Pentecostal but I have a German voice. We will be greeting Bishop Sam Clements in the office as General Overseer the first day of the month after the Assembly. So September 1 Bishop Sam Clements will assume the General Overseership. Until that time, of course he is part of the General Presbytery. Your General Presbyters serve together as your General Overseer. But of course every decision and every action would be done together with him. It’s just an official date for the official beginning. We need to have that. Brothers and sisters I present to you your new General Overseer, Bishop Sam Clements and Sister Linda. Brother Bishop Sam Clements will speak for just a moment.”

10:30 a.m.—Brother Clements made his opening comments: “My heart is overwhelmed. I am deeply honored to be chosen by this body to lead this Church in this hour. I want you to know that I am not here by choice. I cannot tell you exactly what happened in that room last night. I was on my knees praying at one point. At another point, I was being lifted to walk to a chair and sat in the chair to be prayed over. It was what was discerned to be the Holy Spirit. I learned a long time ago not to try to resist God’s Spirit. If you resist God’s Spirit, it puts you in a dangerous place. I speak this from my heart and not for any praise but I know I am the weakest of anyone that was presented to fill this office. I know me and I would not have chosen me but I promise and pledge to you to do the best that I can to please God and lead this church forward. I am expecting a breakthrough in this Assembly. I’m expecting a breakthrough in every local church. I’m expecting a breakthrough in every home that the devil has tried to tear apart. I’m expecting a breakthrough in our cities and in our communities. We must have God. For many years, we have rejoiced, we have received encouragement as we have read the book of Acts. Read about the miracles that were performed. But in my spirit, I feel that the open door is now for us to even go beyond what was happening in the book of Acts. The book of Acts is not a complete book. The church is still active and God is still performing miracles and the Spirit is still moving. He is still being poured out. God is still speaking. He didn’t just speak into a book over 2000 years ago and lapse into silence. Thank God He still speaks to His people today. Holy Spirit is here to guide us into all truth. I believe what made the early church successful was the fact that they lived under the presence of the Holy Ghost. They preached the simple message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They had a story to tell and had witnesses to back it up. They had faith to believe God could do all things through the power of Christ. They had but one message to preach and that was Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, he lived a unique life, He went to the cross, He died a substitutionary death for our sins, He arose the third day, He ascended back to the Father, He sent the Holy Ghost, and He’s coming again. The Gospel message is the only message we have been commissioned to preach. The Gospel brought breakthrough then, it will bring breakthrough today. I believe these next two years can be our greatest years yet. Not because I am in the office of General Overseer but because this is God’s day to act. This is God’s year to act. And it won’t come through man, it won’t come through me or a committee of men. It will come as the Holy Spirit is poured out on this body and He is given His rightful place in our churches. We return to the power that was demonstrated in the book of Acts. Breakthrough is now. Get ready. Get ready. Get ready. It’s going to happen in this Assembly. Get ready. No one is going to be able to stop the movement of God. Not one man. Not an army of men will stop what God has planned for the Last Days. Nothing going on in this world has caught Him by surprise. He planned the end from the beginning. He is not just the author, He is the finisher of our faith. He is the Alpha and the Omega. He is the beginning

and the end and He will be there victorious when everything else fades away. I want to thank God for my beautiful wife. The fifth day of next month we will have been married for 53 years—53 wonderful years. It has been an awesome journey. He has taken us through pastoral ministry. He has taken us through overseer work. He has taken us through the General Presbytery work for North America whom I love dearly. We had a team that I love dearly. And they're going to push this Church forward. Not only in North America, but South America and Central America and Asia and Europe and Africa and the Caribbean. All of these areas are going to breakthrough this year for the power of the Holy Ghost is being poured out all over the world. He is not partial. And He loves it. Me and my wife will love you. She doesn't do a lot of speaking but she does a lot of loving. She's a hugger. If you get around her, you'll find out she'll want to hug you. She'll want to love on you. Because that's her personality. I thank God for my family. Some of them are present here today. I thank God for them that were able to come and be here. Some of them were not able to come. God will go with us and He will help us. I am weak, but He is strong His grace is sufficient and we will be victorious. God bless you all."

10:36 a.m.—Bishop Endecott: "Amen. We thank the Lord. We're so grateful that you are here. That you love this church so much, you're here at this first meeting to do business with us. We had already selected Bishop Sam Clements as the moderator of this Assembly. Typically, the incoming overseer would not moderate but he is the first chairman as the documents require. He is the First Chairman selected by the General Presbyters. I've been serving as the Second Chair. As First Chair, he has prepared to moderate this meeting and I have not. So he'll be moderating as a General Presbyter but you'll know him as your General Overseer. To allow him a moment to breathe we will move towards our first act of business. If you're looking at your program, you're expecting the Tomlinson Center report to come. We've made a small adjustment many weeks ago but it was too late to come into your program. There's been just one change. Instead of the Tomlinson Center coming first Report, we're asking our Administrative Committee to come first."

10:40 a.m.—Bishop Holt came to the podium. Read report. (See on page 116) Vision 2020 / Tomlinson Center / ARKS report / Properties / Child and Youth Worker Protection Policy / Harvest Partner / Malaria Offering / ECFA Accreditation / Liability Insurance / Balanced Budget

10:55 a.m. Bishop Clements (Moderator) returned to the podium. "All right, you've heard the reading of the Administrative Committee Report. This was an informational report. I would ask that all that are in favor of this report going forward would you please stand? Thank you very much. This report only requires an overwhelming consensus. And I believe we had that. Am I correct? Thank

you Administrative Committee. Thank you for all your hard work through the year. This committee puts in a lot of hours. We meet every month and sometimes work through lunch periods and work through most of the day. They're an active group that keeps our Church running smoothly and we appreciate their work. If the Tomlinson Center is ready to bring your report I believe that would be next. While they are coming, I would just like to give a special honor to these men who sit behind me. I have worked very closely with them for the last several years. It's an awesome team. We work together as a team. That will not change. We will continue to work together as a team and we'll make decisions in consultation with the General Presbyters. This Church is blessed to have a team of General Presbyters. Had the General Leadership, the General Presbyters not been in place 18 months ago or so this Church would have been in somewhat of a chaos. But because leadership was there to fill the gap and step in they have brought us safely to this hour and their work is very much appreciated. We communicate often, we communicate through GoToMeeting. It's amazing how advanced our technology is now that gives us that opportunity to talk to one another and look at one another across the table when one is on the continent of Africa and another one is in Germany and we're scattered all over the world but thank God for technology and the advancements it's made. It can be good. It can be bad. But we thank God for the help we have had through that. Is the Tomlinson Center ready? Come right ahead brother."

11:00 a.m.—Bishop David Bryan: "We greet the 98th International Assembly with joy. It is a good day in this place and we are so pleased to be able to stand before you. Most of the members of the committee are here, the Tomlinson Center Advisory Board. We'd like present an informational report that will update you regarding the developments and work that has been done over the past months. We have shared together extensively so we share together in the reading of the report. I would like for the brethren to step forth."

11: 05 a.m. Wayne Pense read the introduction to the report (234).

11:10 a.m. Morais Cassell, Joey Garcia, Don Knoblich and David Bryan read sections of the report. (Report found on pages 234–237).

11:20 a.m.—Bishop Sam Clements: "Thank you committee for your report. These men have worked hard they've worked diligent to find a plan that will work for the entire church and we certainly want to express our appreciation to you for that. You've heard the reading of the report. Again this is an informational report that's been given to you. If you are in favor of approving this report I will ask you again to please stand."

Time was taken to assess those standing.

Bishop Clements: “Thank you, again, I will judge it to be an overwhelming consensus so we will consider it to be passed. Let’s give them a hand as they leave. The time is now 11:28. The next report that will come to this floor will be the finance report. They will not be prepared until the first thing in the afternoon. So at this time we are going to declare this session closed. We hope you will come back at 1:30 sharp and be here for the next report. Thank you very much.”

11:30 Bishop Clements struck the gavel ending this session.

Afternoon Session

Session Theme: International Assembly Business

1:30 p.m.—General Presbyter Ben Feliz opened session.

1:32 p.m.—The Dominican National Worship Team sang, “I Will Bless the Lord,” “I Never Knew That Serving Jesus Was So Good”

1:40 p.m.—Bishop Sam N. Clements explained changes in the proxy system. “We are preparing to go into our evening business session, it will continue. Before we call the committees to the platform, I would like to bring you up to date with the business procedure revisions. After several years of implementation of a proxy system as an effort to give voice to those that were unable to attend the International Assembly, we certainly realize that these efforts to give voice have in some way lessened the voice but since the Bible, Doctrine, and Polity committee have given authority to make procedural adjustments to the process (you can find that referenced in the 93rd International Assembly Minutes, 2004, page 112), in consultation with the General Presbyters, the Bible, Doctrine, and Polity committee have made such adjustments that are being implemented in this 2014 International Assembly business with great hope that the historical nature of the International Assembly as the highest decision-making body can be regained while still allowing global participation by the following revision. January 31, 2014, authority was entrusted in the Assembly committee for Bible, Doctrine, and Polity by the International Assembly to make changes to the proxy system (reference 93rd International Assembly minutes, 2004, page 112). Any changes to the proxy system will not require further Assembly approval but such adjustments have been implemented and they will be used in this Assembly. In the spirit of the original Assembly policies and procedural documents, these adjustments were made to maintain a global participation and to retain the dynamic of the working of the Holy Spirit in the delegates attending the International Assembly.

“Each local church should begin in January of an International Assembly year a review of any new recommendations that are coming before the Assembly. It will no longer be necessary for a selected representative from the local church for an upcoming Assembly but instead each local church would simply send their expressions concerning pending recommendations by March 1 to the state, regional, and national office. April 1, the overseers will submit all the expressions to their respective General Presbyter and the General Presbyter submits all the expressions by April 1 to the General Overseer’s office for a report by the appointed liaison to the International Assembly prior to the International Assembly. And documents were mailed out from the IO on March 11, 2014. The time was extended for the expressions this year due to the time that some of the documents went out so the time was extended almost up until Assembly time for the churches to send in their expressions. The process will include procedural changes following the International Assembly Committee’s report and recommendation. As the Assembly moderator I will give time for the Assembly delegates present to have dialogue concerning matters that are brought before the Assembly for decision. There will be no need for proxies but a simple report of the initial expressions of the local churches. These tabulations will be projected on the screen so that you may see the expressions of the greater Church body. I encourage you that are present to be mindful of the reported expressions by the local churches during the dialogue process. The decision making will rest upon you, the delegates present, with submission at all times to the Holy Spirit. Doctrinal matters will continue to require a one accord agreement, while matters of policy and practice or of a financial nature will continue to be adopted by overwhelming consensus. This adjustment was required because of the difficulties of the past proxy system and to allow for more inspirational decision making and discernment by the Holy Spirit in all of our Assembly business sessions. The assembly expression process was put into place to give the local churches opportunity to declare their discernment regarding International Assembly business. The results have been tabulated and the official numbers will be projected on the screens for each business item under consideration. The action that we take today will maintain the historical nature of the International Assembly as being the highest decision making body while allowing for those unable to be present opportunity for expression. The pre-expressions will serve to assist us today in the discussion and discernment process for each item of consideration. After the reading of the business being considered, the pre-Assembly expressions will be displayed on the screens in order for those present to see the discernment of the greater Church body. Though we are not required in Assembly business actions to follow any particular form or procedure, parliamentary procedure, we have typically in our business always used a first and second motion in our business procedure and I will do that today for the record’s sake. Following this, I will open the floor for discussion and decision and when we call for an expression of the body we will call all in favor and that will

be extended to this Assembly body. Should there be a one accord expression for decision received when one is required you will be given the opportunity to submit or abstain in agreement with the approved International Assembly business procedures. I just wanted to explain that before we began our business session so that you would understand the changes that have been made concerning the proxy system. We will call the committee to the platform. We will begin with the Finance and Stewardship committee and they will be coming at this time. They will only be reading, both committees will only be reading the recommendations that they have made since you have had in your hands for several months now copies of the Assembly reports. They have been read in your local churches and all pastors have had these copies for several months. So they will only be reading the recommendations and then we'll proceed from there. So if the Finance and Stewardship committee are ready they will come at this time. I stand corrected. These guys behind me are a tremendous help. We will have the Finance director come and give his report prior to the Finance and Stewardship committee. So if the Finance director is ready, he can come at this time."

1:45 p.m.—Bishop Paul Holt: Good afternoon. I want to say it's been a great honor for me to serve this church as executive director of Finance and Administration. I would like to take just a moment to recognize the departments that make up the Finance and Administration umbrella or area at the International Offices. I'm not going to ask these people to stand because some are working in places right now. Information Technology, Mike Luithle; Retail Operations and White Wing Publishing House, Gene Browning; Financial Services and Ministerial Services, Paulette Wilbanks; and Global Missions, Cathy Payne. There is an Administrative Services department which is an arm of my office and is managed by Eddie Hartman. I don't believe any one works any more closely with me than Eddie and I would like to thank him publicly for his excellent service. Brother Eddie cannot be with us. His wife is battling cancer right now going through treatments so he is in Cleveland handling communications for us there. His wife is Emily and I would ask that when you pray, pray for Emily that God would continue to do a miracle in her. I'd also like to give special thanks to my secretary, Sarah Rising. Many of you spoke with Sarah as you made your hotel reservations for this Assembly. She's always a positive, encouraging influence in our office and we appreciate her hard work. I'd like to express my appreciation to every member of the Finance and Administration team. Most are rarely up front but they work hard in service to this Church, feeling that what they do is what God has called them to do and I want to publicly say thank you. I would like to comment the United States for their faithfulness in stewardship, their ongoing contribution to this global Church. To the U.S. I would say, your commitment to stewardship serves as a model to the rest of the world, and I'm thankful that the rest of the world is picking up this banner of stewardship, one country after another, one area after another. Central

America is contributing to needs around the world, not just in their area but around the world, including North America. Financial strength is growing in the Caribbean as well as South America. We are a global Church and that should be reflected in our financial connectivity. In every nation this should be our mindset: The desire to give should always exceed the desire to receive. At the International Offices we continue to work on optimizing our service and support ministry. Since 2010 the International Offices budget has been reduced by \$835,000. Some departments have been eliminated and the responsibilities absorbed by other areas without adding additional personnel. Outsourcing, strategic partnerships, and other avenues have been pursued to help reduce expenses. The goal is to constantly be looking for ways to improve our stewardship. These changes are not as a result of a financial crisis. They are a proactive effort to bring all operations in line with our core values of prayer, the harvest, and leadership development. We are pleased to be able to report that even in our efforts to operate on less as was mentioned this morning we have closed both of the last two fiscal years with balanced budgets. Our budget managers are to be commended for their commitment to good stewardship. As Finance and Administration director I have partnered with our General Overseer in the first year, our General Presbyters, ministry directors, Administrative committee and the Finance and Stewardship committee in all areas of finance and administration. The audit committee has also been a valuable partner as they review our financials each month. I've worked closely with our auditing firm Capin Crouse to insure that adequate controls are in place. I've also worked with legal counsel to protect the interest of the Church of God of Prophecy. I have endeavored to provide oversight for the daily administrative duties for the Church worldwide. I'm thankful for the team that helps make all that happen. To maintain fiscal accountability the Church of God of Prophecy receives an annual audit of its financial statements by Capin Crouse, LLC, an independent accounting firm that specializes in nonprofit organizations. Capin Crouse will be sharing with you the results of that audit in just a little bit. The Finance and Administrative division and the Administrative Committee are fully committed to financial accountability, integrity, and stewardship. Our ongoing accreditation by the Evangelical Council of Financial Accountability is testament to that commitment. At this time, our Financial Services manager, Paulette Wilbanks, will come and share the financial report.

1:53 p.m.—Paulette Wilbanks, Accounting Manager, Presented financial statement (found on pages 187–189).

2:00 p.m.—Bishop Holt returned to the podium. Auditors were introduced. Dan Campbell and Allison Webb read the audit report. (Found on page 186)

2:05 p.m.—Bishop Paul Holt: “At this time we will turn the session over the moderator for an expression. Thank you.”

2:06 Bishop Sam Clements: “Thank you Bishop Holt. We would entertain any questions if you might have one for the Finance director.” Bishop Clements waited a moment. “I don’t see anybody coming. I would ask all in favor of accepting this report to be read will you please stand please. The reason the General Presbyters are not standing is because they are counselors. All right. I believe that is an overwhelming consensus from where I can see. So thank you, Bishop Holt, and thank you, auditors, for your hard work. I am very grateful for this team behind me that works as counselors during the business sessions but they also form the General Presbytery and the General Leadership of the Church. They are a tremendous blessing to my ministry. All right I believe now we may be ready for the Finance and Stewardship committee to come. We will turn this to Bishop Tim Coalter who is the chairman of the committee.”

2:07 p.m.—Bishop Tim Coalter: The Assembly Committee for Finance and Stewardship brings you greetings. Isn’t this a wonderful day? Before we get into the report, I would like to recognize the members of this committee. You really get to know someone when you’re locked in a room with them for days at a time, twice a year. And can I tell you that the men and women sitting behind me are men and women of integrity, men and women who love the Lord, and men and women who love this Church body and we are pleased to serve with them. On this committee we have Bishop Jay Croyle, Bishop Franklin Ferguson, Bishop Wayne Hall, Bishop George McLaughlin, Bishop Jesse Yanez, Londa Richardson, Angie Zamora, and myself. Our report today will consist of four sections. The first section will be read simply as a recognition of the ECFA. You’ve already heard about them and that accreditation earlier today. We just wanted as a committee to express recognition as well. Section 2 is a statement of reaffirmation regarding pastoral compensation. This section does not reflect any new item of business but simply brings to light something that is already in our books that we felt needed to be expressed on this floor again. Section 3 is the first section that will require a response. It is entitled Financial Ethics. This will be followed by the last section, Section 4: Embracing the Harvest and Leadership Development, Strengthening National, Regional, State Offices. I believe they are going to show you the chart for Section 3, the response. This is regarding Financial Ethics According to the expressions that have been received globally, 92 percent are in agreement, 3 percent abstained, 4 percent submit, and 1 percent disagrees. In the following section, Section 4, 90 percent are in agreement with this section of the report, 4 percent abstained, 4 percent submit, and 2 percent disagreed. I would like to mention that in Section 4, there have been a few amendments since the report has been sent globally. Those amendments will be reflected, I believe, in yellow highlight on your screen. In addition to those amendments, there is one paragraph of addition that was not in your report that you received, so pay close attention to those highlighted areas in Section 4. At this time, I will ask Sister Londa Richardson, our recording secretary, to come and read our report.

2:10 p.m.—Londa Richardson, secretary, read the report (found on pages 179–180). COGOP met requirements for ECFAs. Explained tithes usage. Pastor passionate. Financial ethics recommendation read. Pastors and family should not serve as treasurer unless extreme circumstances. Section 4 Strengthening national/regional/state offices by the gradual reallocation of tithes over a six-year period.

2:17 p.m.—Moderator: “All right, you have heard the report read. For clarity for the expressions we might put those back on the screen where people can see the report from the field. At this time I would entertain a motion to accept this report as read.” Robert Hile, Jr. Pennsylvania, made a motion to accept. Eric Washburn, Spring Place Church, Cleveland, Tennessee, seconded the motion.

2: 18 p.m.—Moderator: “All right. We have a motion and a second. At this time we will entertain questions from the floor. I would ask you to keep your questions as short as possible and if possible no follow up questions so it would give more time to other people who might be coming to the microphone with questions. So at this time we will ask you to address your questions to Section 3 so we will clear Section 3 and then we will go to Section 4. If you have a question concerning Section 3.” There were no questions. No one stood in opposition.

Bishop Clements: “All in favor if you would stand to your feet, please. If you could bring up the lights in the auditorium, it would help us from here. Thank you very much. Okay remain standing, please. Those that are in favor, Section 3 only. All right, you might be seated. Any opposed to section 3? We will consider section 3 as passed. We will move to section 4.”

2:22 p.m.—*Question*: Pastor Henry Garcia, Springfield Massachusetts spoke in Spanish and was interpreted—“The expression Section 4 about missions, about the 30 percent, I think the percent is too high. The International Offices does not receive money from the nations they are helping. The national and state offices should receive more money but the new overseer should make decision for the church at the international level.”

2:23 p.m.—*Response*: Bishop Coalter—“I apologize that due to the acoustics on this platform, there was a lot of ringing and we are not sure what he said.”

2:24 p.m.—Bishop Clements instructed Bishop Ben Feliz to interpret for Bishop Coalter, which was done away from the microphone.

2:25 p.m.—Bishop Coalter responded: I am sorry, brother. As I understand your question, you are not in opposition to the idea of redistribution. You feel that it may be somewhat aggressive and also you’re asking that this perhaps be

delayed until a new General Overseer is in place. Is that correct?” Interpreter responded in the affirmative. Bishop Coalter: Regarding the second portion of your question, as to the General Overseer being in place, this committee worked in consultation with the General Presbyters who represented the plurality of leadership and collectively felt that this would be appropriate to bring to the floor at this time. Regarding the initial concern that you shared, in our prior workings, we were looking at a four-year time frame for the implementation. But after looking at that, we did expand it to a six-year. So it is the consensus of this committee that the six-year period, which would not culminate until 2021 would allow sufficient time for adjustments to be made accordingly.”

2:27 p.m.—Brother Garcia responded that he feels it is too much. “When money was taken out of the regions, it was not with the future in mind. That is my only concern about that.”

2:28 p.m.—Moderator: Thank you for your question. We have others that are standing. Who was next?

2:29 p.m.—*Question:* Bishop Peringatan Zebua, National Overseer of Indonesia—“First of all I thank the committee for presenting this to us. When I received the financial report, in my simple logic, when you do this recommendation, automatically money, tithe money, goes to the International Offices. I don’t know how much that is in total receipts in the International Office. My simple logic is that when we pass this recommendation, automatically it would be reduced. All ministry of the International Offices benefits churches outside North America. I believe tithe is a biblical truth. In our documents before tithe is to go to the priest but it has been negotiable. My conclusion is this: It is your right to do this. It must be 10 percent. Somebody asked, ‘How much tithe do you pay?’ This is not 10 percent anymore. Of course, we make the kind of adjustment that we send it first and then it turns 30 percent. I believe tithe is a biblical truth. Why don’t you make your kind of a budget, from the local church to the International Office? So in the sense that maybe come from the tithes as well as other financial resources to come to the International Office. Because tithes is clearly a very active objective: ‘Bring all the tithes.’ Tithes means 10 percent of resources, 10 percent of income. Now in our logic, 10 percent is sent into the house. But it surely will be already deduct, or reduced, 30 percent. I think there is a kind of a way to send our tithes. It is negotiable. I know in our document before, in our history that the tithe is to go to the priest. But we tried to, I read once, I’m not so clear, this is all documents, the people were disturbed again. Because the tithe itself is to go to the priest. But it has been negotiable. Of course all the tithe is to the pastor given or to the priest means, this is a ministry also. So, my conclusion is that you’ve been made this, of course in my perspective it is your right. You have rights to do something,

because it is your right. But it will affect not only outside North America. I don't know how much is this? But I'm sure international operational expenses we have to adjust because the money we received before it will be reduced. The second one is we have to find out the biblical, we have to use our wisdom. The biblical truth of living and it is clear: 10 percent! Into the house. Those we know. Then from the 10 percent we can arrange, we can negotiate that. But maybe one day, the 10 percent, may be only one percent. So, I am not good in explaining this because I don't find myself proficient but anyway, of course the committee are the men God used them for this time for situations in this Church. Thank you and God bless you."

2:33 p.m.—Moderator: "Thank you, Bishop. Any response?"

2:33 p.m.—*Response*: Bishop Coalter—"Bishop Zebua, as I understand your concern, you were concerned that perhaps we were asking for more than 10 percent from local churches. Tithe by definition is 10 percent. And that 10 percent is all we're dealing with in this section of the report. The local church, nothing would change. You would still send 10 percent to the International Office or the international funds. It is a redistribution of that 10 percent is what we're looking at today."

2:34 p.m.—*Question*: Bishop Randy Howard, pastor of the Rickman Church of God of Prophecy in Tennessee—"I certainly appreciate the committee and all the hours that you spend and our Chairman Coalter and our moderator, Bishop Clements, congratulations on your selection this morning. I appreciate our heritage of floor dialogue and am glad to enter into that today. Time is short so I will speak to one concept each time I take a turn. There's so much that I could say about this report. Secondly, for anyone who might be interested in my further thoughts, I have a Facebook page called 'F&S Concerns' that you may be able to read further. My first concept about this report is that in a time of limited funds, and we know we're in a time of limited funds we know that this report talks about crisis and urgency. I do not believe that this distribution plan is a wise distribution plan. I don't think that it's the best decision that we can make. I believe that there are better decisions that we can find. It's not a strategic decision, it's not a discriminating decision, and it's not a visionary decision; I would love to visit with you about how we could make a decision like that. If we look at an investment, we are limited funds so we're going to give funds back to the field, that's making an investment. Now when we make an investment we try not to make it in places where they are losing money or low return for the money that we put into it. With this distribution plan, approximately 80 percent of the funds in North America, for instance, will go to places that low return in harvest. I'm speaking about growth. Or have no return in harvest. I think we could choose better plans. And on the other hand, if we look in North America, two particular places I'm thinking of

where we planted more local churches than any other place in North America or the place where we have grown more statistically than anywhere else in North America over the last ten years those places will receive the minimal amount of distribution or, in talking to one overseer, when it all pans out he does not believe he will get an increase. That's not a wise distribution plan. If those that are growing and showing us the way to grow are not going to be invested in so that we can grow more. What I would like to see are two things. Need index. Base the distribution on need and two, base the distribution on potential. If we look at need and if we look at potential I think we'll begin to get strategic, discriminating, and visionary. Consider my children. I have three children. If I won the lottery, I would give all of them the same amount. Plenty of money. But I've got two children who have finished college, they are in their careers, they're making money. Their need is not as high. But I have a 17 year old and his needs are skyrocketing. I'm not going to give him the same amount as the others. I'm going to have to save for college. He's got extra expense. He's got cars on his mind. You see, need and future potential plays into it. Giving fairly to everyone is not wise, it's not discriminating, it's not strategic, it's not visionary. It will not utilize our funds to the maximum. I believe we have growth potential in North America if we focus our funds in the places where we can maximize our harvest potential. The parable of the talents shows us that this was Jesus attitude. He didn't give everyone the same. And when the one buried his talent, Jesus took it away and He gave to the one who made the most. I believe we can be strategic. My recommendation is to table this report, study for two years. I do believe, and if anyone has sat on the Administrative committee for the last six years. I have said this over and over: North America needs more funds but I do not think this is strategic. We can table this report. We can do better research. Find a better and even the best way to be strategic, discriminating and visionary. I'll take my turn later when other have had theirs."

2:37 p.m.—Moderator: "Thank you Bishop Howard. We don't usually applaud during a business session. If you would be so kind to keep your applause to a later date. Would you like to respond?"

2:38 p.m.—*Response*: Bishop Tim Coalter: "Yes, Bishop Howard there are a number of responses that we could offer. First of all, your focus on North America doesn't reflect the global nature of this report. This is not simply about North America, but about our global work. And it is a return proportionately to involvement in the Present Financial System. Regarding the growth in North America between the years of 2000 and 2010, our growth in North America since you focused on this region exceeded 21 percent. The growth is higher in North America in more recent years. Florida exceeded 1,000 new members. This is fertile soil. It was noted in the report that every state, region, nation would be asked to tithe funds that they receive from the redistribution they would tithe those funds back to General

Presbyters' offices. That would provide a pool of money to be used in those either weaker areas or areas where vision is being cast or areas where the soil needs to be fertilized a bit where growth is happening. Since you focused on North America, in this region, upon full implementation that would give the General Presbyter's office of North America, based on today's numbers approximately \$150,000 to provide grants to areas that need it the most. Thank you."

2:40 p.m.—Bishop Howard: "Bishop Clements, since he spoke to specific things that I mentioned, could I take one minute to respond? He mentioned one of the areas of the large states that would be receiving the most. That is the success story of the eight large states. That is the only success story. The others were lower rated in growth but we're giving 80 percent of this 1.5 million, we're giving it to places that are not giving us a large return. That's not strategic, that's not visionary or discriminating. When you mentioned that we'll give the North American presbyter's office 150,000, that's only 10 percent of the big giveback, 1.5 million that we're talking about. Let's use it visionary and strategic. We can grow in North America by leaps and bounds."

2:42 p.m.—Moderator: "Thank you, Bishop. Over here?"

2:43 p.m.—*Question*: "Yes, good afternoon. Amos W. Carty Jr., St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands. First of all I'd like to commend you, Mr. Moderator on your selection by this Assembly as our General Overseer. Our prayers are with you as you lead our body. I would also like to commend the committee for this report and the work that you have done. The question that I have is to the extent that the reallocation of funds to intermediate offices, once they are returned and the tithe, 10 percent I believe, that you mentioned Bishop Coalter, is paid to the presbyter, the Presbytery, the respective Presbytery office is it appropriate then for the for the respective whether state, national, or regional convention to determine the use of the remaining 90 percent in the appropriate area. Would that ban an appropriate body to determine how that reallocation would be distributed?"

2:46 p.m.—Moderator: "Thank you."

2:47 p.m.—Bishop Coalter read from the report that funds are used at the discretion of the General Presbyter. "Each of those regions work with a plurality team within that region. That would be a matter at this point for that plurality team to assume."

3:03 p.m.— Brother Carty: "If I may ask a follow-up question: Then would it be appropriate for a particular convention, whether it be a regional convention,

for example, after the tithe has been paid to the presbyter's office, the remaining amount of the reallocation for that particular convention, to determine how that 90 percent could be utilized in the area? Could the convention in that particular area be the authority or the entity to determine? Would that be appropriate?

3:06 p.m.—Bishop Tim Coalter: “This committee is not making that recommendation from this floor. That would be a matter of national and regional concern.”

3:06 p.m.—Brother Carty: “Thank you very much, sir.”

3:07 p.m.—Moderator: “Thank you, Bishop. We have over here.”

3:07 p.m.—*Question*: “Hello, my name is Michael Edwards. I pastor in Charleston, South Carolina. I appreciate this report I rise in support of this report. If we look at it clearly, it is a recognition of our globalization, our plurality of leadership because of the funds going to the General Presbyters in this manner, there will be less need for the International Offices to subsidize them. So there will be an actual accounting change as to how they receive their subsidies. I've been following up with our stewardship department with Bishop Holt to get what we have to subsidize each General Presbyter from the international funds. But this makes it more the responsibility of the region they're in, recognizing our plurality of leadership, encouraging stewardship in those areas. Now, I am a pastor in America. And I want you to understand that my ministry to me, and the resources, the tithes that come in are part of my ministry and what we send to the International Offices. They are not simply resources to be reallocated to different parts where someone else needs them. We give as we are led. That's why we give to missionaries we are led to, that's why we faithfully send 10 percent of the tithes that come in to the International Offices. That's why I tithe to the state office. So when we think of where this money's come from, they're not just resources. They're my ministry, the other pastors' ministries and they come in because of our ministry. If we were not there. So to say an area is not productive when it is providing resources for the general work is a very dangerous line. As if that is not real ministry. I believe there is potential for revival in America we have some great churches throughout the country. That's how it is. Churches rise and fall. And we just need to recognize that this will spread the responsibility around the world to every local church to be faithful in their support of their national office. They'll be supporting their presbyter through this method. That way the international funds which the International Offices cannot access will be more available and more under the direction of the leadership in those areas. So I think this supports our overall vision of having the plurality of leadership around the world, a global view of what we're doing. Thank you.”

3:14 p.m.—*Response:* Bishop Sam Clements, Moderator, responded: “I believe that was more of a statement than a question.” Pointed to next questioner.

3:15 p.m.—*Question:* “James Kolawole from Nigeria. I want to appreciate the work of the committee because I know they have been working very hard for a while now just to prepare this report and this recommendation. And I do believe it is with good intentions for the growth of this body. But my question is just to have some explanations as to the cost and effect of this recommendation. Is it that International Office have been working and having surplus budget or is it that there are some other things you have to give up or the International Office will be giving up because by the time you take \$500,000 in a year, definitely something will go for something. So what will be the effect of this? Because it takes the International Office to cast visions and we follow them, that is, those of us outside the United States. Although it seems this report will be favorable to nations that are growing financially, and tithes are increasing, it will be a blessing. But at the same time, when the top is weak, it will eventually affect those that are following. So, I just want to know, what are the plans for this shortfall? That is number one. And number two is by the time you gave your report on responses I want to ask, what were the actual numbers responding from the field? The actual numbers responding from the field? 92 percent agree. But how many responses do we have?”

3:19 p.m.—*Response:* Bishop Coalter: To respond to your second question first, the graph that we have is on the screen, simply shows percentages. In response to your first question: Certainly any time there is a change in financial structure, there is an effect that follows. This committee would like to express that we value the International Office. We value the work that is done there. There is absolutely no animosity on this committee toward the International Office so we are not motivated by any negative thoughts in this redistribution. Certainly there will be some effect. However as the report states, this is being implemented over a six-year period. We believe that God’s favor is going to be on this Church. There will be increase. The future percentages will be reflected off of increased tithing and giving. So much emphasis is put on North America. Let me just give you one example. Outside of North America, if every member would give one dollar a year, it would offset the loss that would be experienced presently. But we believe that this is not just an impact analysis, but an opportunity analysis for this Church globally to embrace the financial system of this Church and to be involved in it. And if that happens, then we will far exceed any loss that the International Office will experience presently.”

3:20 p.m.—*Moderator:* “Do we have a brother standing over here?”

3:21 p.m.—*Question:* “Yes. Clint Knowles, Lead Pastor and member at the Hackelburg Church of God of Prophecy in Alabama. When I received the report,

and went through it with my church, I just don't mind telling you that we are part of the two percent in the pie chart. And I'd like to say to the F&S committee, thank you for all your hard work. I know a lot of time goes into a report of this nature. I'm glad to be part of a movement that has been looking for some time to get our finances correct. I can remember pastoring in this movement, years gone by, in which a local church tithed 20 percent from their funds. And we worked on that and we shifted some things. That was a great day for a local church. I'm looking, as I read the document, it appears that the motive, and I use the word motive very loosely. I'm not talking about whether it is ethical or not. The motive seems to be that we want to help the national offices. When I stand before the members at the church at Hackleburg and the finance committee says, 'We have funds. We want to buy a bus,' they want motive. They respect us. They think we care for the finances of our local church. But they don't just accept that because we say we want a bus. 'What are we going to use that bus for? Who're we going to help? How are we going to use it in ministry?' So we tell motive. I appreciate the fact that we want to help state and national offices. I emailed my bishop to let him know that we disagree, not because we don't want him to have funds, we want him to have more funds. And I forwarded that email on to the F&S committee. I don't ever expect or have to have a response. I was part of the delegation when we attempted and moved in the direction to get it right years ago. We came under the structure we're under now. It seems that now we have recognized after a few years, we helped International but we hurt state. My question today is can we not pass this report and take time to look for a more biblical way of doing this? Because I don't want to see us set ourselves up to be like a government in which we may be rewarding benefit, helping those who are not sowing into something. If we want a more biblical way, of course if I'm standing at a mic, you're going to know that I'm probably going to have a recommendation, why can't we just tithe up like we're supposed to? Why can't the local church tithe the state; why can't the state tithe to International? I mean, we know there is a tithing issue. That's why we're in the place we're in now. If everybody would tithe, we wouldn't have this problem. We have a problem. Yes. But let's find a solution. And I applaud you for looking to find a solution. But is this the best, biblical way of finding a solution? Thank you.

3:27 p.m.—*Moderator*: Thank you, pastor. Any response?

3: 28 p.m.—*Response*: Bishop Tim Coalter: "In regards to the email that you sent to the best of my recollection I never received that. I would the point to express my apologies for that. This committee did explore a number of possibilities such as what you were considering in your recommendation. It would have a greater adverse impact on our international ministries. We have, again, this is a project that this committee has been working on for 10 to 12 years, exploring many options. We feel collectively, with our inspiration and our studies that we're bringing the

best option to this Assembly floor that's available at this time. If you or anyone would care to address this committee, we would welcome either your visit to our meetings or your correspondence to this committee. Thank you."

3:29 p.m.—Moderator: "We have one more from the floor and then we're going to entertain an expression from the audience. We have one right here standing."

3:31 p.m.—*Question*: "Tedroy Powell from the Netherlands and Belgium. First I'd like to commend the F&S committee for their hard work and clearly for the attempt to address what is a difficult challenge and situation that is before us as a corporate church. I think the picture that is before us is quite clear. Something needs to be done to address it. Having said that, I have two points or two questions: In order for me to draw meaning from what is being presented, we do need some measurable facts. In the percentages that were given, there were no actual hard numbers so that we know how many people responded. Because 92 percent, that may be meaningful to the people who compiled the figures, but to us who are the recipients of that information, we would need to know how many people responded. Is it a thousand, is it ten thousand or is it a hundred? That is important and that is what I mean about having something factual that we can draw on. So it would help me if that information could be given to us, disseminated so we can have a clear understanding on that point. My second point is that of forecasting. Given that you've been looking at this for approximately 10 years, in most organizations, there is some financial modeling which takes place which lines up our vision and our goals the direction in which we are going. It would seem to me that there must have been some thought given with regards to adjustments in the financial model that's been made for us as a corporate church. What were your plans for where there would be shortfalls and how you would cater to the changes in this?"

3:33 p.m.—*Response*: Bishop Tim Coalter—"In response to your first inquiry, while I don't have a specific number in front of me, I believe it was somewhere between 700 to 1000 expressions. Somewhere in that range globally. Secondly, I'm operating on little sleep. So can you repeat that question again?"

3:33 p.m.—*Question*: Bishop Tedroy Powell—"That's okay. Second question. It has to do with forecasting. Every organization has some financial model which it is working so its finances can be arranged in such a way that it can resource itself over its journey. Given that you had 10 years or so, I may be wrong in that number, I'm just citing what's been said before, what thoughts were given to financial forecasting with changes that have been made and that you've proposed today?"

3:34 p.m.—*Response*: Bishop Coalter responded, "Yes, we have done financial forecasting for how these funds would serve as an asset to state, regional, national

offices. We have hard numbers of those increases per state, per region, per nation. We also have studies of how this will impact International Office, however, we did not undertake a line item impact study as that would come under the responsibility of the Financial Director and the Administration committee. “

3:35 p.m.— Bishop Powell: “Given that you’ve mentioned the Financial Director and Administrative committee, it would be useful to hear what the consensus of your thoughts would be going forward given that we have a financial model. I do not wish to take up much time, but for myself and I’m sure maybe for others too, to walk this journey and to clearly insure there are sufficient resources to provide for us as we move along this journey, it will be important for me to hear what the Financial Director and the Administrative committee would have to say on this matter. I think I’ll have to leave at this point given that clearly we want to get a response from these.”

3:36 p.m.—Moderator: “Thank you, Bishop. Bishop Pense was standing next.”

3:36 p.m.—*Question*: “Thank you, Bishop. Wayne Pense, I’m the regional overseer of the Heartland America region: Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Arkansas. I consider it an honor today to address this group and our committee. I, personally, as a pastor and now a regional overseer, experienced the change that took place in our financial system some years ago. It was proposed by a great group of people that I believe had a heart for our organization. I have lived long enough in this organization to know inherently we don’t have bad people trying to cause something that would harm or hurt us. I pastored through the days when the local church paid 10 percent tithes to the state offices, 10 percent tithes to the International Offices. We sent all of our youth funds and all of our children’s funds and our BTI offerings. And I really don’t remember having a challenge to do that because it was what we were asked to do and we were Church of God and we responded happily. I experienced this change gradually over the years. The change took place of course over a number of years, it was a staged plan just as this is a staged plan to the point where the “spend-out” was that no tithes were to be sent to the state offices. The plan that was given to us sounded good and in the numbers looked fairly good. The plan declared that the tithes of the pastors and ministers that would then be transferred to the local office would make up and even exceed the loss of income to the state offices. We have now over several years reaped the judgment of the change in our financial system. This is my observation, my experience. I believe it was such an unhealthy change for North American operations. States were merged into regions because of the stress of lack of funds coming into that particular state. We once has as many as 50 state offices, the state overseers, in many places state staff, funded by the offerings or tithes that were sent in by the local churches. We now have 23 states and/or regions. This

is personal commentary: I'm extremely disappointed by the suggestion that our churches that aren't sending in the funds are a poor investment. It is glaringly evident that if you do not maintain the generator in time, the source that sends the power and operation to function will cease. There has been a constant flow, and I say this guardedly because it could be misunderstood but unless you were there, you would not know this in many areas there has been the need for the sale of properties, reduction of churches and yes some of that was because those churches were dying. I will say this, I guess we are on our record, we will have some churches that will continue to die because of economics, lack of ability to supply a pastor there but there are other issues that we are dealing with here. In this suggestion and I know, I've been here long enough to know that this is no hasty decision and it has not been reached in haste. I believe it has been made by men and women of great integrity with desire to help us find a way to move forward and make sure we can do the common goal that we all have and that is to share Jesus Christ with the world in the best way that we possibly can. I literally shudder at the suggestion that our churches are bad investments in the United States of America. Reinvestment in the already struggling church operation is not investing poorly, rather it is an effort to make sure that funds that fuel the machines of harvest around the world will continue to prosper. I think perhaps this effort, it will not solve our problems. And some here, I know overall, there seems to be a lot of, well there is a lot of money involved. But for the most part this gradual return is not going to mean all that money to most of us. But what it will mean to some of our local churches is to say through the International Office and these good men and women some way are recognizing the struggles that we have and are reinvesting in that state or regional office who are the ones who touch the local churches and the pastors and I hope I can say this, personally, that we give our lives to try to help those pastors and churches, not just to maintain, not just to keep the doors open but to grow and to prosper. Our churches have given and they will give. Very little will change over the most part as a result of this. Perhaps the next Assembly our people will continue to give but I appreciate the effort that have been offered to us in the United States to help to maintain this machine. It is our desire to send the Gospel to every corner of this world. Thank you."

3:41 p.m. Moderator: "Thank you Bishop Pense. I'm going to ask at this time that no one else join the lines. We have extended it further that I had stated that we would. It is 3:42 and we have another report. We're not trying to rush this. We realize the importance of it. But we will ask that no one else join the lines until after we take and expression. Okay?"

3:42 p.m.—*Question*: "Bishop Terry Swaw, Crab Orchard, Tennessee. I'm the senior pastor there. I certainly appreciate the time that you all have put into this document. Appreciate you giving it to us in a timely manner to pray over and

study this document. When I presented this document to my church, I could not present it to them with an understanding of clearly what's going to take place with all the funds. I understand the 30 percent is going to be over a period of six years delegated out to national, regional areas. I am one individual, if anybody knows me, knows that I want all of our churches to do well. I want every state in the Church of God of Prophecy whether it be a nation or whoever to get as much money as you can to fund every ministry that you have ever envisioned. But the truth is, it doesn't always work like that. I would like to begin a building program at Crab Orchard to make space for the new people that are coming and the ones that I believe are coming in the next few years. But reality is, I have to work within my means right now. I am not against giving 30 percent across the board to whoever it needs to go to. I think one of the things I continue to hear today is the same thing I got when I read the initial document a few months ago. There is not enough information given to us in the field that we can make a clear decision on this document. That we can stand up here and say I support this document because you have given us all the information. Now I trust that every one of you on that stage up there are all godly men and women who are looking into the best interest of the Church of God of Prophecy across the world. However, I have not received the information that I would like that says, I would like to send an "X" amount of money to Tennessee, "X" amount of money to Nigeria, "X" amount of money to the general offices and how that's going to come in and how it's going to go out. We don't have all the answers for the future. But we do have some of the answers that's right before us today. And I don't feel that we have been given all of the statistical information to help us to give an informed decision to say let's make this document move forward. I would recommend today that we table this document and give the churches more information. Statistics of why we want to do this, when we're going to do it, and how we're going to do it so that we can better prepare for tomorrow instead of looking behind us. God bless you."

3:45 p.m.—Moderator: "Thank you, Pastor Swaw. We have two more. Bishop Howard I'm not ignoring you over here. You've had two times on the floor. We'll take one over here. Please make it brief, and then we'll give you a brief moment."

3:46 p.m.—*Question*: "David Bryan, Peerless Road Church of God of Prophecy. I suppose with a great sense of desire to see our churches all over the world: in North America and in every nation really somehow embracing God's plan that allows us to thrive financially, we are certainly challenged at every level and when we look at the Church of God of Prophecy, I think there are a number of ways to categorize components that make up this global body. We have the International Offices that plays a very vital role in the cohesiveness, the connectivity in the provision of ministries. We have very critical national, state and regional offices that are absolutely significant for the supervision the leadership the stimulation

of ministries at the local level. We have our local levels. In terms of the vast economy of the Church, we have the North America engine that has for more than 100 years been the fuel, financially, that has driven the growth of this Church from North America to 132 or 33 nations. Seems to me that we have a body that requires a solution financially that will aid the entire body. What does this report imply for each of these components? We don't fully have that picture completely painted and we heard Bishop Powell referencing the need for greater clarity as I believe Brother Swaw was also calling for. But I see this report being helpful and beneficial to some extent perhaps to some components of the North American intermediate offices, that varies depending on the size, the strength of those particular regions. I see the nations outside of this nation, that for, if they are as most of our nations are by and large numerically, they do not generate enough finances or tithe that this particular solution would give back very much to them and so for them it's a loss. Significant loss. The International Offices at full implementation, were talking about 1.5 million dollars out of a 7 million dollar budget that is very stressed at this particular point and in my estimation as simply one member of the Administrative committee, others can speak, perhaps, but 1.5 million dollars over the course of six years looking at our financial history and the modeling we have had in the past, that number has not grown significantly therefore we're talking about a significant negative impact on the International Offices. So out of the three major components of this Body—International Offices, North American state/regional offices, the nations—two of those would be severely negatively impacted, by and large. In the nations, there are some nations that are larger and significantly better economically and they benefit. But the vast majority do not. So we have a solution that is a “lose, lose, partial win.” In my estimation it seems that somehow godly men and women of God from around the world who care for the entire body must be able to do better Thank you.”

3:51 p.m.—Moderator: “Thank you Bishop Bryan. We've been quite liberal with the time for each person on the floor. I would like to, with all due respect, Bishop Howard, ask you to be brief. If you will please then we will call for an expression.”

3:52 p.m.—*Question:* (Bishop Randy Howard, Rickman, Tennessee) “Thank you Bishop Clements. That's why I wrote down my comments to be succinct and to the point. This action is all about reversing action taken 20 years ago. I think Bishop Pense comments highlighted that if anything at all. If you read the document, you'll see that the first page if it had been laid out as a page would have been about 20 years ago. The document is three and a half pages and we spent one-third of it speaking of 20 years ago. That is why I say it is an action that looks backward to the past not forward to the future. Simply reversing the action of 20 years ago does not speak to our context and the need we face today. Neither does it speak to our potential or the opportunities for our future. For this reason, it's not the

best action we can take. I like Bishop Bryan's comments to try to find a win/win scenario. Consider these three ideas. Past action treated every area the same and used percentages. As I've said that's not strategic. Today we have a North American General Presbyter and he has a council; should be able to make the best decisions to allocate funds for the best results in North America. This would be far more efficient, more effective and strategic. Second: The present demands good discernment of the real needs in North America. This means the North American General Presbyter and his council must discern where the needs are; some criteria would be good for good understanding among all people. Perhaps that "need indicator" I was talking about. As to the future demands, we discern opportunities and potential. This cannot be done effectively state by state in North America. Leadership must discern what are the best opportunity investments for the area as a whole. Then we must invest in those opportunities. Giving back a percentage to everyone does not do this. Bishop Clements will remember that he served with me on a task force, at least for half of the task force that literally gave 1 million dollars back to North America to plant churches. We saw 34 churches planted in the space of four years as we invested strategically to a need. The collateral damage that will arise from this activity. This activity has far-reaching implications beyond just 30 percent going back to regions, states, and nations. The first rule of thumb in medicine is to do no harm. Though today it often seems the medicine we take is worse than the sickness we had. I believe that is what this report will do. It is not only not strategic, but the collateral damage is going to be extensive. One of those collateral damages will be leadership development. Over the last six years, we've strived to build a unified and central leadership development delivery strategy. It's still building. It's still forming. But it has had success these last six years. Decreasing the funds by one-third in the International Offices will stop the momentum of the leadership development train that has been gaining momentum in this Church. But finally the International Offices will be transformed just like 20 years ago. The state and regional offices were transformed as Bishop Pense was declaring to us and as we know ourselves. We will look back in 10 years and the International Office will be drastically changed. Will it be for our best? Or for our good? I do not believe so. I believe we are taking the same action we took 20 years ago. And we will see the same negative impact but in a different direction. It's a reversal of 20 years ago. I plead that we would table this. Find better alternatives. Let's give money back to North America. We are growing now and we will grow into the future even better and strong if we can be strategic and visionary."

3:57 p.m.—Moderator: "Thank you Bishop Howard. We'll give the committee and opportunity to respond one more time, make a closure to this, and then we'll take a count."

3:57 p.m.—*Response*: Bishop Coalter—"Sure. We do believe that this report that is on the floor today is strategic. We believe that it is visionary. That it does

address the needs of our future. Local churches have so many other opportunities beyond the 10 percent they send in presently to serve the needs of this Church. Whether it's through Harvest Partner giving, Helping Hands giving, or just having a local burden to reach out to help with a particular project of a particular ministry, even at the International Office. We believe that globally the states, regions, and nations, many are suffering tremendous financial difficulties simply because funds have been diverted from those offices. This is simply a way to give back, to share the blessing God is giving this Church. We believe that when the tide rises all of the boats will rise with it."

4:01 p.m.—Moderator: "Thank you, committee. At this time we will ask for expressions from the floor. I will need the ushers to please help us to take accurate counts because we need to know numbers on these expressions. So I'll ask all in favor of this report to go forward, if you would stand please. Please remain standing until we have a count. We certainly appreciate the work that our ushers do, their volunteer work. We couldn't have an Assembly without their help. We express our appreciation for their labor."

4:02 p.m.—Moderator: "You may be seated. All opposed please stand and remain standing until we get a count please."

4:02 p.m.—Results were tabulated. Bishop Clements, Moderator: "Okay we have calculated the figures and we do not have an overwhelming consensus. We do have a margin between the numbers but not enough to declare it as being passed. That is with the counsel group's opinion. They did the calculation on it both ways and we do not have sufficient figures to declare it overwhelming consensus. Our first vice-chair would like to speak to the congregation."

4:05 p.m.—Bishop Clayton Endecott: "I would just like to represent the General Presbytery on this expression. We felt very much like in visual as well as mathematical calculations that this was not what we could call an overwhelming consent. So it didn't pass. That will mean that we will have to work on a document that would satisfy those needs. Here's what I have been asked to address to you. It is the conviction of the General Presbytery concerning the need that was very well and very articulately explained by our committee who worked so hard and that is that we are convinced that there is a great need to invest in North America. And that something must be done and that it is very, very, very urgent. We believe that because we have seen that this has been a mother church for the nations all around the world. We believe that because we see that we have wonderful churches here who are making a difference in their community and America continues to need salvation. My colleagues have asked me to share with you that we will over the next weeks and months will work very hard with our teams and those that

will be appointed in this Assembly with your Finance/Administrative group to find some solutions to begin not to wait two years but to seek ways to begin now to address that need.”

4:09 p.m.—Moderator: “Thank you and thank you committee for your hard work. You can step down. Thank you.” The Assembly applauded. “I would ask in the future that if you’re going to use figures in your statements from the floor make sure your numbers are accurate because I did notice some discretion in some of the figures that were put out there as far as churches planted and membership and so forth. So I just ask that before you make statements on the floor, you make sure you have all the accurate figures. Thank you. At this time we will call the BDP committee if they’re ready to come and give their report. We will now relinquish the floor to the chairman, Dr. Wallace Pratt and you can proceed, Dr. Pratt.”

4:10 p.m.—Bishop Wallace Pratt: “Good afternoon. We greet you in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. So good to see our delegates from all over the globe here. We also want to pay our respects to our new General Overseer, brother Clements.” He introduced the committee members, who “spend a lot of hours reading and studying for the job.” James Kolawole, Tim McCaleb, Elias Rodriguez, Tedroy Powell, Dan Chatham, Carswell Leonard. He continued speaking: “I don’t know if you realize you are going to see a landmark occurrence today. The work on “The Value and Spiritual Life of Children” was a joint study done with our Children’s Ministry department and Sister Kathy Creasy and her staff who helped research and write this along with our committee. We worked together as a team. We had several meetings in consultation with each other and we studied alongside each other sometimes in sub-committees to make it more effective. We have a great burden for children. Not only Sister Kathy has a great burden and her staff but we as a committee have had this burden and have agreed that we need to do a better job starting in our homes and in our local churches at raising up a generation of children that are being challenged on every side. So we look forward to being able to give that to you today. We will start and I’m going to ask to my left here, Bishop Tedroy Powell if he would read the recommendations of “Answering the Call of the Holy Spirit.” (Found on page 121)

4:13 p.m.—Bishop Tedroy Powell read the recommendations (Page 152)

4:18 p.m.—Moderator: “Could we have the expressions on the screen please from the field on this document? You can see 93 percent that is in favor, two percent abstained, two percent submitted, three percent disagree. So would I hear a motion to accept this report as read?” Cathy Payne made motion to accept. Wilber S. Caley seconded the motion.

4:19 p.m.—Moderator: “Okay, we will entertain questions from the floor. Do I have someone standing over here?”

4:20 p.m.—*Question*: “Scott Bambrough, pastor, Tucson, Arizona. With all respect to the International Assembly and committee I would like to share a small portion of my disagreement regarding this report. The recommendations at the end of the document are appropriate as they stand by themselves. However according to the introduction of the document, if these recommendations are approved, then we are also approving the whole document as the introduction states, ‘Therefore we recommend to the 98th International Assembly that the following document supersedes any past or present declarations or rulings concerning sanctification and holiness.’ While the ending recommendations can coincide with our current position on sanctification and holiness this document ultimately takes us into a completely different direction. After reading this report I have not found any evidence that would indicate that the position and belief that the church has held for over 100 years is incorrect or flawed. Most specifically the position of entire sanctification as a second definite work of grace being distinct to the salvation experience. The International Assembly’s current interpretation, the writings, the witnesses, and testimonies to the second definite work of grace that has been built tried and proven throughout the many generations of the Church should continue as our official position. I believe the witnesses’ testimonies and experiences that many in the Church have had throughout the years clearly substantiates and validates the church’s position of a second definite work of grace separate from salvation. This document indicates that salvation and sanctification are one work, not two. I read a quote about sanctification. God does not sanctify until there is the recognition of need. Progressive sanctification gives credence to suppressing the sin nature, not killing it. Quoted Scripture. Sanctification is not progressive. The ongoing perfecting of holiness begins with sanctification.”

4:23 p.m.—*Response*: Bishop Tim McCaleb, BDP Committee: “You made a statement you didn’t really ask a question. Or point to any specific lines of disagreement. I mean you didn’t point out anything in the document itself. What we are trying to do is call people to a deeper holiness than we ever have. We don’t want to walk away from the second definite work of grace which was the greatest experience in my own personal life is the night that I was delivered instantaneously from alcohol and tobacco and some other things. It was a marvelous experience. I never want to walk away from that. But at the same time, what happens is that so many people think, well I’ve been sanctified therefore I’m living a sin-free life. And they quit pursuing holiness. They quit pursuing a deeper cleansing. Children grow and we believe as believers we grow. And the more we grow and as we find things deeper in our heart, we find things that we did not know were there, we fall before this holy God again. Like the cherubim that fly around the throne crying,

‘Holy, holy, holy,’ every time they glimpse the glory of God, when we glimpse His glory, we realize even though we have been saved and sanctified and filled with His Spirit, yet we fall so far beneath His holiness we too want to fall on the ground and say, ‘Oh, God. Be merciful to me. Cleanse me again.’ I find myself praying constantly, ‘Oh, God, sanctify me again.’ So, that’s the spirit of what we’re trying to get to.”

4:25 p.m.—*Question*: Brother Bambrough: “I appreciate your response. The recommendations are fine but them when we look at the report, that’s where, with the longevity of the report and how long it is. I mean to try to have the time to be able to dissect it down. But really, with some of what you just said, why couldn’t we just make it that simple? I believe in part when you look at this if we approve this today we’re approving this whole document by what was recommended in the introduction. But I believe that’s where the issue is. Within the report, it opens up the door to where no longer it is a message of a second definite work of grace. But yet now in it the implications are that salvation and sanctification are a work that takes place in one. Even a person’s experience in the altar, they can get saved and sanctified, we’re combining this into one experience itself and that is where my concern is, is also when you look at a part with the pastor’s and them needing to take time to go to the side and separate themselves with God and to search for any hidden sin, I believe if anybody is where they’re supposed to be with the Lord anyways, and they’re truly sanctified there’s not going to be any hidden sin. But what’s happening this report brings forth the opportunity to them begin to translate it to people and articulate it to them that they can be saved, they can be sanctified and in that progression, there can still be sin that’s existing in their hearts. And that’s where my concern rests.”

4:27 p.m.—*Moderator*: “Thank you, pastor. We have one over here?”

4:28 p.m.—*Question*: “My name is Evelyn Gardiner. I’m a member of the Church of God of Prophecy, Roxbury, Massachusetts. Thank you for this opportunity to ask a question. I approached the chair sometime back about this very subject because it came out in the class that I was teaching, the Foundations course. And the question was already posed to me by my Sunday school students who were ages 9 through 11. And they wanted to know, ‘If I get sanctified, will I ever sin again?’ And this is a nine-year-old asking that question. So, I was very excited about the undertaking of this topic. My question is pretty much the same as the other brother’s. Will we continue to teach sanctification as a second definite work of grace? The report says, that this will supersede all previous reports on this subject. That has been my concern. The emphasis on the experiential nature of sanctification and a less than enthusiastic embrace of the progressive nature of sanctification which we have always acknowledged but have done not so good a job

in teaching. Which in my view is part and parcel of the work of Christian education. And I would term comes under discipleship which I find so very lacking. That people have not learned how to pursue holiness in the fear of the Lord. Partly due to a failure to really emphasize the progressive nature of sanctification. How we have really stressed, ‘Get saved. Get sanctified.’ But have not really done a very good job in the progressive aspect of this experience. Which is contained in our doctrinal positions and is also included in the Foundations course materials. And just recently really elaborated on extensively. So my question is again, as the brother, ‘Will we continue to teach sanctification as an instantaneous work of grace subsequent to salvation?’ Because I know to do otherwise brings us more aligned with one of the largest classical Pentecostal movements which has never taught sanctification as a second definite work of grace. They’ve always taught a progressive nature. It also brings us more in line with reformed theology and Protestant denominations who acknowledge that sanctification is an experience but have never taught it as an instantaneous work. And I came to the Church of God of Prophecy from the Protestant movement and know that is a part of their teaching that don’t acknowledge an instantaneous work of sanctification as we do. So my question again has been stated and I would just like to know categorically will we continue to teach people to pursue this experience of the second definite work of grace or will people just begin a transformation into sanctification and they’ll never be able to testify as having been sanctified?”

4:32 p.m.—Moderator: “Thank you for your question.”

4:33 p.m.—*Response*: Bishop Tedroy Powell, BDP Committee—“Thank my sister, Sister Gardner, for sharing with us. Clearly there is a tension. If we pick up the points that was made before by Brother Scott, between the second definite work of grace, we title it sanctification, and the understanding of progressive sanctification. We could look at texts. In 1 Corinthians 1 where Paul addresses the saints that are called, that are sanctified and called to be saints. Using the words sanctified and called to be saints in the same phrase and statement suggests to me that there is clearly a progressive nature to that dimension of our walk in and with God. Now I believe it is definite, it is instant, but it’s also progressive. Now let me just broaden this a little by saying, when we became members of the Church of God of Prophecy, we agreed to walk in the light to the best of our knowledge and ability. Now, walking is a dynamic. It’s movement. It’s progressive. Now, I do not believe, from what I see in Scriptures, and too, history and development of Christianity that this is static. There is a level of disclosure of God. Disclosure of His will, of His purpose. And that’s what I understand walking in the light means. So therefore in this document after much prayer reflection and study and consultation we think and feel that it is balanced to teach in the way that we’re suggesting here. It is definite but it is also progressive. Clearly recognize

that this is quite a heavy discussion for us to be having and requires time for us to go into where you have concerns and so on. But clearly we feel that it is both. It is balanced. And there is less of a tension if we were just to teach it's instant and definite and not to balance that with the progressive nature by lining up the Scriptures and looking at our own experiences, too. Because even after we've been walking with God many years, we still find that there are some struggles that we have, some issues that we have to face. And so we suggest that it is both. Thank you."

4:35 p.m.—Moderator: "Thank you. Brother Michael."

4:35 p.m.—*Question*: "Michael Edwards, Charleston, South Carolina. More of a point of order. The reading is interesting. I was a little disturbed by a reference from R.C. Sproul in there, Calvinist theologian. That opens us up to a lot of his work. That said, here's some interesting things. However, the recommendation, I was listening to Brother Scott, I've had this conversation, most of the recommendations are at the end of the report. The recommendation at the beginning of the report is the one he's disturbed by. In our Ministry Policy Manual, page 22, under the Recommendations as Official Rulings. I think it behooves us to put all recommendations that relate to teaching or that are going to be required together. This document is a great teaching tool, but to put a recommendation in the first introduction and then to follow with a set of recommendations at the end are two different things. You are talking about the teaching of the Church in the introduction where I think at the end you're trying to encourage us to get deeper into our understanding of sanctification. Experience it in the crisis situation but also walking in it and exploring all that the Lord has for us and for the Church. Perhaps the brief answer to that is a point of order and could we do this? This is my question. Could we just simply strike the recommendation in the introduction, still leaving intact those statements that we are on entire sanctification from the past and adopt the recommendations at the end of the report and using this as a teaching tool? I'll take my answer seated."

4:38 p.m.—*Response*: Bishop Wallace Pratt—"We understand your concern with this. Developing an extensive document like this, Pastor Edwards, is difficult because we realize that we are trying not only to clarify situations and to clarify doctrines but we're also trying to challenge our people to move up in areas where we have not always done so. I heard someone talk about the lack of discipleship in our Church. I believe it was Sister Gardner, and that is so true. It is the great missing element in most local churches and in pastoral ministries. And I think a lot of it is our doctrine of saved, sanctified, and filled with the Holy Ghost. When I was a child I heard it, 'Saved sanctified, filled with the Holy Ghost and satisfied.' What has happened it's brought about a point where people think that they have arrived spiritually and there stops a constant progression of seeking the Lord. It's interesting to me that when you study the life of Moses, Moses was a person

who had several encounters with God where God took him into His holy presence and helped him to see that there were still things in his life and ministry that were not where they should be. It's very obvious that Jesus did that with His own disciples. He kept inviting them to come in closer. The reason we wrote this in the beginning and we discussed about doing this, is that we felt like there was so much embodied in this document, that we felt like we wanted our people to see the whole thing the whole progression of drawing near to God in their life. All the men on this committee are men who have been born again of the Holy Spirit. We've all come to salvation. We've all been through an initial sanctification where God did a dramatic work in our life. We've all been baptized in the Holy Spirit. We have spoken in tongues. We joined the Church, some of us many years ago. And I can tell you that our desire is to even now after all this time, I confess to you that I was saved in 1959. I was sanctified a night later. And four days later I received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues. But when I was 16 years old there came a day when I realized there were things in my life that still were not where they should be with God. To tell you that from the time I was eight to 16 that I never sinned would be an impossible task for me. But I don't believe I had backslid. I still loved God very deeply and tried to serve Him. But I realized that God was showing to me through the Word of God as I studied it, and I did a lot of that. As He was sharing with me, that I was not as holy as I should be, that I wasn't like Him. And that I needed to grow and come closer to Him. That encounter took another turn where God really did an act of continuing to sanctify me and my life. And I think my story is repeated with many of you. That the Lord has worked with you throughout your ministry and life. And that's what we want to see happen in our Church. We want to see people challenged. When they come to church we don't want them to say, 'Well, I was sanctified 50 years ago.' A sister told me in my local church I was pastoring, 'I was sanctified 62 years ago and I've never sinned since.' I told her I was proud of her. I wished I could have done that. I confess to God before you all that I have not remained sinless through my entire life of serving the Lord. But I have certainly confessed my sins before the Lord and He has certainly not only cleansed me of those sins but He has sanctified me more thoroughly and brought me closer to the throne of God. And I readily confess that before you as my witnesses. We used to not be afraid to tell our stories in the Assembly and tell our stories about what God did for us. We are not here today, this committee to convince you of anything. We're here to challenge and present to you what God has shown us through several years of study. And we invite you to grow. And that's what the call was for in the beginning. If I can explain that to you, and Sister Gardner and Brother Scott. It was that we were recommending take the whole document, take the whole study and apply it to your life and begin to draw closer to the flame. Draw closer to God."

4:42 p.m.—Moderator: "We will ask you to excuse us for just a moment as we speak to the committee."

4:43 p.m.—After a conference among the committee members, Bishop Wallace Pratt said, “There is something going on in the world right now. There is the spirit of the antichrist. And the antichrist does not want us growing. He does not want us examining ourselves. The Bible constantly encourages us that we must examine ourselves to see if we be in the faith. When that was being written it was not being written to sinners. It was being written to believers. That we must examine ourselves. And so, we have no desire to cause anyone consternation or any kind of difficulty. We are certainly not against our pat. We embrace it. We were all saved in those ministries and we continue to teach them. Brother Tim is going to read something to you then and we are going to make a slight adjustment here right in the beginning because we certainly want to have something that is pleasing to the Lord. We don’t want to hold to what was written just because we wrote that. We want to listen to the Lord.”

4:46 p.m.—Bishop Tim McCaleb: “Our passion is holiness. We were hoping to strengthen our desire. But I’d like to read something on page 22 of the document the third line down, starting with A.J. Tomlinson. A.J. Tomlinson states that ‘Sanctification is a definite work of grace subsequent to regeneration and should be desired by everybody.’ Even though Tomlinson stated that sanctification is a definite work of grace, he did not hold to the idea of once sanctified, always sanctified. In the same tract, he said, and I’m quoting Brother Tomlinson at this point. ‘In order to obtain this experience the believer puts himself at once or by one act of faith into the cleansing stream and is immediately made clean. He then continues in that stream or continues faithful and is kept clean. Purity is retained on the same condition that it is obtained. And to keep under the cleansing wave is to be faithful to the condition of purity. Jesus expressed the continual cleansing by the figure of abiding in the vine.’ We’re encouraging folks to get sanctified and then continue in that cleansing stream of being continuously washed by the blood of Christ.”

4:48 p.m.—Bishop Elias Rodriguez: “The recommendation will read like this: ‘Therefore we recommend to the 98th International Assembly that the following document be held in balance with any past or present declarations or rulings concerning sanctification and holiness.’ This changed the verbiage of the recommendation to strike the word ‘supersede’ to reflect that this document is ‘in balance’ with other teachings on sanctification.

4:49 p.m.—Moderator: “That is removing the word supersede out of the document. So that will change somewhat. Maybe that will satisfy your questions that it’s changing something. (Turned to committee) Is that right?” We’re nearing the time to dismiss and we have an evening service coming on. If we prolong this much longer we’ll have to extend this into a Saturday afternoon in which there are other

things which are scheduled for that so we will take, we have two people standing, well, there's three I don't know if we can continue this much longer. We'll take a couple of comments and then we'll call for an expression to see where we're at."

4:50 p.m.—*Question*: "John Cope, East Nashville, Tennessee. The big question is, 'Is sanctification a one-time thing?' As a person who's only been in this organization eight years and in that eight years becoming a pastor and a minister, I have discovered that I'm not perfect. When I got saved, I was sanctified spiritually. Jesus set me apart. But as I continue to live this life and walk this walk that Jesus has me walk, I made comments about the nature of sanctification in agreement with recommendation."

4:55 p.m.—*Moderator*: "This document does not change any present teaching that we have. It is helping us understand holiness and living a holy life. We still believe in sanctification as an instantaneous work of grace but we also believe in a continual cleansing as we walk in grace. So with that in mind could I ask all in favor of this document being put forth and passing would you please stand to your feet? All right thank you, you may be seated. I would ask if there are any that opposes this if you would stand. Ushers will have to help us out because we are trying desperately to spot anyone who is standing. Since it is only less than a half dozen that are standing, I would ask if you would be willing to submit to the whole of this congregation. If you would, will you be seated? We have two, three, ok could I ask you again since this is not changing any teaching that we presently have. It's just encouraging people to live holy as I understand the document. I believe I am getting a nod from the committee and that is correct. I will give you an opportunity to say why you will not submit."

5:08 p.m.—*Question*: "Brother Moderator, (Bishop Scott Adams), Pastor, Church of God of Prophecy, Marion Ohio. I just wanted to say that on page 22 where they read about A.J. Tomlinson, the next section down says the normative and the exception. And my thought is why does it say sanctification in the initial experience in a believer's life and in the ongoing growth within a Christian's life may not always take place in the same manner as it has in the life of others? My question and my problem with that is when we get saved it's the blood of Jesus Christ that saves us. It isn't a progressive salvation, it's instantaneous. And the same blood that saved me, is the same blood that sanctifies me. And my only question that I really want to bring up here is how can sanctification be progressive and I understand what the committee is say but how can sanctification be progressive when it's instantaneous, the same blood. If a person chooses to sin, that's not the fault of the blood of Jesus Christ. His power saves and sanctifies us. And I agree that if a person sins they fall out of that grace. Sanctification and salvation. I guess my concern is are we saying here that sanctification, is it progressive or is it instantaneous?"

5:09 p.m.—*Response*: Bishop Clements—“Our walk with God, our holiness walk with God will always be progressive. The experience of sanctification we are not talking about and correct me if I’m wrong committee, we still teach the instantaneous work of grace concerning sanctification. But our holiness walk with God we have to be constantly filled. And Paul admonishes that in the New Testament, that we be constantly filled with the Spirit. So that indicates to me that I have to work on that daily. I have to die daily as Paul mentions in the New Testament. So it’s not changing what we have preciousely taught it’s just encouraging people to strive to be holy and to live holy and to walk in holiness.”

5:10 p.m.—Bishop Scott Adams: “I’ll accept that.”

5:10 p.m.—*Question*: “Scott Bambrough, pastor, Tucson, Arizona. I’d like to ask the committee with this report being to coincide now with our current and past stand and position on sanctification and holiness reading the report what I understand with what’s in there, is that a person can be saved and still have sin in their life. Is that true according to your report?”

5:11 p.m.—*Response*: Bishop Clements—“I am not trying to answer for the committee but there’s many definitions of sin. It moves from just crossing the line or a willful transgression. And many times we cross the line. None of us are perfect. We strive for perfection. We cross the line sometimes. And when we do there is a continual cleansing for sin that we have committed. If we say that we did not sin, and we did not cross the line, and we cover that, then that creates hypocrisy. So we have to be honest with ourselves and honest with God. When we cross the line we have to ask for forgiveness and keep our holiness walk with God. Am I correct? So would you accept that Brother Bambrough?”

5:11 p.m.—*Question*: Bishop Scott Bambrough—“I guess it doesn’t completely answer the question. Can we be saved and still sin and still have sin in our hearts. When you look at the Scripture, the way I see it, we’re either cleansed from sin or we’re not. And if we sin, don’t we go back into sin?”

5:12 p.m.—*Response*: Bishop Daniel Chatham, BDP Committee—“The passage we mentioned in 1 Corinthians where Paul addresses the Corinthians as saints, the ones made holy. They’re sanctified in Christ Jesus. But then he proceeds to list all the things they’re doing wrong. That’s the whole point of the book of Corinthians he’s writing it to saints, sanctified ones, but there were also divisions. So any division amongst us is sinful. We don’t like that. Any lack of love then is sin. So therein lies the challenge for you and I as we look at these passages. Sometimes our churches look a lot like Corinth. Does that mean everyone is outside of God’s grace or God has rejected them or God has thrown them off and that work of Christ is not drawing them back

to purity? I think the answer in Scripture is, 'Yes, Christians do sin.' It is repulsive to God. If I could go back to the beginning of the document, we talked about being in the presence of God. In the presence of Jesus, we all understand our continual deficiency in holiness. We're not like Him. That He is distinct and morally perfect. And we are not. Even our best is not perfect. And we end up saying like Peter would say, Get away from me for I am a sinful man, even though he was Christ's number one follower. We end up with Isaiah saying, 'Woe is me for I am undone and my lips are unclean.' Although he had been a prophet for many years and declared the Word of the Lord. We end up being like Moses that he would hide his face from this God who is perfect morally. I think we should be careful. Am I willing to say there is room for Christ to work holiness more in me? Have I been set free from the dominion of sin? Yes. Do I need to continue that? Absolutely. Romans chapter six. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body. Don't let that take charge again. It sure gives the opportunity that it's possible."

5:13 p.m.—*Question*: Bishop Bambrough: "I understand that you can sin. Just because you get sanctified doesn't mean all of a sudden, somebody can't ever choose to sin again. But I guess one of the concerns is, looking at this, I feel like it, could open up the door for us to one day, then, adopt the once saved, always saved theology."

5:15 p.m.—*Response*: Bishop Daniel Chatham said, "This is the opposite of that. Let's look at the reality of our relationship with Christ in light of His holiness, in light of His righteousness. It's not in standards we set up for ourselves we feel very comfortable with. You know, we walk out of a business conference. We've just beaten one another to pieces and we talk on the way out. And Christ would say that that's sinful. We don't feel that way. Let's look at the holiness of God. And determine our relationship by that standard not by the standard we're comfortable with. Has there ever been a lack of love in your life? Okay. Mine, too. So I join with Wallace and say you know what? Christ called me to perfect love. I'm not there all the time. I want to get there."

5:17 p.m.—Moderator: "Will you submit to this Assembly, Brother Scott?"

5:17 p.m.—Bishop Bambrough: "Yes, I will, Brother Moderator."

5:17 p.m.—Moderator: "Can I have a submission over here? I see one standing."

5:18 p.m.—*Response*: "It's not about a submission or not, Bishop. Roy Cunningham, Vallejo, California. My question concerns that we are dealing with more than one subject. We have holiness, we have sanctification, and righteousness. Holiness. I don't think holiness belongs to us. Holiness belongs to God. And I think that we are in control of righteousness if what we do, what we say is our responsibility."

God gave us the right. We can do that. That's righteousness. But holiness is not talking about us. It is talking about God. He is holy. The recommendation was made. Do we need a motion to change the recommendation? My only question Bishop is that holiness and sanctification are two different things and we should approach it from that point of view. Thank you."

5:19 p.m.—Moderator: "You would be welcome to dialogue after this session or sometime after the Assembly. I'm sure they would be glad to discuss it further with you. But do I hear that you are submitting to this Assembly?"

5:20 p.m.—Response from Brother Cunningham: "A long time ago, sir."

5:21 p.m.—Moderator: "Everyone has been seated. So we can we declare this document passed? Yes. I don't perceive that there will be any problem with the document on children. Brethren can you just quickly read that and we'll ask for an expression on that?"

5:22 p.m.—Bishop Pratt asked for Kathy Creasy to come to podium. It was said that she had left. Bishop Clements explained that she had a scheduled event she had to go to. Bishop Pratt: "We are going to make this available for you. We are going to be providing tools. There is already a myriad of things going to be put online for pastors to download free and other things to help us in this area. Brother Tedroy, would you read the document? (The Value and Spiritual Life of Children found on page 159).

5:23 p.m.—Bishop Tedroy Powell read recommendations

5:26 p.m.—Bishop Wallace Pratt: "We just want you to understand that the Church has never had a theology of children. We really believe that this Church needs to right now make a determined effort to put it on the front burner of every church. We are losing generations out of this Church. This will give theological credence to the ministry to children. Our committee as a whole wants to call the church to shoulder the responsibility to children. We must right now enter into a crisis ministry to children in our churches. This gives you a good theological workbook in your local churches to see how to approach that. The other materials that will be provided for you that you can obtain will come alongside and help you in making that possible. But we do want to emphasize and time restraints really interfere when you're dealing with something so important as this subject. But I encourage you, while many of the delegates have left here today, you be the ones who carry out the clarion call that we must concentrate our ministries on children in this Church desperately. Our committee as a whole wants to call you to this responsibility. If Sister Kathy was here, you would catch the note of emergency in her voice. She travels a lot doing this and she understands. So I pray that you will

really focus on this and read this thoroughly when you go home and see how you can better implement children's ministry in your church.”

5:29 Bishop Clements called for a motion to accept.

5:29 p.m.— Bishop Clint Knowles, Hackelburg, Alabama, and EC McKinley, Hendersonville, Tennessee, motioned first and second, respectively.

5:30 Bishop Clements asked for those who were in agreement to stand. He declared an overwhelming consensus and the motion passed.

5:30 p.m.—General Presbyter Ben Feliz came to the podium. He declared the business session closed.

END OF BUSINESS MINUTES

Section 3

98th International Assembly Journal

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Wednesday Evening

July 30, 2014

Session Theme: A Spiritual House

6:35 p.m.—The Bahama Brass Band entered the hall.

6:50 p.m.—Bahama Brass Band exited the hall as Amber Payne greeted the crowd for pre-session interviews.

7:00 p.m.—For the pre-session interview, Amber Payne introduced Darren Schalk who talked about discipleship lessons and Cathy Payne, coordinator of Global Missions ministries.

7:22 p.m.—A video introduction to the session, “Breakthrough,” was shown.

7:27 p.m.—Bishop Clayton Endecott, General Presbyter of Europe, CIS, and the Middle East opened the session and encouraged the people to get the prayer map. “We raise our hands, wave a hanky, or point and say, ‘Amen.’ This is a spiritual house.”

7:30 p.m.—Bishop Robert Davis, overseer of Florida, came to the podium. He welcomed delegates and introduced the Florida Sunshine Band, who played several selections.

7:38 p.m.—The Florida Sunshine Band exited playing, *You Are Great*. Robert Davis invited everyone to the Florida state convention in summer 2015.

7:45 p.m.—Bishop Endecott returned and introduced the Soul Searchers. They sang, “Why Don’t You Give In.”

7:52 p.m.—Bishop Flavio Rosario, overseer of Panama, came to the podium. Bishop Ben Feliz, General Presbyter for Central America, Mexico, and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, translated his exhortation for the offering. Bishop Eric Mwambigija, national overseer of Tanzania, prayed for the offering.

8:05 p.m.—Song: “Since I Lay My Burdens Down,” by Anointed Men of Prophecy.

8:15 p.m.—Northeast Region Worship team led worship with songs, “Every Praise,” “It’s All about You,” “Jesus, Be the Center” and “Agnus Dei.”

8:47 p.m.—Bishop Endecott introduced the evening speaker, Bishop Stephen Masilela, General Presbyter for Africa.

8:50 p.m.—Diann Cassell sang another chorus of “Agnus Dei.”

8:55 p.m.—Bishop Stephen Masilela, General Presbyter of Africa, came to the podium. He greeted delegates from places in Africa and recognized those who had come from Africa to the Assembly. After introductory comments, he preached the sermon, “A Spiritual House.”

A Spiritual House

1 Peter 2: 4, 5, 9—“Come to him then, to that Living Stone which men tried and threw away, but which is chosen and precious in God’s sight. Come and, like living stones, be yourselves built into a spiritual house, for a holy, dedicated, consecrated priesthood, to offer up those spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable and pleasing to God through Jesus Christ. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a dedicated nation, God’s own purchased, special people, that you may set forth the wonderful deeds and displaying the virtues and perfection of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”

As I sought the heart and mind of our Lord about what we as a people and movement would need from God’s Word this evening, it seemed to me this very passage in 1 Peter, the second chapter, is precisely what we need. I will be quick to point out that it is not the only thing we need, but we do need this, and we need it badly. It is a word about how to become a spiritual house, a word about how to offer spiritual sacrifices which are acceptable to God. It is a word about how to have Spirit-filled worship services and a thriving, growing, and spiritual movement.

This is the house that our Lord Jesus declared that He was on a mission to build in Matthew 16:18—“And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church and the gates of hades, shall not overpower it.” This is a powerful house. Not a weak house! I am so glad to be part of the house that the gates of hell shall not master. Life giving, life changing, forward-looking church; a church on the move that shall shake the gates of hell and they will not prevail. A prevailing church is a magnet for people who are needing help. A true picture of what the Church of God must be. It must prevail over sickness, poverty, self, depression, and demonic forces. The breakthrough is on its way. He’s building a strong house. It must prevail against the devil. We are kicking out poverty. Mental problem, it’s a spiritual problem! It is not about how much money you have in your pocket. Things are about to change. The same God who blessed America is blessing Africa. He’s building a spiritual house. Get ready. It will take all the nations of the world to build this beautiful house. This house is composed of called-out people who have been transformed, saved from sin, the darkness of this world; wherever they gather in My name, I am in their midst. He’s about to show up tonight.

Tonight, I want to walk you through steps that make us or enable us to become a spiritual house and offer sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. The first one is that God has chosen a stone in Zion called Jesus. The reason why Peter calls Jesus a stone here is because Jesus fulfilled some Old Testament prophecies. Isaiah 28:16: “Behold I am laying in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone of sure foundation, he who believes (trust in) relies on, and adheres to that stone) will not be ashamed.”

Psalm 118:22—“The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner.” The Old Testament prophets foresaw that there will be a stone put in Zion, a stone of which some people will believe upon and never be ashamed; a stone over which some people would stumble. Jesus is the risen stone, He is no longer dead but alive, no longer rejected by man, affirmed by God, out of the tomb and installed as the cornerstone and alive and so He is the living stone. Jesus is alive. He is sitting on the right hand of the Father, the same today, tomorrow. He reigns. I love Him, I praise Him. He heals my body! He forgives my sins! He lives forever more!

Secondly, we come to the stone. Those longing for Him, come to Him. We come to Him, to eat, drink the water from the stone. He says, “come to Me you who are heavy laden and I will give you rest;” He says “Take My yoke for My yoke is easy.” He says, “I have come that you should have life and life abundantly; come and drink from Me.”

Thirdly, we are shaped into living stones. In coming to the stone, we are coming alive. He makes us living stones. We come to the stone and when we bump or come into contact with this stone, we are made alive. He is a living stone and now we are living stones. When you come into contact with Jesus you cannot remain the same. You are forever changed. 2 Corinthians 5:17—“When a man is in Christ, he is a new creation” I was born in a family where no one had ever been saved. When I came in contact with this stone, my life was changed forever. The problem is that people come into the church without coming in contact with this stone. When you do, you will never be the same. His life is imparted to those who come to Him and are united with Him. He is forming us.

Fourth, the reason why we are made living stones is so that you can be put in a proper place, so that we can be built into a “spiritual house.” Christ is the builder here. He builds individuals into a spiritual temple. 1 Corinthians 3:16—“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and the Spirit of God dwells in you? You are being shaped into a household for dwelling of God by His spirit.”

What we see so far is that God lays this stone, Jesus Christ in Zion, that is Jerusalem, and men reject it—they crucify Him—but God has chosen this stone and regards Him as precious, and raises Him from the dead and makes Him an ever-living stone, and gives Him the highest honour at the head of the corner. God is doing all this to the end that Christ might gather a people who would themselves be alive like Him and make a temple, a church, an eternal dwelling place for

the Spirit of God. God is in business! He is building a spiritual house. When you accept His stone, He makes you a living stone. We are able to do all things through Christ who strengthens us. We are given power to become sons of God. We are made right with God.

The Scripture then goes on to say we are a holy priesthood, not only are we living stones being built into spiritual house for Gods habitation, we are a holy priesthood. In other words, we are not merely the passive building where God dwells, we are also active participants in the worship, and not just participants, but a special kind of participants, the priests.

All of you tonight, who are washed in the blood of the Lord. All of us lay people and leaders are the priests in this new spiritual house and our privilege as priests now is to draw near to God. In the old dispensation the priests had the privilege to get to the Holy of Holies—to offer sacrifices to please God on their own behalf and on behalf of their people. What a privilege we have today to enter into the Holy of Holies to offer sacrifices with spiritual sacrifices.

What are these Spiritual Sacrifices?

1. Bodies. In Romans 12: 1 Paul says that we are to present our bodies as a living sacrifices holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. That means everything you do with your body is to be done as an act of worship to God.

2. Praise and Thanks. Hebrews 13: 15 says we “continually offer up sacrifices of praise to God, that is the fruits of our lips that gives thanks to his name.” So, the spiritual sacrifices are the praises and thanks of God’s people alone and in groups of worship. Enter His gates with praise! Come with an expectant heart. As we begin this Assembly, how many of us are hungry for God?

Sixth, the spiritual sacrifices are offered to God through Christ. The goal of all this is that spiritual sacrifices would be offered which are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Make sure Jesus gets his due right here! Gods aim is that we offer Him spiritual sacrifices and we can only do that “through Jesus Christ.” Jesus is the living stone. He is the head of the church.

Everything hangs on our coming to the living stone. If we don’t come to the living stone, we don’t have life and we cannot build a spiritual house and we cannot become a holy priesthood and we cannot offer spiritual sacrifices. It all hangs on Jesus, Church! Without Him we can do nothing. We are a spiritual house. This body must again become a Spirit-led moving forward as He directs. Jesus is the precious stone. He is the only way to God. He is the only way we can do anything acceptable to God. There is no greater value in the whole universe than Jesus. Through Him we live, through Him we have our being, through Him we know God and come to experience the presence of God and offer sacrifices to God. Without Him we are nothing.

What happens In a Spiritual House?

In order for our movement and our churches to be active and spiritual, let us look at the early church. Let us look at some of the characteristics of the early church.

They were all filled with the Holy Ghost.

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all in one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and sat upon each of them. And they were filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them the utterance” (Acts 2:1–4). Jesus told his disciples they would have power after the Holy Ghost came upon them in Acts 1:8. If we are not filled with God’s power and “signs” do not follow us, how else will the world believe in Christ? We must be filled with God’s power and authority.

Love and unity were perfected in them.

“They were all with one accord in one place and they continued daily with one accord” (Acts 2:1, 46). A church will not grow and become spiritual if division, strife, jealousy, and any such things exists. One of the first things people should notice when they enter our churches, is the love and care we have for each other. “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have also loved you, that you also love one another” John 13:34. Our love should be contagious. The early church did not win people by stoning or condemning them for their actions, but by telling them of Jesus love for them. We cannot afford to be divided. Lord, forgive me for being divided from my brother. If you are only interested in people of your type, you are going to have a problem in heaven. He is building a spiritual house from all over the world. Love is our symbol. He’s building a house of love. God is building a house. Let there be love in His house. Love somebody tonight. House of love. Move on us Holy Ghost.

The Church Was Progressive

“And the same day there were added unto them, about three thousand souls and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved and believers were the more to the Lord, both Man and women” (Acts 2:41, 47; 5:14) a spiritual church will be a soul winning Station – a place where sinners can receive Jesus. People daily receiving salvation.

Money Supply Was Sufficient

The believers “sold their possession and goods and parted them to all men, as every man had need neither was there any among them that lacked” (Acts 2:45; 4:34) a spiritual church will give liberally when we give to the Lord that which is already his, we will be in need of nothing.

Divine Healing Accompanied Them

“They brought forth the sick into the streets, laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them”
 “Acts 5: 15 God has given us his power to do the impossible . Signs will follow believers in a spiritual church. We will witness greater things than our grandparents. The latter rain will be together than the former rain.

How many of us of us are longing to praise Him? To give thanks and deeds and acts of love. How many are prepared to obey the word of God, allowing the Holy Spirit to use you. We must be ready to be self-sacrificial. Christ sacrificed more than we deserved. Are you longing for his love tonight? Let us push towards Him. Come with an expectant heart. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for Him. The Psalmist says, “As the hart pants and longs for the waters of the brooks, so I pant and long for you. Oh God. My inner self thirsts for God, for the living God when shall I come and behold the face of God”? Let us be a Spiritual House!

9:38 p.m.—Bishop Endecott called for people to pray. The Northeast USA Worship Team sang, “Sanctuary.”

Thursday Morning

July 31, 2014

Session Theme: Breakthrough Harvest

9:00 a.m.—Bishop Gabriel Vidal, General Presbyter for South America, opened the session with a call to prayer.

9:09 a.m.—Bishop Vitaly Voznyuk prayed for Europe, CIS, and the Middle East.

9:14 a.m.—Prayer for Africa from Bishop Tedroy Powell, national overseer of the Netherlands.

9:20 a.m.—Bishop Andres Hau, national overseer of Mexico, led prayer for Asia, Central America, and the Caribbean in the Maya language.

9:33 a.m.—Northeast Region USA Worship Team opened worship with “Let the Church Cry Out,” “Your Presence is Heaven to Me.”

9:43 a.m.—Bishop Vidal returned to the podium to introduce Dr. John Wagenveld of the Multiplication Network.

9:50 a.m.—Dr. Wagenveld of the Multiplication Network: “Thank you for this opportunity. When I walk down the hotel halls I am happy to see the amazing diversity. God loves diversity. Thank you for the partnership with the Church of

God of Prophecy. His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms. The church is the hope of the world. Isn't Jesus the hope of the world? Jesus is but has chosen the church to go into the world. More churches, stronger churches. Why church planting? Should be in the center of our missionary efforts. If we provide ministry and then leave what is left? We should leave behind thousands of churches. The mother church should establish daughter churches. Concerning women in the ministry, Matthew 28:5-7 says the angel said to the women, (Do not be afraid, go and tell his disciples.)

Source of Power: Resurrection and Pentecost, The resurrection proved that Jesus was who He said He was. Romans 10:9 shows us that church planting cannot happen unless we declare Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised Him from the dead.

Shifts in Mission for a Harvest Breakthrough.

Shift 1: Move from Extractional to Incarnational. Most churches extract (rescue) them from the world to bring them into the four walls of the church. Jesus left heaven and came down to earth to save us. The Father sent Jesus. It's not about getting the world to come to church but getting the church to go to the world. Go into every area of society to proclaim Jesus is Lord. Holiness is to be separated from the world but also separate for the world. Models of relating to the world: escape, engage, accommodate. We should engage the world as salt and light.

Shift 2: From autocratic leadership to servant leadership. Delegate, allow others to minister. Each one has been given a gift (puzzle piece) that makes up a church. Missing pieces are the people that are not here yet. Follow me. Follow Jesus

Shift 3: Move from segregated view to integrated faith—change from where faith is a compartment of your life to where your faith touches every aspect of your life.

Shift 4: Move from buildings to community. Christians don't go to church, Christians are the church. Where two or three are gathered, that is the church. Church planters build community. You can find these graphics on the Assembly app.

Shift 5: Move from bounded sets to centered sets in our approach. Bounded—in or out—build it and they will come. Centered is Christ-centered. Some people are walking towards Christ and some are walking away from Christ. Let's help others take steps toward Christ.

Shift 6: From owning and controlling to stewarding and releasing. Owning and controlling is related to fear. Stewarding and releasing is related to faith. Some are fists and some are open handed, but God cannot put much in a fist.

Shift 7: Shift from addition to multiplication. Man ran over a chicken. Man gets money out to pay for dead chicken. But the man started moaning the eggs, the eggs. The man pulled out more money for the eggs and the man said how much for the eggs. The man moaned. Some of those eggs would hatch.

Obstacles to Multiplication: A full-time worker, we need part time workers. A fully-trained seminary graduate, populations are growing at a faster rate than seminary graduation. A dedicated building. We must be faithful and fruitful for a breakthrough harvest.

10:48 a.m.—Dr. Juan Carlos Melo of Multiplication Network came to the podium. Interpretation was provided by Bishop Ben Feliz. He presented a video of how the Multiplication Network’s partnership with the COGOP is. “Although this is mostly numbers, behind every number is a person. There will be hundreds of churches planted. COGOP is an example of what the church should be.

11:11 a.m.—Three leaders gave brief testimonies, including Bishop Rafael Avino of Peru, Bishop Rupert Neblett of Panama, and Bishop Francisco Lopez of Argentina.

11:29 a.m.—Dr. Melos returns to podium introduces the coordinator from Peru, Pastor Loyer Moreno from COGOP.

11:35 a.m.—Dr. Michael Sillah, Africa Director of the Multiplication Network, came to the podium: “I greet you in the mighty name of Jesus. I am from Tanzania. Spoke regarding Multiplication Network. Nearing 1,000 church planters, 50 denominations.”

12:00 noon—Bishop Vidal returned to podium. He encouraged everyone to attend the workshops that afternoon and dismissed the morning session.

Thursday Afternoon

July 31, 2014

Session Theme: Equipping For Ministry

There was no afternoon general session. Delegates were encouraged to attend workshops on a variety of topics.

Thursday Evening

July 31, 2014

Session Theme: Church Wholeness

6:30 p.m.—Bahama Brass Band entered and played “I Just Feel Like Something Good Is About To Happen,” “I Want God To Hear My Cry,” “Showers of Blessing” and “The Great Speckled Bird.”

6:45 p.m.—Amber Payne conducted the pre-session interviews with DeWayne Hamby, director of Communications and managing editor of the *White Wing Messenger*, and Darren Schalk, curriculum editor.

6:55 p.m.—Video presentation: Break Through theme song.

7:00 p.m.—David Browder, General Presbyter for Asia, Australia, and Oceania, came to the podium. He introduced the newly-selected and affirmed North America General Presbyter, Tim Coalter, and his wife, Kelly. He asked for leaders to lay hands and pray for them.

7:10 p.m.—Northeast Region USA Worship Team led in worship. Songs included, “Freedom,” “Nothing Is Impossible,” “How Great Is Our God” in English and Spanish, “The Great I Am” and “You Are the Risen King.”

7:25 p.m.—Bishop Endecott introduced some of the fraternal guests, including Dr. David Ferguson, Intimate Life Ministries, Terry Bower, Global Ministers Oklahoma, Dr. Steve Strang, founder of Charisma magazine, Terry Baler, Kevin and Janet Seaton and Dr. Lamar Vest and his wife, Vickie. He invited Dr. Vest to address the Assembly.

Dr. Vest—“You can’t push someone who is everywhere out and that is God. Thank God for the opportunity for the Church of God of Prophecy General Assembly, who is not trying to rewrite Scripture but putting forth the Scripture. I want to express appreciation to General Overseer Sam Clements. The best years of the Church Of God Of Prophecy is not behind you, but are ahead of you. Those of us that were born into this movement know that God is opening up opportunity. May God bless you tonight.”

7:40 p.m.—Bishop Franklin Ferguson, national overseer of the Bahamas, boosted the evening offering. Bishop Hilarion Javier Paton, national overseer of Bolivia, prayed over the offering.

8:10 p.m.—The Northeast Region USA Worship Team sang, “Blessed Be the Name of the Lord.”

8:20 p.m.—General Presbyter David Browder introduced evening speaker, Pastor Brian Sutton of the Peerless Road Church in Cleveland, Tennessee.

8:22 p.m.—Song “He Made the Difference” by the Peerless Trio, Cleveland, Tennessee: LeAnn Hamby, Renee Sutton, and Marsha Robinson.

8:25 p.m.—Bishop Sutton stepped to the podium to preach “Breakthrough in Wholeness.”

“Breakthrough in Wholeness”

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through the whole countryside. He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised Him. He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on Him. He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing” (Luke 4:14-21 NIV).

By referencing Isaiah’s powerful prophecy from Isaiah 61:1, 2, Jesus not only acknowledges who He was, but He also tells the world what He has come to do. His ministry would include those whom the world has cast aside and rejected. Jesus’ pronouncement, and acceptance of this mission, was a signal of God’s Kingdom here on this earth. The Kingdom of Jesus Christ would be known as an upside down Kingdom. Those who are weak, suffering, bound, blind, poor, and oppressed would be His target audience of ministry.

There has never been a greater time for ministry than today. There have never been more hurting people. There have never been more confused people. There have never been more needy people. People on every corner and in every land are crying out for something today to fulfill their needs. We know that Jesus Christ is the answer to every question and we know that Jesus has called the church to the incarnational work of Jesus Christ to those who are broken. Our ministry is not Social it is Spiritual, but our ministry is not just spiritual it is social. The ministry we are called to pour ourselves out for is a ministry of wholeness, found in and through Jesus Christ and His people.

When we examine Luke 4:14–21 and Christ’s proclamation about Himself, we see the heart of God for the church. It is Christ’s desire to give the world a breakthrough in wholeness and it is Christ’s desire for the church to be an agent of His wholeness. We talk often about strategy and strategic ways to be successful and effective with our message. Every church wants to grow and every Pastor wants to be successful. Jesus is laying out a perfect strategy for the church to work in. We will simply operate in the power of the Holy Spirit with the proclaimed directives of Jesus Christ found in Luke Chapter 4. What can the church do to be

effective? We follow the words of Jesus to be: anointed by the Holy Spirit, preach to the poor, proclaim freedom to the prisoners, give sight to the blind, release the oppressed and proclaim the year of the Lord's favor!

1. If Jesus Came In The Power Of The Spirit, The Church Should Have The Anointing Of The Holy Spirit That Submerges Us In Compassion And Equips Us For Mission.

The incarnation of Christ is at the center of the Salvation of mankind. God comes down to earth through His Son Jesus. One, who is fully God, yet fully man, has work to do that goes beyond what any being, other than He, could accomplish. Jesus had come to bring a different and radical Kingdom to this earth. One where we must love our enemies, pray for those who use us, turn the other cheek and a Kingdom where the least will become the greatest. Christ's proclamation that God's Spirit was upon Him and anointing Him for service, is a truth that we, the Body of Christ cannot ignore if we desire to minister to those in need around us and beyond. Just as Christ desired and required the Spirit's equipping; the church will require this same anointing to accomplish God's will. Desiring that His disciples would follow His example, Jesus said in John 15:5, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." Whether he was turning water into wine, healing the sick, or raising from the dead, Christ worked with a dependence upon the Holy Spirit's power. John, chapter 5, shares the tremendous story of Jesus walking past a man who had been paralyzed for 38 years. This man was lying beside the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath. As Jesus passed the man, he looked at Him and asked Him the question, "Do you want to get well?" This exchange then led to Jesus telling the man to "take up his bed and walk," and with that he obeyed Christ stood to His feet, was healed and walked away carrying His mat. After this healing, Jewish leaders began to persecute Jesus because He had healed on the Sabbath, and he had told the man to take up His bed and walk. Jesus response to their persecution against Him was simple and profound explanation of how His ministry worked under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. He said in John 5:17, "My father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working." He continued in verse 19, "Very truly I tell you, the son can do nothing by Himself; He can do only what He sees his father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does." Jesus' work to heal the paralyzed man was not on His own, but it was a responsive ministry. Whatever the Father does, Jesus said, that is what I do. The anointing of the Holy Spirit that submerges the church in compassion will cause us to not only see those who are hurting around us it will teach us how to respond to the Holy Spirit's call and work, rather than asking Him to respond to us. If Jesus said that the Father was always working in the world then we simply need to obey the voice of His Spirit to find where he is working. The anointing that we

daily pray for will prepare the church for mission but it will also clarify our ability to see where God is working and what God is doing.

We should recognize the need for the ongoing sustaining power of the Holy Spirit in our lives, rather than a simple one time experience. Without the Spirit's same anointing upon us, our efforts will be in vain. Like Christ, we must have the Holy Spirit's power to equip us and sustain our work. Our cry is not for the Holy Spirit to simply baptize us today, but Holy Spirit fill us and lead us EVERY DAY as we give Jesus away. Apart from you God, we can do nothing, but with the Spirit's equipping, God can do everything through us!

2. If Jesus Came To Preach Good News To The Poor, The Church Should Preach The Good News To The Poor That The Riches Of This World Are Temporary But The Riches Of Jesus Christ Are Eternal.

Jesus proclaims that he came to preach the good news to the poor. We see a Savior who specifically speaks to those who suffer. The poor that Jesus speaks of in Luke chapter four are poor, not only because of their lack of material wealth, but because of their political and spiritual circumstances. "The Bible clearly and repeatedly teaches that God is at work in history exalting the poor and casting down the rich who got that way by oppressing or neglecting the poor. God is on the side of the poor."

Jesus has not come to give the poor a material bailout that will bring great riches; rather, He has come to provide something of much greater value: Himself. His heart is clearly open to the most vulnerable. Jesus has come to provide spiritual riches to those who sit in spiritual poverty, as well as hope to those who are materially poor. Those to whom Jesus speaks are not those who are poor because they do not work, or because they are lazy. They are poor because they are oppressed by the religious and political systems of their day, as well as, our enemy, Satan. The good news that Jesus proclaims is that He came for all mankind; He even came for those who have no riches to purchase their way out, and no means to buy hope and independence.

The church is called to preach a prosperity Gospel. Not the type of prosperity Gospel that is often marketed, but the type which will promise far greater riches than this world and all of its temporal wealth could offer. The riches that Jesus preaches are those that are eternal. The prosperity Gospel of the New Testament would never promise riches in this world, for what are those riches worth? They are only temporary, can be burned in a fire, eaten by moths and can rust away. Jesus came to preach Good news to the poor and that news is that, "You may be poor in this life but true riches are found in me, and my riches are eternal."

Jesus accepts this prophetic mission and speaks it vocally for the Body of Christ to hear. As the people of God, we are now challenged to be Christ's representatives here on earth, also ministering to the poor as He did. Jesus proclaims

in Matthew 25:31–40: “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’ The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’”

We must follow Christ’s lead and seek to minister to those that the world has counted unimportant. How wonderful to know that we will not only model the lifestyle of Jesus when we minister to the poor and needy, but we will also minister to Christ as we serve the “least of these.” We have longed for and prayed for God to come to us in a powerful way. As Pentecostals, we have “sought” God to come and visit us powerfully in our worship services. This is wonderful and we should continue to do so, yet Jesus words in Matthew become clear to us: To find Jesus, we may need to stop asking God to visit us and rather go to visit Him, in the jail, clothing the naked, feeding the hungry and mending the broken . . . for he said he was in the “least of these,” that we encounter every day. Jesus came to give good news to the poor!

3. If Jesus Came To Proclaim Freedom to the Prisoners, the Church Should Also Proclaim That Jesus Offers More than Forgiveness of Sin and Freedom from Its Chains

Mark chapter 9 records a story of the chain-breaking power of Jesus in verses 14–29. “When they came to the other disciples, they saw a large crowd around them and the teachers of the law arguing with them. As soon as all the people saw Jesus, they were overwhelmed with wonder and ran to greet him. ‘What are you arguing with them about?’ he asked. A man in the crowd answered, ‘Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech. Whenever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground. He foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive out the spirit, but they could not.’ ‘You unbelieving generation,’ Jesus replied, ‘How long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy to me.’ So they brought him. When the spirit saw Jesus, it immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground and rolled around, foaming at the mouth. Jesus asked the boy’s father, ‘How long has he been like this?’ ‘From childhood,’ he

answered. 'It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.' 'If you can?' said Jesus. 'Everything is possible for one who believes.' Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, 'I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!' When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the impure spirit. 'You deaf and mute spirit,' he said, 'I command you, come out of him and never enter him again.' The spirit shrieked, convulsed him violently and came out. The boy looked so much like a corpse that many said, 'He's dead.' But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him to his feet, and he stood up. After Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him privately, 'Why couldn't we drive it out?' He replied, 'This kind can come out only by prayer.'"

How many of us know someone who is being held in the clutches of sin's power? We are in a society where addiction to drugs, alcohol and destructive behaviors is rampant. People come to the door of the church because they need hope and that hope is Jesus Christ. Jesus proclaims that He came to provide freedom. Therefore our prayers and ministry must be to bring freedom. What kind of grace and forgiveness is it that would see God forgive a person for their sin only to see them continue in the thing that is destroying them? Our Gospel cannot be watered down! It must be forgiveness that includes freedom. Addicts are at our door. No, addicts are IN our doors and they are looking to Jesus Christ to free them. Jesus words are powerful to us, "This kind can only come out by prayer." Our core value of prayer should be more than words on a page but a work of labor that stays in the altar day after day until the prisoner is freed. When Jesus sets prisoners free they do not get an ankle monitoring bracelet that gets them out of prison but confines them. Holy Spirit anointing fall on your church that we may pray the prayers of freedom over those who are in bondage and addicted to sin and sinful behaviors. Make the church a mighty force that reaches into the Spiritual prisons and redeems lives from destruction!

Christ's proclamation of freedom takes the sinner beyond simple forgiveness for sin into freedom from sin. Jesus has come to destroy the power of sin in our lives. "Jesus Christ sets us free from the power of sin. While it is still possible for us to sin, we can be freed from the compulsion to sin." Our friends, our neighbors, our sons, our daughters, and all of those that we meet who are in the prison of sin, are those whom Jesus came to rescue. We cannot only supply food for their bellies or pray small prayers for the forgiveness of their sins; we must share with them the power of Christ to break them free from the bondage of sin, and the addictions, that hold them in the tragic grip of Satan. Jesus comes to give freedom to the prisoners!

4. If Jesus Came To Give Sight To The Blind, The Church Should Proclaim That Christ Removes The Veil Of Deception And Blindness And Brings Vision And Truth.

Jesus' proclamation that He would recover sight to the blind applied to much more than the simple healing of a person's natural sight. The curse of oppression and spiritual poverty upon the lowest of society could be removed, if only people

could see the way out; this way out was Jesus. The Apostle Paul described this blindness as a veil that could only be lifted by turning to Christ. Though blindness was often understood to be a punishment for evildoing, Jesus now offered sight to those who had never been allowed to see and sight to those who had never even tried to see.

Jesus' promise to bring the restoration of sight was a radical idea. Now all who desired to see Jesus, and experience his truth, could receive their sight. By coming to Him, they will no longer be required to depend on the leading of others to find their truth. His restoration of sight would make it possible for believers to now see the He is way the Way, the Truth and the Life. Through Him, the veil that had hindered man's ability to see and experience God would be removed. Through Him, man could now see God for who He really was and they could experience God for themselves. Jesus came to give Spiritual eyes to the blind!

5. If Jesus Came To Release The Oppressed, The Church Should Work To Open Doors Of Freedom For All Who Are Oppressed.

At no other place in the proclamation of Christ's mission do we see a greater example of His desire for the Kingdom of God to be at work in the world. Jesus addresses one of the most misunderstood concepts in scripture: the oppression of others. A perfect example of the oppression that Jesus came to stop is found in Mark chapter eleven:

On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple area and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves, and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts. And as he taught them, he said, "Is it not written: 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it a den of robbers." The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching" (Mark 11:15–18 NIV).

This short reference to oppression is an example of God's desire for all people to have "equal access" to the Father. The oppression of God's people had become so terrible in Jerusalem that even the sacrifices being offered to God were being used to make money, and this was being done at the expense of the poor who came to worship. Money changers were the people who were exchanging Roman money into the shekels that could be given to God inside the temple; and vendors were selling "priest approved" animals that could be sacrificed inside the temple. These practices in themselves could possibly have been done as a service to worshippers; however, Jesus clearly saw that inflated prices were being charged, even to the poor. By oppressing the people in this way, they were literally denying many of the poor access into God's house to offer sacrifices. This was being done with the approval and cooperation of the temple priests, who were probably receiving a portion of the profits.

Jesus' turning over of the tables is the visual expression of what He said He would do as the Spirit of the Lord anointed Him. He was standing up for the oppressed and condemning those in power who were doing the oppressing.

In Christ there would be a freedom from oppression. As the church, we are called to be very careful in all aspects of our work within the body of Christ. Are we providing equal access to God and equal access to Spiritual growth to everyone, regardless of their economic or educational status, gender, race, or nationality? Is it modern day oppression for the church to build dividing walls within our congregations that may oppress our members and limit their access to God? The church should be a place where no one is oppressed but all find Jesus, the way, the Truth and the Life. Within the walls of the church is it possible that even our judgmental attitudes may serve to oppress those who are in our fellowship? God help us to remove all of the barriers possible to people finding God. Jesus came to release the oppressed!

6. If Jesus Came to Proclaim the Year of the Lord's Favor, The Church Should Proclaim That Christ Has Come to Give a Breakthrough in Wholeness for All In Need.

The "year of the Lord's favor" is a Jewish term for the Year of Jubilee, which was an Old Testament tradition (Lev. 25:8-54) whereby every fifty years all the rich Israelites surrendered their property and the poor Israelites were forgiven their debts. Thus everyone started all over again. It was, in other words, a periodic effort to redistribute the wealth of Israel.

The year of Jubilee's great strength was that it allowed a fresh start to all, even those who had made poor decisions and had placed themselves into situations that they could not get out of. Jesus' words regarding this year of Jubilee was a pronouncement of the grace of God that would now not only come every 50 years, but through Him, was available every day! Jubilee for Israel meant that those underserving of debt relief were to be forgiven, and all things restored to them.

As God's church, we make that same pronouncement to the world that the cancelling of debts by Jesus is a Spiritual one. Man's sin debt would now be forgiven by Christ's own sacrifice; and we can be released from the most significant debt in this world: the debt of sin. Jesus came to forgive us from sin and give us a brand new beginning in Him!

One of the most powerful aspects of the Gospel is that it captures the heart of the year of Jubilee and offers a fresh start or "Do Over" to everyone. The church is not called to reach the found, but to reach the lost. What we will generally find as we preach and minister to the poor, the oppressed, the addicted and the broken is that their lives are indeed destroyed and broken by sin. They are messy, they are difficult, and they are hard to work with. Jesus is not calling us to build Crystal cathedrals but hospitals for the hurting. What we will find is that all of the people that are held by sins chains need a second, third, fourth, or fifth chance at redemption and this is the power of Jesus Christ. Jesus has come to make all things new for them. To wipe their

slate of sin clean and bring a new year of the Lord's favor. He has called the church to proclaim this favor and operate as his ministers of reconciliation. When we are doing HIS work and doing HIS will we will never have to wonder about HIS anointing, for it will be upon us.

The Apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:18, 19, "All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation."

As Jesus was God incarnate to this world, the church is now called to be the expression of Christ to our world. We receive the ministry that Christ has given us as his body to: serve those who are poor, reach those who are oppressed, carry those who need deliverance, pray for those who need healing, lead those who are blind, to pronounce the day of freedom to those who bound by the debt of sin and be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ to proclaim that Jesus died and rose again to bring us into relationship with a loving and forgiving God.

Because of the grace of God through Jesus, the prisoner is no longer be responsible for the payment for his crimes. If Christ has made our payment, through His own blood, there is now no condemnation upon the prisoner whom Christ has made free. Christ's freedom for the prisoners does not only loose them from bondage, His freedom allows them to now become attached or reconciled to God. The freedom that Jesus gives does not send a prisoner freed from sin into the street, but into the loving arms of the church, His Body! There will now be no men and women freed from prison and simply thrown out onto the street and out into the cold world, with only the clothes on their back, and holding a suitcase, with no place to go and no one to pick him up upon his release. In Christ, the freed prisoner is reconciled and restored, as if no crime had ever been committed. His freedom is not only a freedom from sin but a restoration to God. We will be the hands and feet of God who await these released prisoners. They will not be released to "nowhere and no one." We will be waiting at the prison door to welcome them to our family and be a part of God's restoration process as His ministry of reconciliation.

Tonight we have a wonderful opportunity to ask the Lord to renew of vision of his calling for the church. We are not called to the found, but to the lost. We are not called to the well, but to the broken. We cannot compete in the Kingdom of God for found sheep, for we will lose that battle every time. But there is a group of people who lay in the gutter, who sit in prisons, who are the least of these that require no pre-appointments to see and who require no special gifts or talents to attract. They are those who the Jesus is calling us to find. This is where we started as a movement, reaching those who were on the bottom rung of society. Ministering in the hills and the mountains to the poor and oppressed. Possibly that is why the Lord smiled upon us so much early on in our movement, we were ministering to His most vulnerable Children. Tonight, we have another wonderful opportunity to allow the Holy Spirit to place upon us a broken heart for the poor,

oppressed and bound around us. We have an opportunity to ask the Holy Spirit to anoint the church that we would become ministry that offers a breakthrough in wholeness for those who are hopeless.

Perhaps we've come here seeking to find God in the Spirit of Revival. Saying, "Jesus, we want to see, you. Jesus, we want to minister to you. Jesus, we want to touch you and have you touch us." But Jesus is saying back to us, "If you are looking to find me, I'm easy to find. I am in the face of the Hungry when you feed me . . . I am in the face of the thirsty when you give me something to drink . . . I am in the stranger, the homeless man, when you take me in . . . I am in the face of the man who needed clothes and you didn't give me your worst coat but you gave me your best one . . . I am in the prison and you came to visit me . . . I am in the addict, and you gave me more love." If we are looking for a real breakthrough today I believe that breakthrough will come as we minister to Jesus in the most vulnerable around us. Can we pray for God to open our eyes to opportunities in our churches and in our lives to do the real work that He has called us to do and minister a "breakthrough" Gospel to those who are most in need?

9:20 p.m. Delegates invited to the altar for a time of prayer.

Friday Morning, August 1

Session Theme: Leadership Wholeness

9:10 a.m.—Varlack Worship Team began singing with Glynis Varlack Allgood leading. They sang, "Let the Glory of the Lord Rise Among Us."

9:14 a.m.—Bishop Ben Feliz came to mic. He introduced Bishop Lucio Rojas from Mexico to pray.

9:18 a.m.—Varlack Worship team sang, "Where My Help Comes From."

9:22 a.m.—Bishop Feliz introduced Bishop Levi Clarke from Africa. Bishop Clarke from Africa read Psalm 51 and prayed the Lord's Prayer and then prayed extemporaneous prayer.

9:26 a.m.—Varlack Worship Team sang, "Jesus Be the Center."

9:31 a.m.—Kay Horner, director of the Center for Spiritual Renewal, prayed for leaders. She read Psalm 139. She asked for pastors to identify themselves and for those around them to pray for them in front of them, behind them, and on each side.

9:39 a.m.—Varlack Team sang "Great is Thy Faithfulness" as Kay Horner finished praying.

9:42 a.m.—Bishop Feliz introduced Dr. David Ferguson, Intimate Life Ministries.

9:45 a.m.—Dr. Ferguson preached the sermon, “The Glory is Back: God’s Hope for Spirit-Empowered Disciples”

I. “Christ in You, the hope of glory”—Colossians 1:27

I recall clearly, as most of you do—where I was on September 11, 2001. My wife Teresa and I were in the Dallas-Ft. Worth airport on the way to lead a pastor couples’ conference in Denver. Shocked as the second plane struck the second tower, the Lord brought to mind a Hebrews 12 passage I had not thought of in years. “Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven—this expression, ‘Yet once more’ denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken (eternal things) may remain” (Hebrews 12:26-27).

We saw things shaken that day that we thought could not be shaken—our security, our financial markets—but for the past decade I’ve reflected often on the “shaking” God seems to be doing in His church. He seems to be removing man-made things in order that only eternal things remain. Such seems to surely be the case in the global crisis of fulfilling the Great Commission to make disciples, who make disciples, who make disciples. In most of the Western world we struggle to pass on the faith to the next generations with a majority of churches plateaued or declining. In my serving as chairman of a global task force on discipleship, leaders from Asia, Africa, and South America would acknowledge many coming to Jesus and large gatherings for prayer and worship—but the depth of spiritual transformation was all too often shallow—not being lived out daily in radically transformed lives.

God is shaking/de-constructing our discipleship paradigms: Disciples are not simply those who know more. Knowledge can make you arrogant. Disciples are not simply those who do more. If people show up five times a week they are more spiritual is a myth. You can show up and still be the most cantankerous people on the planet. You can know and do without the power of the Holy Spirit. We ask children what did you learn what did you do in church. We should embrace the reality that a six year old can embrace the Spirit of God. Did they hear God?

Disciples, as we will see, are those walking intimately with the Lord—encountering and expressing the glory of God. You woke up this morning with hope. Christ in you is what God is hoping for. God is shaking deconstructing some of our myths.

Spirit-Empowered Discipleship is all about “walking in the light” of His Son, His Word, His people.

John 12:35: “Walk while you have the light lest the darkness overtake you.” How do we do that?

Three Sources of Light:

1. Walk in the light of His Son. John 8:32. Jesus said earlier I am the light of the world. When is the last time you had a fresh encounter with Jesus?

2. Walk in the light of His Word. Psalm 119:105: Thy word is a lamp. Great testimonies out of South Africa. We are beginning to see emerging leaders who don't ask, "What did I get done?" but, "What verse did I experience today?" Frequently experience Bible verses. We have to do them.

3. Walk in the light of His people. Matthew 5:14. Disciples were confused. Jesus said, "You are the light of the world. Jesus said both.

I, in my early 20s had a transforming experience with Jesus. He showed me that He is always in His side of the yoke. He told me, "I am often times loving your wife without you. Why don't you join me?" It was a breakthrough in our marriage. He is always in the yoke.

One time, my wife asked me to take our child to school. I was offended. I had Kingdom stuff to do! I said, "Sure," but with a very bad attitude. I said it but didn't mean it. I said it with an irritated spirit. The Holy Ghost convicted me. I went to apologize. My daughter followed. She saw her father confess his faults to her mother. My wife forgave me. It was healed. We went to school. We didn't know what to say to each other. She got out of the car at the school. She turned back to me and said, "Dad this stuff works." We had a walking in the light moment.

During our time together, we'll experience transformative steps as we walk in each of these three sources of light!

II. The Story of the Glory

When you woke up this morning, you may have hoped for great weather, a relaxing day, or a day filled with lots of accomplishments or fun—but what might God be "hoping" for you? If God has a hope for your life, it seems important to know it. We'll explore His hope for you during this time together and we'll do so as we reflect together on the Bible's "story of the glory!"

In many ways from Genesis to Revelations, the Bible is a story of the glory of God. God walks with Adam in the cool of the day (Genesis 2:15–20); His glory seals the covenant with Abraham to birth a people of His own choosing (Genesis 12:1–3, 15:1–16). Moses, the deliverer, encounters the bush that doesn't burn and descends Mount Sinai with his face veiled because of the glory—the Shekinah—the presence of God; upon God's instruction a tabernacle is built and His people are led about by the glory of God—a cloud by day and a fire by night. When they are faithful to His presence among them they are blessed—and when unfaithful, His presence is quenched. In the days of Eli, the priest, the ark is captured and upon hearing the news, Eli falls over dead and into his lineage a baby is born—Ichabod, the glory has departed (1 Samuel 4:21).

In the days of King David and Solomon, a permanent temple is proposed and then constructed. You may recall that God seems to resist construction of this

permanent temple—maybe signifying that it was always God’s hope for His glory to move around!

1 Kings 8 records the Ark being moved from the tabernacle to the newly constructed temple—and the glory so filled the place that no one could stand (1 Kings 8:10, 11; 2 Chronicles 7:1–3). In the days of extreme rebellion, immorality, and paganism, the kingdom is divided and ultimately taken into captivity; “Why do you treat your people like this?” they come to ask—and the prophets speak. Ezekiel describes a vision of the glory rising from the Ark—to the pinnacle of the temple—and then ascending into heaven. Ichabod—the glory is gone (Ezekiel 10:4, 18).

From the close of the book of Malachi—for 400 years—priests and the people gather at appointed times but the glory is gone. Year after year, decade after decade going through the motions of religion but God is not there. No wonder the legalistic bondage of the Pharisees arises in the context of religious practice—without the presence of God!

But as the New Testament opens, there are shepherds tending their flocks by night “and the glory of the Lord shone around them” (Luke 2:9). The glory is back! John would say it like this, “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us—and we beheld His glory” (John 1:14). For 33 years the glory of God which was in the bush, the cloud, the fire, the tabernacle, the temple—is now fully revealed in the God-man Jesus. Living a perfect life, suffering a sacrificial death, this one who never knew sin became sin that we might become the righteousness of Christ in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21). After a miraculous resurrection and appearing to more than 500, He commands His followers—to tarry, to wait in Jerusalem.

Obviously, expectantly they gather in the upper room and then there’s a sound like a mighty wind—and tongues of fire—the glory is back! But it’s back like never before; the Shekinah, the glory which was in the bush, the cloud, the fire, the tabernacle, the temple, the Son of God—has never until now, resided in a mere human. Paul describes it like this—“I was made a minister of a mystery (mustarion: something previously hidden, now revealed), and the mystery is this, ‘Christ in you, God’s hope of glory!’” Celebrate!

God is hoping you and I will extend His presence, make His glory known. It was always His desire that His glory move around—and it does so now in His disciples. Or as was said of the First Century church—they took note that they had been with Jesus (Acts 4:13).

I’d like to explore through this story of the glory a challenge for each of us in God’s hope for “Spirit-empowered” disciples. I use the term “Spirit-empowered” intentionally as it seems at least naïve or worse to think that I might fulfill His ultimate hope for my life by my power or my might—rather than by His Spirit (Zachariah 4:6).

It’s been more than 40 years since I came to follow the Lord during the Jesus movement of the ‘60s. Rejected by many traditional churches but accepted and mentored by the Full Gospel Business Men’s Committee. As I reflect on the past

four decades, I'd like to pose four critical statements from my own journey seeking to fulfill His hope for me as a Spirit-empowered disciple. My first decade as a Jesus follower seemed to highlight this issue from my own story of the glory journey.

III. Spirit-empowered disciples move only when the glory moves

Imagine the disaster as the children of Israel move before the glory moves! The Apostle John says it like this:

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (John 3:6).

I've experienced both the blessing and pain of this scripture.

As a relatively new believer I had entered graduate school in computer science and served as a computer center manager in state government. My administrative assistant Betty came to inquire one day, “What do I need to do to be saved?” It was my Philippian jailer moment—“believe on the Lord Jesus Christ”—but the Spirit stopped me with the rest of the verse, “...you and your household.” The cloud seemed to stop—I needed to stop. “Betty, I'd love to share with you more of the good news of Jesus—but I wonder about your husband Allen; would he be open to us all visiting?” My wife and I had the privilege to see both Betty and Allen come to follow Jesus—and Allen later would tell us: “We needed to come to Christ together—we were having such struggles in our marriage that had Betty come to follow Christ without me, I'm not sure I would have. I had tasted of a valuable lesson—move when the Spirit moves.”

Stop when the Spirit stops! The New Testament story of the ten lepers (Luke 17:11–19) provided me a transformative moment, giving priority to this imperative to encounter and express His glory:

—Looking first for a teaching outline on the text

—The Spirit touched me through the one returning leper and the words, “Were there not ten?”

—And then the words—“has only this Samaritan/foreigner come back?”

—This one leper has encountered the glory—the glory had not moved—so he returned to express glory.

Origin is everything! If it originates in the flesh—it ever remains flesh.

Spirit-empowered disciples listen for—seek—and insist on the initiative of God.

My second decade as a Jesus' follower undoubtedly focused on this issue:

IV. Spirit-empowered disciples wait on the Lord as a priority and privilege

—It's in waiting where we learn to say, “Speak Lord, Your servant is listening” (1 Samuel 3:8, 9).

—It's in waiting where we learn to “serve the Lord with gladness” (Psalm 100:2).

—It's in waiting where we have our “strength renewed” (Isaiah 40:31 NASB) “They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength” “Wait for what the Father had promised” (Acts 51:4).

Who among us likes to “wait” or “tarry” as Jesus would have commanded? For many of us “waiting” is a waste of time like waiting in traffic, or waiting in line; but as Scripture uses the word, it’s a relational word (Greek: meno). You’re waiting expectantly on a person! It’s like a maternity waiting room: Dad’s, you were longing expectantly for the arrival of your son or daughter. Grandparents, you expectantly waited for news of a new grandchild.

It’s in our waiting that we truly experience Great Commandment love of God—which empowers our Great commission passion: Consider possibly the most misunderstood word in the Great Commission:

And He said, “Go therefore and make disciples of ALL the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe ALL that I have commanded you” (Matthew 20:19, 20).

For my first 20 years as a Jesus follower, I was a “night person” struggling to find time for devotions and prayer—and then Jesus encountered me. Meditating on Romans 8:33, 34 on one occasion, I was struck for the first time by its personal implications:

Who will bring a charge against God’s elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, and who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. (Romans 8:33, 34 NAS). The only one who can bring charge against me is now praying for me!

Recalling Jesus’ reassurance to Peter in Luke 22:32, “But I have prayed for you,” I was challenged to ask, “Does Jesus only pray for people named Peter in the first century or at times does he pray for me?”

But “he is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8) and “He ever lives to make intercession” (Hebrews 7:25). His Spirit spoke: “David, I am often times praying for you, but a great deal of the time, I pray without you—why don’t you come join me?” My life was radically transformed as the Spirit continued speaking through Matthew 26:40 as the red letters of Scripture clearly and personally spoke, “Can you not pray with Me just one hour?” For more than 20 years most days begin in the dark, quietly meditating on Jesus praying—but He’s not praying alone—I’ve joined Him—waiting, expectant, longing to hear, yield, and love.

My third decade as a Jesus follower had a clear focus on this imperative.

V. Spirit-empowered disciples are secure enough in “who they are” that they can humbly serve others. “A new commandment I give unto you that you love one another even as I have loved you” (John 13:34).

My wife and I served for six years with the Minirth-Meier Christian Psychiatric clinics specializing in serving ministry leaders—pastors and overseers, elders and deacons, as they struggled with depression and addiction, moral and ethical failures, eating disorders, and suicide attempts. It was a sobering time and gave rise to the Center for Relational Care which continues to serve leaders in crisis plus

our burden for preventative/enrichment support to church leaders. One common theme from this time was what we sometimes call “spiritual amnesia”—leaders had never embraced or had lost sight of **who they were!**

You are the “beloved of God”; you are the one who Jesus prays for; you are the one He has accepted; you are the one He at times hurts for—and in the security of this identity you can humbly serve others.

Jesus’ upper room experience is our model of secure identity and humble serving:

Luke 22:24–27: “And there arose also a dispute among them as to which of them was regarded as greatest—and He said to them, the kings of the Gentiles lord it over them—but it is not to be so among you—but I am among you as one who serves.”

John 13:3, 4 NAS: “Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God and was going back to God, got up from supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself.

John 17:22, 26: “The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”

Notice the definite article “the love may be in them and I in them.” Who are you? As a recipient of His glory, you have received by His Spirit both the Father’s love of the Son and the Son’s love of the Father. Father loves the Son and shows Him all he does. He is speaking he is revealing always You have inside of you a revealing Holy Spirit we are going to shut up and listen How did the son love the father I do exactly what He commands. If any man would do my will he would know. The opposite is the work of the flesh. Say yes first sign the blank contract I’m in. this is how you have breakthrough. That is love for the Father.

Lastly, this past decade as a Jesus follower has convicted and convinced me often that:

Spirit-empowered disciples view life’s interruptions as transformative moments to express His glory.

“But we all with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Who likes interruptions? You’re headed off to do great things for God and you’re interrupted—by life events, loved ones, strangers—and it’s then that your “Spirit-empowerment” is evident.

This spring there were late ice storms several times through Atlanta that interrupted my travel plans. On one occasion traveling from Austin through Atlanta to Orlando, I arrived in Atlanta to receive a text that my return flight the next day had been cancelled. I had not even gotten to Orlando and already my return flight 30 hours later is cancelled! Inquiring at the Atlanta ticket counter, the agent indicated

my flight was cancelled due to “predicted” bad weather! I’ve been interrupted—and my response has been less than glorious! A gentle answer will turn away wrath but a harsh word stirs up strife. I apologized to the airline person. Her face softened and she got helpful almost immediately. She started looking and found a flight that would get me there before the other one would have.

Consider in closing, the example of interruptions from Mark 5:21-42. Jairus, the synagogue official, and Jesus and his disciples are interrupted along the way to heal Jairus’ daughter. Imagine if you were one of the disciples . . . Are you excited that you have stopped? Absolutely not! You’re irritated. “What do you mean, ‘Who touched you?’” Now behold, the glory of the Lord and ask His Spirit to transform you into His image—from glory to glory! Consider the glory of Jesus as He responds with sensitivity, humility, grace, compassion, gentleness, patience, kindness and love. He is always approachable. Then ask of His Spirit to be transformed into His image—from glory to glory. “Holy Spirit, I sense a need to become more like you. Change me that I might better express your glory.” Ask the Holy Spirit if there is an area he needs to do a fresh work. Listen for his answer. He is not going to say “All’s good” or you would be like Enoch and be translated. Then share in one sentence what the Spirit spoke.

10:31 a.m.—Bishop Feliz introduced Bishop Adrian Varlack, CBL instructor and Church Historian.

10:39 a.m.—Glynnis Varlack Allgood sang, “Change My Heart, Oh God.”

10:44 a.m.—Brother Varlack came to podium. His message was entitled, “The Power of the Heart.”

The Power of the Heart

This summer, I used the theme in my convention tour, “He That Hath an Ear Let Him Hear What the Spirit Says” which is repeated seven times over in that passage. God is speaking to the church in a very critical time in our history. My sister lives in Poinciana and may be here. I love her. I acknowledge that Jesus has heard our prayer from 1991 to take charge and He has taken charge. Brother Ferguson spoke about being able to hear the Word of God. To hear clearly, we must be broken. We must give Him our hearts. This message is about the heart.

Sam Chadwick said, “It is a wonder what God can do with a broken heart if he gets all the pieces.” “Make me to know joy and gladness that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice” (Psalm 51:8). Proverbs 4:23 says, “Watch over your heart with all diligence for from it flow the springs of life.” Jeremiah 17:9: “The heart is wicked who really knows it?”

Eight years ago this year, my friend, Harvey Palmer, Men’s Director in that part of Canada, asked me to come to a men’s retreat. He suggested I speak on the

heart. I found myself, first of all. I found more clearly who I was and what this thing we call heart meant. It surprised me what I found. It frightened me and brought tears. It reminded me that at age 14 I got saved after four nights of seeking. I had promised the Lord that I would never fail Him. God can save you if you are dishonest but not while you are dishonest. For some reason I knew I needed to pray.

It was as dry as crackers the first night I prayed. The second night, the Alabama preacher, a Caucasian by the way, noticed my intensity and came to pray with me. He asked afterwards, "Anyone want to testify?" He said to me, "Surely you got saved." I said, "No, sir, I did not." Third night I had the same experience. The minister came to my side. I felt good but the dryness was still there. So when the time came for testifying he said, "Surely tonight you got saved." I said, "No, sir." I walked out of that school house a very disappointed 14 year old. I laid down in my two-room house. "Lord, have I done something that you cannot save me? Have I sinned against the Holy Ghost?" I had that fear in my heart. I waited for Him to answer and fell asleep.

The next day, we went with my dad to get bait for his traps. We were talking about the revival. They used to call me Adoo. "Adoo, it looks like you can't get saved." I said to them, "I am going to get saved tonight." Something was in my heart that said I would. I went to the altar. I prayed and prayed and stayed and prayed expecting the breakthrough. I walked out of that altar. The preacher insisted, "You are saved!" but I felt ashamed to say I was not. On the step outside the church, a lady asked, "Son did you get saved?" I hung my head and said, "No m'am." Something broke like a dam inside me. The Lord broke me so I could not see. My sisters had to walk me home. I felt I needed to break and the Lord broke my heart. Eight years ago, I realized that breaking was not a one-time thing. It is a process throughout the whole of our lives. Many things we can do by skill or with our knowledge, with our abilities, but brokenness, contriteness, that's where God dwells.

As I studied, there were times I had to stop and weep. World War 2, the apartheid era, show the cruelty that can come from the human heart is astounding. It wants to do wickedness. Who can know it? God knows. He can do great things with broken hearts if He gets all the pieces.

A couple of stories: A certain general, when they had serfs, had an eight year old boy who belonged to a mother. The general had hunting dogs. One dog injured his leg. He had the little boy arrested and the next morning he stripped him naked and sent him running for the dogs to track down. In front of his mother. That came out of a human heart.

In World War 2, bundles were being thrown in the fire wiggling. Babies. Human hearts did that. Lest we think we are better off. What if you could carry out everything you have ever thought and the law wouldn't bother me what would my deeds look like. That is why God has to search the heart. Out of our mouth we say I love you but the Bible says lie not one to another. What is hidden? What would come out if you felt free to do it? The heart has tremendous power.

At the time of the flood, the imaginations were only evil continually. God said I will destroy the earth that I have made. I am sorry that I made man. Thank God, Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. What can He find when He looks among us? I want to go a step further.

Adam and Eve heard the sound of God. Adam and Eve were created marvelously. Psalm 139 tells that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. Sister Horner referred to Psalm 139. Adam and Eve sinned walking through the heat of the day. Sin is always open and bare before the Lord, we cannot hide it. Do not underestimate or overestimate your heart. He wants a holy people with broken hearts. God help us to be obedient to the Word of God. He wants people with broken hearts; He wants people that will not hide anything from Him. The Lord had told Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply but when He saw what they had done, he took them from The Garden. The devil cannot multiply himself. Adam and Eve had the capacity to multiply. God came that we may have life and have it more abundantly. Hallelujah!

Please hear the Word of the Lord. When God saw what they had done and passed judgment, He threw them out of the Garden lest they take of the Tree of Life and become immortal in sin. He had told them to be fruitful and multiply. The devil cannot make little devils. God kept them from getting to the Tree of Life in their sin but later on, Jesus said, "I came that you might have life."

God clothed them and said, "The seed of woman shall bruise your head, devil." Jesus said, "I am he that was dead but behold I am alive forever more."

But now that he has made a cure for us, He is going to give us stories in the Bible about the wickedness of the heart. When David was a young man worshipping, singing, God anointed him King of Israel. The flesh has always wanted to kill God's glory. Saul wanted to kill David. One of David's men, Ashahel, said, "We know you are supposed to be the next king. You have public opinion on your side. The throne is yours; I can kill Saul." David said, "Who am I that I would touch the Lord's anointed? David is sensitive to the Lord preserving the anointing by not using it in a self-serving way. When he cut off the piece of Saul's garment, David's heart smote him because he was sensitive to the Lord. Man seeth not as God seeth. The Lord looks at the heart. David could have gotten the throne a short way.

David later was self-indulgent while in the office of the anointed king. How could the tender heart of his youth now be in the place to have a soldier carry the message that was his own death warrant? Don't trust your heart. Nathan told him Uriah was dead, David sat down like it was nothing. When Nathan told him the story about the man who took the poor man's sheep, David's heart hid the truth from him until Nathan said, "Thou art the man!" Don't trust your heart unless it is in the hand of the Lord. David had said something he could not stop. God said I will tell it from the housetops.

Absalom sought to take the throne. What happened in that case is that it was Joab, the same one who carried out the action against Uriah. A person who has something on you will use it against you if they have a wicked heart. Joab knew what David had done. Maybe the Lord is through with me but I don't want Absalom

killed. You will lose your spiritual power when your heart leads you astray. God looks on the heart.

The book, *A Tale of Three Kings*, says those who seek power, we pray for Gods power, but we want power to rule. But if our hearts are not broken, we cannot serve in humility. Jesus said it shall not be so among you. We seek power to be able to do this or that. Break me, Lord! Cause me to break so that I can have a true spiritual breakthrough!

11:52 a.m.—Bishop Varlack called for the audience to and pray.

12:02 p.m.—Bishop Feliz came to podium as Glynnis Varlack Allgood sang, “Change My Heart, Oh God.” He invited Assembly delegates to attend the Mission Encounter during the afternoon session.

Friday Afternoon

August 1, 2014

Session Theme: Missions

There was no general session. Delegates were encouraged to attend the Mission Encounter happening in the Panzacola Ballroom.

Friday Evening

August 1, 2014

Session Theme: “Young Harvest”

6:15 p.m.—Bahama Brass Youth Band played, “You Deserve the Glory,” “Revive Us Again,” “Agnus Dei,” “Keep On the Firing Line”

6:30 p.m.—Amber Payne did countdown interviews with Kathy Creasy, International Children’s Ministries Director, and Trevor and Aileen Reid, International Youth Ministries Co-Directors.

6:45 p.m.—Bishop Stephen Masilela opened the session and introduced Chucky Chandler, South Carolina youth director.

6:50 p.m.—Brother Chandler came to the podium. He brought Trevor and Aileen Reid to the stage, along with regional youth directors, to honor their years of service as youth ministries co-directors. They were presented with a basket of cards and gifts from youth and youth leaders.

6:55 p.m.—Breakthrough video: “Hakuna Matata.”

6:58 p.m.—Video: “Will the Church Rise up and Fight?”

7:05 p.m.—Tony Sutherland Worship Team sang, “Every Praise,” “Let It Flow/Rain Down On Us,” “Your Presence,” “There is Power in the Name of Jesus / Break Every Chain.”

7:35 p.m.—Tony Sutherland sang prophetically: “I see those dreams coming. There’s a promise in the name of Jesus.”

7:40 p.m.—Brother Chandler came back to the podium and encouraged the attendees to testify to each other.

7:45 p.m.—Llewellyn (L. J.) Graham from Wolverhampton, England, 13 years old, came to exhort for giving.

7:50 p.m.—Chucky Chandler introduced Aneliesse Rodriguez who prayed over the offering.

7:52 p.m.—Bahama National Children’s Choir sang, “Look Up,” “Revive Us Again,” “Send Down the Rain,” “Bahamian Praise.”

8:07 p.m.—Video featuring Pastor Clint and Elizabeth Knowles, Hackelburg, Alabama.

8:15 p.m.—Bishop Trevor Reid, International Youth Ministries Co-Coordinator, interviewed Clint Knowles’ ministry team about their program for youth and children. They grew from 108 to 175 when they built a new facility. April 27, 2011, church lost that facility in tornado.

Clint: “I saw it as a new beginning.

Liz: As we rebuilt the first thing to consider was youth and children needs. First building constructed was a gymnasium. To be successful you have to be strategic. Planned meetings and even off days around what is going on in the community.”

“Take the whole calendar into perspective. Our growth took place in spring fall and winter, while kids were in school. Spiritually speaking, I believe the house of God is a house of prayer. I believe that the church should minister to every member of a family. We don’t seek to be baby sitters, we seek to develop disciples. We had weekly prayer and monthly midnight prayer.

How are the families reached, disciplined, transformed?

Clint: “I believe that the church must develop and harvest leaders. We can pour into young people. We are kingdom equippers.”

How does youth ministry follow?

Dustin Atkins answered: “We put ourselves in the middle of the community. Go to every school. We teach our youth solid biblical principles. Youth ministry is not youth ministry until youth minister.”

Tina Raper, children’s minister: “Plant the seed of God and make them disciples. Grow great leaders in the body of Christ. Twice a week we use worship, puppets, games, and activities. We think that children are the most important part of a foundational ministry. If you can change the life of a child, you can change the world.”

Clint: “Numbers gauge our growth. But you must be involved in your community, must have a balanced family life, serve your church, minister the rhema word of God. Connect Grow and serve.”

8:30 p.m.—Bishop Masilela introduced Tim Beck, evening speaker and youth director for the state of Alabama.

8:31 p.m.—Tony Sutherland sang, “Your Presence is Heaven.”

8:40 p.m.—Brother Beck came to microphone as Tony Sutherland continued to sing.

Tim Beck preached “Breakthrough to the Young Harvest”

Breakthrough to the Young Harvest

What is this obstacle, what is this mountain? Some things you cannot get around. It’s time to break through it! Pray in the Spirit! Look at your neighbor and say, “It’s on! We’re never going back to normal!”

How bad do you want breakthrough? Give me revival or give me death. Give me breakthrough or give me death!

The Anatomy of the Mighty Samuel 22:1, 2

“David therefore departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam. So when his brothers and all his father’s house heard it, they went down there to him. And everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him. So he became captain over them. And there were about four hundred men with him.”

Adullam means: the justice of the people; a hiding place; the secret place. Please understand this passage is a prophetic picture and God is beckoning us to Adullam. Heaven is crying out for a godly riot. At the beginning of this year, God begin to reveal to me that this year would be marked by a godly riot. Usually, riots are negative however this would be ordained by Heaven, but it would still be misunderstood. Yet, we must move beyond our reasoning and embrace the Spirit’s activity.

God is up to some amazing things and we cannot afford to miss it! Our Lord is inviting us back to the upper room (the secret place) to lock ourselves away with Him until the power of God flood our lives and our streets. There is a remnant within the remnant and church within the church and those are the ones who will be revealed in Adullam. In 1 Samuel 22, David removes himself from the current kingdom and enters into a secret place.

- He has already been anointed king.
- He has already defeated the giant.
- He has already prevailed and conquered every challenge.
- And now, in the cave of Adullam, he waits, prays, and seeks God.
- Suddenly, out of nowhere 400 men show up. They walked away from

everything just to be with this man... this king...

Get this: they traded the palace for a cave, warmth for cold, they went from heroes to fugitives overnight. This was insanity! This was Heavenly! What provoked this riot? What was it inside of these that caused them to be so radical?

Their DNA contained something most just didn't have. You see, it is extremely imperative that we receive revelation from these two verses because our day is extremely identical.

How many of you know this is not the real story? Yes, this story is real, but the real story is about the King of Kings! Jesus is already anointed Prophet, Priest, and King who reigns over the universe.

He has already defeated the giants called sin, sickness, and death and since His ascension, He has been assembling the mighty (a few good men and women), those who would continue to establish His Kingdom upon the earth. Then eventually, He will set up His Kingdom upon the earth. Occupy until I come.

Revelation 11:15

"The seventh angel then blew [his] trumpet, and there were mighty voices in heaven, shouting, the dominion (kingdom, sovereignty, rule) of the world has now come into the possession and become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ (the Messiah), and He shall reign forever and ever."

This will happen as it is written and must be the focus of the Church. So, what must we do?

Hebrews 13:12-14

"So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through His own blood. Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured. For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come."

Just as the 400 abandoned all for the sake of David, we must understand and embrace the anatomy of the mighty for the sake of our King.

Luke 14:26, 27

“If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.”

To carry revival, live a lifestyle of breakthrough, and contend for cities/nations there must be four essentials in our make-up (DNA).

1. Discontentment (Holy)
2. Separation
3. Intimacy
4. Bravery / Breakthrough

These are the hallmarks of those who are mighty in the eyes of Heaven. But to make such a statement, these distinctions must show up outside of David and his 400 men. A word is established on the account of two or more witnesses, so to prove my point and support this revelation, let us look at Moses from the OT and Jesus from the NT.

Moses

“By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered the reproach of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward” (Hebrews 11:24–26).

Discontentment refused to be called the son of Pharaoh. Separation—left Egypt. Intimacy in the desert.

Bravery—Marched back into Egypt, said, “Let God’s people go!”

Jesus

Discontentment—left Heaven, came to earth to restore order. (John 2)
 Separation—Led by the Spirit into the Wilderness for 40 days/40 nights.
 (Luke 4) Intimacy—never did anything own His own. John 8:38: “I speak of what I have seen with my Father...” Bravery—the cross, facing and prevailing over death, descending into hell to declare liberty.

Again this is the anatomy of the mighty! All follow this same progression . . . from Martin Luther to the Puritans to A J Tomlinson to William J. Seymour to John G. Lake to David Wilkerson.

Let’s follow them.

#1 Discontentment (Holy) to be discontent is to experience a lack of contentment or satisfaction. It’s a restless desire or craving for something you do not have. Holy discontentment is when this condition is caused by God. Ravenhill once said, “The

true man of God is heartsick, grieved at the worldliness of the Church, grieved at the toleration of sin in the Church, grieved at the prayerlessness of the Church. He is disturbed that the corporate prayer of the Church no longer pulls down the stronghold of the devil.”

87 billion dollar porn industry, 58 percent of Americans believe same sex marriage and you tell me to calm down you tell me to be normal you have lost your mind.

I don't know about you, but aren't you sick of the powerless, pitiful, country club we've become? Don't you see the modern day believer is laced with laziness, polluted with pride, and consumed with carnality? Is anybody else fed up with the political nonsense that drives ministry today? Where are the warriors who will call out “white-wash living” regardless of the consequences?

Where is the “pioneering spirit” that should rest on the church in these last days, which declares, we will not settle, we will not relent, we will never become comfortable, silent, or obsolete? Change never occurs outside of discontentment! Every riot, revolution, and revival passed through the birth canal of discontentment!

Here is the truth: We cannot rest until the kingdoms of this world become the Kingdom of our God! That is the reason we are still here, still breathing, and have been given, yet another day. I cannot and will not accept, that we are to just hide out and hold on until Jesus comes back. That is not Biblical, that's stupid!

We need change! We need a godly riot! We need a true lasting revival! And here is the funny thing, it's waiting on us! We must refuse the way it's been and the way it is. It is, what it is because, we allow it! We are too content!

Matthew 18:18: “Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” The reason signs and wonders are not chasing us down is because we are too comfortable, too content, and too causal. The reason the dead are not being raised is because we are too comfortable, too content, and too causal. The reason thousands are not being saved and added is because we are too comfortable, too content, and too causal. The reason darkness is growing all around us is because we are too comfortable, too content, and too causal. The reason revival is something we study, but rarely experience, is because we are too comfortable, too content, and too causal.

2 Kings 7:3-8: “Now there were four men who were lepers at the entrance to the gate. And they said to one another, " Why are we sitting here until we die? If we say, 'Let us enter the city,' the famine is in the city, and we shall die there. And if we sit here, we die also. So now come, let us go over to the camp of the Syrians. If they spare our lives we shall live, and if they kill us we shall but die. So they arose at twilight to go to the camp of the Syrians. But when they came to the edge of the camp of the Syrians, behold, there was no one there. For the Lord had made the army of the Syrians hear the sound of chariots and of horses, the sound of a great army, so that they said to one another, "Behold, the king of Israel has

hired against us the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Egypt to come against us. So they fled away in the twilight and abandoned their tents, their horses, and their donkeys, leaving the camp as it was, and fled for their lives. And when these lepers came to the edge of the camp, they went into a tent and ate and drank, and they carried off silver and gold and clothing.”

It should stir us, concern us, and challenge us, when other moral men and women have experienced the depths of God, while we continue to splash around in the shallow end. Let's just admit it, what we are experiencing and living in is unacceptable! John G. Lake had healing rooms. The government recognized Spokane, Washington, as the healthiest city in US!

Romans 8:19: “For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.” 2 Corinthians 3:18: “And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.” Honestly, the degree and glory we are dwelling in has simply expired. It's time to dig deeper!

Ephesians 3:19, 20

“. . . to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work in us.”

We must live and increase in holy discontent. His more ought to place a demand on more of us. Holy Discontentment yields separation!

#2 Separation 2 Corinthians 6:17, “Therefore, Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you.”

The mighty break away from everything that opposes the King's reign in their lives.

Henry Drummond stated, “True Christianity removes the attraction of the earth; and this is one way in which it diminishes men's burden. It makes them citizens of another world.”

Turning towards the caves of Adullam means:

- Turning your back on this world joyfully surrendering your earthly citizenship.
- Boldly acknowledging, in word and deed, the Lordship of Jesus Christ.
- Proudly embracing the titles stranger, pilgrim, and outcast.
- Living different, thinking different because you are no longer of this world.
- Holy roller slam—let's go back to living unapologetically

2 Corinthians 4:18

“We look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.”

There comes a time when you realize that what is unseen is the greater reality and you turn your investments and affections in its direction.

Philippians 3:20

“But our citizenship is in heaven . . .” Set your mind on the things above until you are heavenly minded you will be no earthly good

Colossians 3:1-3

“If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”

Romans 8:6

“For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.”

Here is the reason so many of us are having difficulties . . . it is because we are still connected to this world and its ways. The disconnection has never really occurred. Honestly, most in the church have never forsaken and renounced the world and we wonder why we have a pathetic, powerless church! To be mighty and to do mighty exploits for God there has to be a separation, a setting apart, a sanctification unto God.

Worldliness is the leech that is slowly draining the life out of the body of Christ. Worldliness can be defined as being attached to, engrossed in, or preoccupied with the things of this temporal life. The natural and carnal dominates most people's lives. We cannot carry Heaven and reveal Heaven being full of the world! No wonder, people remain oppressed, sick, and defeated in our presence . . . because all we can give them is of this realm, yet they need something from other realm! Jeremiah 6:14 simply says, “They offer only superficial help for the harm my people have suffered. They say, ‘Everything will be all right! But it is not all right!’ Let get it straight, the world doesn't need that which is superficial, but that which is supernatural.

Jeremiah 6:15 continues with, “My people have even lost the power to blush.”

They were no longer moved and troubled by wickedness. They had become just like everyone else . . . even worse. Sounds just like the modern day church, doesn't it? We are in and of the world, when the Word is clear, to be in but not of . . .

Beloved, we have lost our influence because even the world around us knows we don't believe this Book by the way we live. The majority, are Christian's in word only. As the great theologian Elvis said, “a little less conversation, a little more action please . . . a little more bite and a little less bark . . .”

To be mighty and to do mighty things, we must be separate from this world and its ways and totally immerse ourselves in that which is powerful and eternal.

Smith Wigglesworth would not permit himself to read anything but the Bible. Speaking about this he said, “Libraries make swelled heads, but the Word of God

makes enlarged hearts. We are to have enlarged hearts, hearts filled with the fragrance of the love of God that will show forth the life and power of the Lord.” The reason Wigglesworth was able to raise multiple people from the dead was because of separation. We exhale what we do not inhale! We can only give that which we possess. Wigglesworth was able to offer “something out of this world” because he was more familiar with the supernatural than the natural. It is high time to fully disconnect and live out of “in the world, not of the world”! This is an ancient message the modern day church needs to hear and heed in these last days! Separation has a purpose: intimacy!

#3 Intimacy. The 400 entered into a cave . . . a secret place! The purpose was to be close to their king. Their one passion was to be with David. They had no other agenda and no other promise but his presence. True love compels you to do crazy things. It’s called being sick with love. I mean, the king’s presence was their only promise and that was enough. Do we know such love? Remove everything else but His presence... would that alone be enough for us? When will we learn the secret to longevity is intimacy? To be mighty in this Kingdom is to be eaten up with love for the King! To be lovesick for Him is the greatest of all joys!

Augustine said, “To fall in love with God is the greatest of all romances; to seek Him, the greatest adventure; to find Him, the greatest human achievement.” Intimacy with God is the most powerful, most costly, most neglected, and most emphasized truth of the New Testament. It is the most powerful and pleasurable reality anyone can experience. It is the most costly treasure to pursue, but the most valuable and lasting. It is the most neglected issue in the Kingdom because it takes effort on our part. Intimacy is the most emphasized because of its necessity to prevail in the last days.

Intimacy is not automatic, but deliberate! Trekking from the palace to the cave is tremendously taxing to the flesh and the weak always turn back. Many travel the road to Adullam but few reach the destination! The proof is the lack of “carriers of revival / lifestyles of breakthrough” in the earth today.

To be mighty is to be proactive against the flesh, throw the first punch, place it in a chokehold, and make it tap out. This is a daily occurrence. The truth is, there is a side of you that will always contend for the palace knowing the true King is in Adullam. Bravery is manifested out of intimacy.

Philippians 3:7-10

“But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For His sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in Him. That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and may share His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death.”

Song of Songs 2:4, 5; 14–15

“He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love. Sustain me with raisins; refresh me with apples, for I am sick with love.” “O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the crannies of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet, and your face lovely. Catch the foxes for us, the little foxes that spoil the vineyards, for our vineyards are in blossom.”

It has been said, “A man who is intimate with God is not intimidated by man.” Bravery is manifested out of intimacy!

#4 Bravery . C.T. Studd in his book, *The Cricketer and Pioneer*, wrote, “Last June at the mouth of the Congo there awaited a thousand prospectors, traders, merchants, and gold seekers, waiting to rush into these regions as soon as the government opened the door to them, for rumor declared that there is an abundance of gold. If such men hear so loudly the call of gold and obey it, can it be the ears of Christ’s soldiers are deaf to the call of God, and the cries of the dying souls of men? Are gamblers for gold so many, and gamblers for God so few?”

2 Samuel 23:13–17 David’s Mighty Men (3) 1.3 million soldiers 30 chief men but only 3 were called mighty.

“Three of the 30 chief men . . . came to David at the cave of Adullam . . . the garrison of the Philistines was then in Bethlehem. David said with longing, ‘Oh, that someone would give me a drink of the water from the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!’ The three mighty men broke through the camp of the Philistines, drew water from the well . . . and brought it to David. He would not drink it, but poured it out to the Lord. He said, ‘Far be it from me, O LORD, that I should do this! Is this not the blood of the men who went in jeopardy of their lives?’”

These three revealed extravagant devotion for their king. They “caught” the whisper of David’s heart and determined to answer it. They went above and beyond the call of duty!

It is time for us to not only expect big things from God, but attempt big things for God! He is longing for those who will put their lives on the line! Where are the ones willing to die for this thing? Where are the ones who fear nothing but God?

Our life goal is to stand before Him on the last day and offer ourselves to Him just as these three men offered water to David at the expense of their lives. Adullam is calling! The secret place is wooing! The invitation has been given! God is seeking the mighty! History is written by the mighty! Revival is carried by the mighty! Breakthrough is released by the mighty! These are the markings of the mighty:

- discontentment (holy)
- separation
- intimacy
- bravery

Is this your anatomy? It was in A J Tomlinson. It was in the pioneers of this movement. What about now? What about our generation? These distinctions

(hallmarks) are passed down from generation to generation. Most things are not just taught but caught. Have we and are we instilling these Kingdom truths into the next generation? David was the first giant killer that produced and raised up multiple giants killers. He was the first mighty man that unlocked a generation of mighty men. He was able to release his DNA into the men under him.

What this movement becomes and looks like in 10 years will be a direct reflection of our DNA today! Is our current anatomy mighty? It must be . . . the earth, all nations, and our cities/villages depend on it! The mighty move. Good is the enemy of best. There is more. Set your face for the more. Let's move all over this house.

9:20 p.m.—Altar call

Saturday Morning

August 2, 2014

Session Theme: Servant Leadership

9:00 a.m.—Bishop Clayton Martin, General Presbyterian for the Caribbean and the Atlantic Ocean Islands, greeted and opened the session.

9:03 a.m.—Northeast USA Regional Worship Team came to the stage as Bishop Clayton Endecott explained morning prayer time.

9:10 a.m.—Northeast USA Regional Worship Team sang, "Our God is Greater."

9:15 a.m.—Concert prayer.

9:18 a.m.—Scripture read in Spanish and English concerning when the day of Pentecost was fully come.

9:20 a.m.—Northeast USA Regional Worship Team sang, "How Great is Our God."

9: 24 a.m.—Bishop Endecott called congregation to pray one for another.

9:26 a.m.—Northeast USA Regional Worship Team sang in English and Spanish, "The Lord is Good Forever."

9:29 a.m.—Bishop Clayton Martin came to microphone and encouraged everyone to pray again.

9:31 a.m.—Ximo and Judy Gregorio played guitar and flute. Judy sang a couple of verses of an unknown song with Ximo playing guitar and then Judy played the flute again. Song changed to “Santo Santo Santo” in Spanish and then in English.

9:39 a.m.—Darren Schalk came to podium to present Teacher of the Year: Two women who represent more than 100 years of discipleship ministry. Bessy Hartman Christian Educator of the Year Award goes to Rebecca Johnson. Eleanor Landon received the Billy Murray Award. General Overseer Clements presented both women with plaques.

9:51 a.m.—General Overseer Sam Clements spoke of the overwhelming presence of the Holy Spirit in the Assembly. Talked about ordination of bishops being highest office of ministry, preparing for the Bishop Ordination Service.

Bishops from all around this world will be ordained. “I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching” (2 Timothy 4:1, 2).

“What I say to these bishops applies to every minister in this building. Lives will not be changed with a building or trendy programs but only with the preaching of the Word; that is the power of God! The emphasis is never on the preacher but on the Word. The Gospel still changes people’s lives. My question today is, “Is there a word?” A fresh anointed word of God to change lives. 1 Peter 4:11: “If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.” This is both challenging and humbling and should be encouraged who is any man to interpret the mind of god emphasis squarely on what is important must not turn gods house into a secular meeting place the engrafted never failing pure and sure word of the living god forever settled in heaven god will constantly give more light and understanding of his word involves no change in the word itself the word is forever fresh and inspiring and applies to all people Acts 10 when peter was summoned to leave the housetop he did not embrace the church that would include all people with a vision on his mind he arose and went with the men Cornelius family had gathered why have you sent for me Cornelius spoke of angelic vision to call for him you have done well to come we are all here before god to hear all things that are commanded of god not for your opinions or roman law or Jewish no polite political dialogue certainty not speculation still the challenge to the preacher king asked Jeremiah is there a word from the Lord where there is no word no vision people perish bishops there must be a fresh word from god no guesswork puzzles but thus saith

the Lord he had the right to ask and Peter had the right to give the word that he brought was more wonderful news of a breakthrough a power world shattering whole gospel in a nutshell Bethlehem Galilee Jesus forgiving the sinner defeat the powers of darkness and opening of the kingdom to all believers the Holy Ghost fell on them revealing flooding them with fullness we are praying for a breakthrough again in this church Bishops preach the word, the Gospel still works. I charge you to fulfill your duties:

1. Cease from all forms of unrighteousness, pride, weakness, live in conformity with the Word
2. Allow Christ to have complete control over your life
3. Dedicate your time energy and talents to saving souls
4. Be willing and determined to give generously of self and possessions
5. "Continue in doctrine thou shalt save thyself and them that hear . . . work evangelist" Be a bishop in the COGOP

10:06 a.m.—Bishop Martin returned spoke of ordination of bishops all over the world the Church of God is moving these men to be promoted to the rank of bishop today these men are before us the International Offices having endorsed them Thanks to their families, relatives, and friends who are here for this special service.

10:10 a.m.—Bishop Jean Claude Dorlean prayed in French.

10:12 a.m.—Bishop Franklin Ferguson read 1 Timothy 3:1–7.

10:14 a.m.—Paulette Bryant came to sing "The Lord's Prayer"

10:18 a.m.—Bishop Martin came back. He led a moment of worship. Asked candidates to stand. Instructed them how to respond and asked the following questions:

- Have you prayerfully considered the responsibility of the sacrifices you are called to make?
- Do you believe Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God and that the Scriptures are the Word of God to make us wise unto salvation through faith in Him, with all your heart?
- Are you motivated not out of a desire for position or earthly gain, but by the love of God and love of your fellow man and the wish to glorify Him and to save sinful men?
- Will you strive to build up the church, the body of Christ, to prepare God's people for works of service, to labor for the unity of the faith of the knowledge of the Son of God?

- Will you endeavor to draw others to Christ through your example as well as your word?

- Candidates to repeat: “I will make it the purpose of my life to live for Jesus Christ and ask for prayers of this church to help me in this ministry.”

10:21 a.m.—Prayer of dedication by Bishop Clarence Williams.

10:24 a.m.—Bishop Ferguson came to podium and called names of candidates.

10:26 a.m.—Bishop Clements and General Presbyters began praying for candidates.

10:29 a.m.—Paulette Bryan sang, “Go.”

10:31 a.m.—Franklin Ferguson returned to the podium to announce next set of candidates. Presbyters laid hands on and prayed. At the conclusion of prayer, Paulette Bryan continued to sing Go.

10:37 a.m.—Franklin Ferguson announced next set of candidates.

10:40 a.m.—General Overseer, General Presbyters, and other Presbyters and Overseers laid hands on candidates for ordination and prayed.

10:44 a.m.—Franklin Ferguson returned announced next set of candidates.

10:46 a.m.—Overseers, Presbyters and General Overseer laid hands on and prayed for newly ordained bishops.

10:50 a.m.—Franklin Ferguson returned to podium announced fifth group of candidates.

10:53 a.m.—Presbyters, Overseers, and General Overseer laid hands on and ordained the bishops.

10:56 a.m.—Franklin Ferguson announced sixth group.

10:59 a.m.—Prayer and declaration for bishops began by presbyters.

11:03 a.m.—Paulette Bryan sang “He Will Guide Thee With His Eye.”

11:07 a.m.—Bishop Feliz came to podium to speak of one of the candidates, Moises Fernandez of Cuba. “Many years we had no connection with the church in Cuba. The church remained faithful. Saved their tithes all those years. Did

not touch that money. For all that time, we have not seen a new bishop come to the stage to be ordained. Today we did. Not one person represented Cuba in our conventions eight Cubans are in this assembly. Jesus is lord over Cuba. We are one family we are one church! Satan is defeated in the Church of God of Prophecy! When you see our Cuban brothers, greet them and tell them, 'Welcome home'."

11:15 a.m.—DeWayne Hamby came to the stage. He encouraged the attendees to subscribe to the *White Wing Messenger*. He introduced a special guest. He directed people to go to the booth in the Exhibit Hall for a free CD and to meet the special guest from 3–5.

11:20 a.m.—Special guest, John Morgan, who is a George W. Bush impersonator, spoke to the congregation. Testified of being an Ambassador of Jesus Christ and promoted the *White Wing Messenger*.

11:22 a.m.—Clayton Martin dismissed the congregation, reminding the Celebration of Nations participants to meet with Cathy Payne after the service.

Saturday Afternoon

August 2, 2014

Session Theme: Connections

Saturday afternoon included a variety of activities, such as presbyter/overseer luncheons, a Tomlinson College/Tomlinson Center reception and a Hispanic Worship Celebration.

Saturday Evening

August 2, 2014

Session Theme: Global Harvest

6:15 p.m.—Musical Concert with Bahama Brass Band played several selections.

6:30 p.m.—Pre-Session Interview; Amber Payne interviewed Joey Garcia and Morais Cassell regarding Tomlinson Center and Mark Menke about the Center for Biblical Leadership

6:45 p.m.—Session Moderator, Bishop Ben Feliz, General Presbyter, Mexico, Central America, and Spanish-speaking Caribbean made recognition to Bishop Romeo R. Ferguson for 22 years of faithful service to the Bahama Brass Band. General Overseer Sam Clements read and presented a plaque.

6:55 p.m.—Bishop Feliz introduced Cathy Payne.

7:00 p.m.—Celebration of Nations: Cathy Payne, Global Missions Coordinator, read and exhorted on Revelation 7:9, 10. She introduced the Celebration of Nations parade.

7:08 p.m.—Sister Payne read Ephesians 2:18. She Payne recognized new nation Tuvalu with Bishop Gary Langley. Nation of China was welcomed.

7:15 p.m.—Bishop David Browder from Oceania led in prayer for all the nations that were represented.

7:17 p.m.—Sister Payne exhorted the congregation to give God the very best praise. Flag corps, followed by Bahama Brass Band, exited.

7:20 p.m.—Northeast Region USA Worship Team sang, “Hey, My God Is Good,” “Let the Nations Sing,” “Awesome,” “You Are Alpha and Omega” and “How Great Thou Art.”

7:50 p.m.—[REDACTED] Overseer of Russia, came to receive the offering.

7:57 p.m.—Prayer: Henadzi (Gena) Kernazhytski, Overseer of Belarus

8:00 p.m.—International Assembly Mass Choir; Chad Lambert, Director (Virginia) sang, “Sing Praises,” “Don’t Give Up” and “For Every Mountain.”

8:15 p.m.—General Overseer Clements came to the podium and recognized Church of God International Offices staff. He introduced the evening speaker, Dr. Mark Williams, General Overseer of the Church of God.

8:20 p.m.—Inspirational Word & Call to Surrender: The Global Harvest, Dr. Mark Williams, General Overseer, Church of God, Cleveland, Tennessee. Thanked Brother Clements for allowing him to come and speak for us. Said it was one of the most cherished opportunities he had ever received, this invitation. He pledged to stand shoulder to shoulder with Brother Clements, presbyters and families, overseers, pastors, women and men. “We are family. We have a wonderful heritage together and I believe we will have a wonderful future together.” He recognized Church of God guests, had them to stand and called their names. Had his mom and dad to stand.

Called all to stand and read 1 Timothy 3:14–16: “I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and the foundation of the truth. And by

common confession, (King James says, “Without controversy”) great is the mystery of godliness: He who was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received, taken up, in glory.” Breakthrough? My message tonight: **It’s All About Jesus**. Prayed.

The books of first and second Timothy along with Titus form the pastoral letters. The recipients of these letters were pastoring churches. Timothy was pastoring a church in Ephesus; you may remember how it all happened. Sixteen months they had been in hard labor and the Lord began to move on the hearts of Paul and his companions to go the city of Ephesus. Ephesus was a proud city, a rich city; it was also a religious city, pagan that is, when Paul went into the synagogue and reasoned with the people, they agreed with him and he began a church. Apollos was a man that was mighty in the Scriptures. Apollos had a teachable spirit. When Paul arrived back from his trip, he had 12 people and he asked if they had received the Baptism. Acts 19:2 says Paul laid hands on them and they spake in tongues and that began a revival. Sick were healed, demons were exorcised; great was this revival. Two years until all of Asia heard this word of the Lord. A mighty church planting began. The church at Ephesus knew what it was to see miracles, a church that had a great pastor, the apostle Paul. Now Paul was to pass his mantle to Timothy. How would you like to follow Pastor Paul as pastor? Timothy was younger than Paul. He now was walking in the shadow of Paul. It was also a church with problems. He had some problem people and people with some problems. His letter talked about all the problems of the church. There were those that looked down on Timothy because he was young. Here is a young man that is following Paul and he is pastoring people with problems. He was always being compared to Paul and he was just about ready to leave. All of a sudden, his phone rang and he had an email with First and Second Timothy. He said, “Oh, here is my appointment letter. Maybe we can leave this church and go somewhere else. He opened up the letter and read. Paul told him to remain at Ephesus. What do you do when all of sudden you realize that there are people there that don’t like you? What do you do when you are being compared to someone that was successful? What do you do? We have some important instructions in First and Second Timothy. First of all: Connect with your calling. Now, Timothy, I know you’re walking in my shadow, you are hearing people saying a lot of things about me, don’t forget I was a blasphemer, persecutor, murderer before I came to Christ, but I received mercy. I just want to remind you the same mercy and same grace that came to me on the road to Damascus is the same grace and the same mercy and the same love that will come to you! You are not called to be a Paul you are called to be a Timothy. Whatever you are going through, you are called by God. Romans 1:7, 8:28, 9:26; 1 Corinthians 1:27, 7:15; Galatians 1:8, 5:13; 1 Thessalonians 2:12 and 4:7 all remind you that you are called! God never changes His mind about His call. Now is not the time to throw in the towel. While you are waiting on your breakthrough, continue to pray. In chapter two, God

would have all men to be saved. Timothy, you are looking for a title but, Timothy, you have got to pray! There are no shortcuts to a breakthrough—you've got to pray. You need to choose godly leaders. Timothy this is not to be a one-man show. God has set men and women in that church to help you bear that load. In chapter 3 are guidelines. Timothy, be careful. Don't just lay your hands on anybody. Make sure they are living right and walking right. You choose godly leaders. Fourthly, he tells Timothy: Commit to a godly lifestyle. When you feel like everyone is against you when you feel tired, when you feel misunderstood that's the time you become vulnerable to an attack of the devil, the devil will come before you, but you if you are going to succeed in the kingdom of God, you've got to lead a holy life. He warns him in chapter 5 to be careful of the opposite sex. He said that people say gain is godliness but the love of money is the root of all evil, pursue godliness and holiness. Don't be just any kind of vessel, be sanctified for the Master's use. You have earned the right to leave when you have a pure, godly life. He who has clean hands and a pure heart. Hear me my sisters and brothers, none of us are exempt from the attack of the devil, he would still like to trip you up, you don't have to fall! You can stand! Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world! I didn't plan to stop here. Brother General Overseer, I'm signing too many revocation forms where people are compromising. Don't do it! If you surrender to the Lamb, you will be free. Let the Lord do a cleansing work, don't ever compromise don't ever let down. Until you are cleansed, you will continue to live in chains. If you surrender to the life-cleansing blood of the Lamb, you will be free indeed. I feel the presence of the Holy Spirit in this house tonight. Lift up your hands and let the Lord do a cleansing work. Paul to Timothy: Connect with your calling, continue in prayer, choose godly leaders, and connect with a life style of purity and holiness. You've just got to keep on keeping on. Sometimes you've just got to suck it up Timothy be like a farmer that sows the seed and works the soil. Timothy, don't ever give up. Connect with your calling, don't ever give up; it's not about you. It's all about Jesus. That's what he points out in chapter 3 verse 14. The purpose of the pillars is to hold up the house. My job is not to build my kingdom. My job is to hold up the truth of the living God. Timothy get your eyes off of yourself get your eyes on Jesus. Sometimes, we have to be reminded it is all about Him.

When we read books, we find sometimes it doesn't say the same thing this Bible says about Jesus. He talks about the different theories of Jesus. Magician, sage, one god among many, one of many incarnations, divine avatar, an angel, engaged the powers of mother earth. But you know what? The Jesus of this book, the Bible, He was more than just a good man or an incarnation, or an angel, or a teacher, he was more than all of that! He was God manifest in the flesh. In the beginning was the Word. The Word was God. All things were made by Him. God has highly exalted Him. Every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord. He is the way, the truth, and the life! He is Jesus! He is more than an angel. The angels

saw Him and worshiped Him. At His birth, during His ministry, after His death. And they worshiped Him. Preached to the nations; believed on in the world. And it also says, taken up to glory. I read that, Bishop Clements, some time ago and it just stuck out—taken up to glory I thought, how long has it been since I preached about His ascension? I preached about His birth and life and death, but I don't preach about His ascension. I was convicted. I got to thinking, "What would it be like to be Jesus as he was rising up toward heaven?" I'm sure there was an upward look. I believe he probably saw the angels, the cherubim making preparations for the soon coming King. The Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your head. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, He is this King of Glory. Look at my hands, look at my side. Jesus was going up through principalities. What did he see when He looked around on His way up? He saw the prince of Persia, prince of darkness, and principalities. When Jesus was on the cross, He spoiled principalities. Now there is no stronghold. There are no principalities that can hold us back. He probably looked down. He saw that handful of disciples, that handful He told to take the Gospel to the world. He must have looked through time and saw a body called the Church of God. He saw the nations. He looked around and said, "I'm not going to leave you comfortless, I'm not going to give you a Great Commission and not give you power, the same Holy Spirit that overshadowed Mary, the same Holy Spirit that came on the day of Pentecost. I'm going to send the Holy Spirit to you and the works that I do, you will do also and more." Just before He went out of sight, He said, "Oh yeah, I will be back!" My sisters and my brothers that are thirsty, dry, crying for a breakthrough, the Lord said, "I'm not through with you yet!" Cancer will not have the last word! Connect with your calling, continue in prayer, commit to a life of holiness, keep going when you don't feel like it and remember, it's all about Jesus! Would you stand? Lift your hands high up! Let's open our lips and praise Him from our hearts. (Congregation began to pray.) I feel a refreshing here tonight. I feel a renewal. I believe God wants to do a miraculous work. I realize most if not all don't know me. Some, I've not had the privilege to meet you. I believe there are pastors, there are evangelists who have been going through a dry, painful, thirsty journey. Nights have been long. You have felt all alone. It feels like you are walking through a desert. I believe the Lord has a refreshing for you tonight. God knows my heart. I'd never embarrass you for anything in the world, but I want to be obedient. Pastor, evangelist, wife of a minister, educator, missionary, Christian, if you need a refreshing, I want you to come down here tonight. We are going to allow the Holy Spirit to give you a refreshing tonight. The Lord says to you tonight, "You don't have to walk through this anymore. I know where you are." God has something for you tonight. When you are as close as you can get, raise your hands and begin to praise Him.

9:25 p.m.—Bishop Williams begins to pray for the delegates.

Sunday Morning

August 3, 2014

9:00 a.m.—Bishop David Browder, General Presbyter of Asia, Australia and Oceania, opened session.

9:03 a.m.—The Northeast Region USA Worship Team sang, “Jesus Hold My Hand.”

9:07 a.m.—Bishop Browder returned to the podium and introduced the session theme, “Servants Together.” He led directed prayers for families, churches, leaders, overseers, and International Offices personnel.

9:30 a.m.—The Northeast Region USA Worship Team sang, “On Christ the Solid Rock I Stand.”

9:33 a.m.—Amber Payne did countdown connection. William Lamb talked about Lee University.

9:39 a.m.—Next guest with Amber Payne, Shaun McKinley, spoke about Pentecostal Theological Seminary.

9:43 a.m.—Bishop Endecott came to podium and introduced the overseer of Korea, Jung Min Lee. The youth of Korea had a presentation first.

9:45 a.m.—Young lady from Korea introduced song that was played by traditional Korean instruments, as well as five young people on cymbals, drums, and gong.

9:50 a.m.—Message by Jung Min Lee, overseer of Korea.

10:30 a.m.—The Young Harvest Choir ran to the stage. They sang, “Great Are Your Ways,” “You’re a Great God” and “If the Lord Said It.”

10:45 a.m.—Bishop Endecott recognized the services of Bishop Scott and Brenda Gillum, who served as liaison for the General Presbyters.

10:55 a.m.—Cathy Payne recognized churches for their mission giving.

For Harvest Partners “Mission Giving”

1–50 Membership: Hagansport COGOP in Talco, TX—Pastor William Fred Henry, Jr.

51-100 Membership: Cincinnati COGOP in Cincinnati, OH—Pastor Edwin Eugene Wilson

Over 100 in Membership: Altavista COGOP in Altavista, VA—Pastor Wayne L. Murphy

For Harvest Partners “Project Giving”

1-50 Membership: Ada COGOP in Ada, OK—Pastor Walter Kendell Martin

51-100 Membership: Mount Hope COGOP in Mount Hope, AL—Pastor James M. Ramsey

Over 100 in Membership: Salisbury COGOP in Salisbury, MD—Pastor Gary A. Smith

One Child Fund Giving

1-50 Membership: Coeburn COGOP in Coeburn, VA—Pastor John Jackson Hamm

51-100 Membership: Crab Orchard COGOP in Crab Orchard, TN—Pastor Terry E. Swaw

Over 100 in Membership: Salisbury COGOP in Salisbury, MD—Pastor Gary A. Smith

Overall Mission Giving

1-50 Membership: Marion COGOP in Marion, OH—Pastor Randall Scott Adams

51-100 Membership: Crab Orchard COGOP in Crab Orchard, TN—Pastor Terry E. Swaw

Over 100 in Membership: Northview COGOP in Roanoke, VA—Pastor James Milton Atkins

Honorable Mention in Overall Mission Giving

1-50 Membership: Brooklyn COGOP in Brooklyn, NY—Pastor Uzziah B. Cooper, Sr.

51-100 Membership: Westmoreland COGOP in Westmoreland, TN—Pastor Bary Nelson Ray

Over 100 in Membership: Breezewood COGOP in Fayetteville, NC—Pastor Bill Vines, Jr.

11:15 a.m.—Bishop Paul Holt expressed appreciation to Wade Patterson for his services as Heritage Ministries Coordinator.

11:17 a.m.—Bishop David and Rosita Bryan commended Trevor and Aileen Reid for their service to International Youth Ministries.

11:21 a.m.—Bishop Masilela honored George Asante-Boateng.

11:23 a.m.—Bishop Endecott came back to the podium to honor Wallace Pratt, stepping down as Biblical Doctrine and Polity chairman.

11:26 a.m.—Bishop Browder honored Robert Judah Paul (Malaysia overseer) and Runamar Estan (Pakistan overseer).

11:28 a.m.—Bishop Feliz honored Confessor Batista and Sister Batista for their service to Puerto Rico.

11:30 a.m.—Bishop Endecott honored Tony Caralambous for his service to Greece and Michael Caralambous for his service to Cypress and Israel.

11:33 a.m.—Bishop Clements came to the platform to honor four overseers who are transitioning out. Called Brother and Sister (Harold) Parker to the stage. Also honored Cervin McKinnon, Joey Garcia, and Bishop Serpas.

11:35 a.m.—Bishop Vidal honored Bishop Victor Parraga (Ecuador), overseer who retired last year.

11:36 a.m.—Bishop Martin honored Bishop Elgarnet B. Rahming, overseer of Bahamas who retired last year.

11:40 a.m.—The General Presbyters and the General Overseer recognized the services of Randall E. Howard, former General Overseer.

11:44 a.m.—Bishop Endecott mentioned those who had passed away and directed everyone to notice the Memorial Exhibit that was set up in the hallway.

11:47 a.m.—Northeast Region USA returned and sang, “Jesus Be the Center.”

11:50 a.m.—Bishop Clements came to the podium and introduced his wife, family, and office staff. He gave his closing remarks:

“This has been a powerful assembly: anointed praise team, mass choir, wow! Singers have led us into worship, giving God the highest praise. We have experienced the freedom of the Spirit. Many cleansed, baptized in the Holy Spirit. It is God who has done that. They will leave a different person than when they came. Our children and youth have been having assembly! God has been tremendous as He has moved. There is revival going on, a young harvest that is not going to stop with the closing session. Now, we have come to the closing session and you are

expecting to hear a challenge from me as your leader concerning the days ahead. I can tell you today it is my intention and I believe the intention of our leadership team from around the world to continue to promote and push forward with the core values that have been already established which are prayer, harvest, and leadership development. In addition to that, I want to present to you today a new, an old, a revolutionary, a Biblical, a mind-boggling idea for building the Church, for reaching the harvest. This plan has been tried and has proven that it will work. It is simple and anyone can do it: model Jesus and put Jesus Christ first!

“The Scriptures cry out that at the top, at the center, in the front, and underneath everything is Christ. He is not second choice, He is our only choice. He said, “Without Me, you can do nothing.” The most exciting journey that we could ever embark on as we leave this Assembly is to seek to keep adjusting and readjusting to Christ and His ‘firstness.’ Before we do anything else, we must learn Christ. The New Testament does not start in Acts. Until you go back and read Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, then listen to Jesus’ teaching, modeling, mentoring, and disciplining, you won’t know how to act.

“It is not that we are not busy working for the Lord. We may be working more than we ever worked before, preaching more, visiting more but the question is, what are we accomplishing? After Christ’s ascension, there was a period of some 10 days that the new church Jesus had established came together, not one person was healed, not one sermon was preached, and not one lesson was taught. They had something else to do, and that was to wait on God until they were empowered from on high and had His direction. The Book of Acts has 28 chapters, but only 27 are “action” chapters. First, there is one chapter of dead stop! And without that waiting and seeking Him, there would have been no Pentecost, no ministry, and no Book of Acts. There are seasons when the people of God must stop and seek deliberately to put Him first, to give Him our time and attention, to seek His mind and His empowering before we proceed with other activities.

“We talk about desiring to see the Church return to the Book of Acts with the outpouring of Pentecost, but I believe we must go further than that and return and revive the ministry demonstrated in the life of Jesus in the Gospel accounts and seek to become like Him if we are to fulfill our commission today. Jesus did not just say to people, ‘I love you,’ but He sacrificed Himself upon the cross to show that love. He did not just say to the people in need, ‘I’m concerned about you,’ but He looked for ways to minister to their needs. He broke with tradition, He was criticized and falsely accused, but He said “It is not the whole that need the physician, but they who are sick. It is not the ninety and nine, but the one that is lost and I am come to do the will of Him that sent me.” In Luke 4:18, He said, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor, He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.” And that is what He did. Do

we have any greater mission than this? Is there anything more important in our ministry than this?

“Jesus did not wait for people to come to the Temple so He could minister to them but He went to the people and met them at the level of their needs. Some of the people would have never come to the Temple, and even if they had, they would not have been accepted by the Temple crowd nor would they have been allowed in the Holy Place. But Jesus came to save the lost; He came to break down the walls of partition. Is our mission not the same today?

“Jesus’ ministry on earth was different than that of the Pharisees, the rabbis, and the priests of that time. He ministered to individuals, to small groups, to multitudes on the mountainside, by the seashore, in the Temple, and wherever needs were to be found. He loved people and the startling fact is that He said the church was to be like Him.

“I want to point out some principles that Jesus taught and practiced which I believe are vital for us in our approach to the harvest. Jesus believed in the principal of investing. We practice the principal of preservation trying to preserve, maintaining what we have, and we have done a good job of that. Our stewardship of souls has been called into question by God, and we are called to repent. In Matthew 25, we have what we know as the Kingdom parables. They tell us about the kingdom of God. Verse 14 says, ‘For the Kingdom of Heaven is like . . .’ You could say the ‘King is like’ because the Kingdom is an extension of the King. Then it talks about a man traveling into a far country; but before he left, he called his servants and delivered his goods to them.

“He made an investment; to one, he gave five talents, to another, two, to another, one, and you know the story. Two of these were profitable investments and one was bad. There is always risk involved when you invest in something. Jesus, the most profitable servant in the history of the world, took one life—His own—and invested it all. He believed and operated on the principle that ‘Except a grain of wheat fall to the ground and dies it abideth alone, but if it dies it will bring forth much fruit.’ Seed in the ground is an investment. Jesus Christ invested His life, He risked it all.

“He took a handful of men and poured Himself into them. He taught them by example. He disciplined them. He invested in them the propagation of the Gospel. If they did not get it out to the world, it would not have gotten out. He risked the whole Gospel on fishermen, tax collectors, and common men whom other people would not have given a second look.

“If they will be what they ought to be and if they do what they ought to do, they will take the Gospel to the ends of the earth? What a risk! Jesus said to His little flock, I’m going to release control to you and I’m going to give my authority to you so that my kingdom can grow. I want to say right here if Jesus Christ could risk everything in people like you and me, then I should be willing to risk investing in someone else.

“Many churches are not growing today simply because leadership is not willing to release control. Let me make it clear: When the Lord releases control to you, it means you are more accountable because then you are more responsible. There are people in our church who have been touched by God for various ministries but we are afraid to release them because they might mess up or they might make us look bad. I must remind you that the Bible says all the disciples, except for just a few, at one time turned away from the Lord. Some denied Him, they betrayed Him, but He did not give up on them. When you invest in people, it is not always a guarantee, it is a risk.

“We have not always been what God wanted us to be, but for some reason, He has extended His mercy.

“When you sow seed in the ground, not all are going to produce, but if you sow enough seed, you will get a harvest. Some are going to discourage us and some are going to disappoint us but if we can learn to release it to Jesus, we will see an increase. God may want to work in different ways than we have been used to. Some unconventional approaches may be needed to reach this generation, but if God is not inspiring it, it will come to naught anyway. The bottom line is we can’t just sit here in our camp and die— we must do something now.

“God has always worked through human leadership. Ehud came into a time of confusion in Israel: he ordered Israel to ‘Follow Me’ and the resulting victory was eight years of peace. Gideon said “Watch me, follow my lead, do exactly as I do” and three hundred Hebrews defeated thousands of Midianites. Paul wrote “Follow me as I follow Christ.” The scary fact is a congregation will become like their leader. Intense spiritual leaders will raise us intense spiritual followers.

Jesus was aware of this fact and He chose a few men and poured Himself into them. He invested His life in them. It was a risk, but it paid off, because afterwards, wherever these men went, people saw Jesus in them, they perceived they had been with Him.

To invest yourself is the greatest risk of all. To invest yourself, you can’t play it safe. That is why a lot of people never invest themselves or their resources, they are afraid of the risk. Risk is not hurting this church today as much as playing it safe is! Fear of risk caused Israel to stop short of Canaan. We have compassed the mountain long enough!

On Thursday evening of this assembly, Dr. Lamar Vest stated that breakthrough for the Church of God of Prophecy actually began in 1994 when this church made a decision to turn to the harvest. I believe this to be true.

I would like to use a quote from a sermon Bishop Billy Murray preached in January 1994 entitled “Turning to the Harvest.” He said “We had our beginning amidst blazing evangelistic fervor which resulted in amazing growth from some 20 members in 1903 to 20,000 in less than 20 years. The assembly minutes in 1906 states the following: ‘After consideration of ripened fields, and open doors for evangelism this year, strong men wept and said they were not only willing but

really anxious to go.' It is, therefore, the sense of this meeting that we do our best to press into every open door this year and work with greater zeal and energy for the spread of the glorious Gospel of the Son of God than ever before."

Bishop Murray continued to say, "This evangelistic zeal that caused such growth in our early history was not backed up by a financial system, their trust was in God, not in a system." Finance has been on the heart of our people this last year and in this assembly, but I made a note while Bishop Varlack was preaching on Friday morning. I wrote, "This church does not have a financial problem, it has a heart problem."

When we get the heart problem fixed and get our vision set on the main thing and that is winning the lost to Jesus Christ, the resources will be there. Money follows ministry. A God that can take five loaves of bread and two fish and feed thousands of people can take what little we have and breathe on it and supply every need we have and more. I say it is time for grown men and women to weep again and get ready to press through every open door this year and work with a greater zeal and energy than ever before! This is God's year to act—breakthrough has begun. I am praying for God to change our little bitty mindsets and give us a vision of the lost souls. Let us go forth and do the work that Jesus Christ has called us to do. This is our time, our day—we must not miss what God is doing. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus our Lord!

It is time for us to weep again. This is God's year to act. Breakthrough has begun. We must not miss what God is doing. Let this mind be in you. Study, learn Christ. With the Holy Ghost with us we will do what He did when He walked this earth. God bless you.

12:15 p.m.—Bishop Clements left the podium.

12:16 p.m.—Song: "We Shall Behold Him" by LeAnn Hamby, Cleveland, Tennessee

12:19 p.m.—Brother Clements; "Somebody needs to praise the Lord! We shall behold Him! We are going to see Jesus, face to face! What a day that will be! To behold His face, so shall we ever be with the Lord. We are getting ready to make the appointments."

Section 4

Reports of Committees

Revision of Administrative Committee Report to the 98th International Assembly of the Church of God of Prophecy

Introduction

The Administrative Committee plays a critical role in establishing and maintaining the budgetary and policy frameworks needed to set fiscal priorities and allocate resources to facilitate the church's global ministries. This report provides a vehicle to discharge our duty to be accountable to God and the church as we pursue the church's vision and mission together.

As we reflect on the events that have transpired in the world and within the church over the past twenty-four months, we are grateful to God who has inspired faithful givers to provide for the diverse ministries flowing from the International Office. Our expression of appreciation to the pastors, members, and leaders at all levels of the church is sincerely given and cannot be overstated. Those who faithfully give their tithes and offerings to sustain global missions, inspirational leadership, leadership development, Christian education, administrative and harvesting ministries are to be highly commended. The spiritual gains experienced throughout this ministry network over the period under review are attributable to those whose vision and commitment to this movement lead them to invest their time and treasure in the expansion of Christ's kingdom. We echo the sentiments of the first century apostle as we thank God, ". . . for your fellowship (your sympathetic cooperation and contributions and partnership) in advancing the good news (the Gospel) from the first day [you heard it] until now" (Phil. 1:5, AMP).

Vision 2020

The Administrative Committee is convinced that the twenty-first century will see the continued advance of God's kingdom throughout the world. We are committed to broadening and deepening our response to the Spirit and His call to full implementation of the church's vision and mission embodied in Vision 2020. The church's inspirational leaders have affirmed, "We are committed to the strategic planning and implementation process until our vision and mission is fully realized and our core values woven throughout every level of our movement."

At the 97th International Assembly we shared comprehensive prayer, harvest and leadership development goals to stimulate concerted action by churches, districts, states, regions and nations, further aiding them in systematically working through the process of setting goals and objectives. The next critical steps taken in our Spirit-led strategic planning involved determining appropriate measures for the goals and benchmarks to assess progress in achieving key objectives, as

we march toward 2020. Review of current reporting procedures in light of data collection needs led to revision of some reports and adoption of new protocols for gathering important information to more accurately assess where we are, where we are striving to go, and the effectiveness of our methods.

Tomlinson Center

The Tomlinson Center Director and the Advisory Board were tasked with continuing to pursue the objective of filling a substantial void in our leadership development offerings—provision of educational pathways leading to a Bachelor’s degree in ministry/Bible for pastors and other church leaders. The previous strategy that made a campus-based residential model central for the short term was challenging for a number of reasons, the most significant of which were the lack of financial resources and the limited number of students involved in preliminary phases. The current approach is being shaped by an awareness of educational trends regarding non-traditional approaches to college campuses, accessibility to a larger number of pastors/emerging church leaders, cost effectiveness for students and state/regional/national/area offices, and a focus on training leaders for effective Pentecostal ministry in a global context. The Tomlinson Center Global Schools for Biblical and Ministerial Studies incorporates a modular model that uses church-owned facilities in diverse locations as extension sites. This approach will involve immediate geographical expansion throughout our global network but is founded on an existing Bible institute and Bible college framework established in California, that has been field tested over the last decade.

The Administrative Committee has sought to support the efforts of the Tomlinson Center despite a challenging funding environment by approving use of Tomlinson Center designated funds for its ongoing work. This strategy will be continued in FY2014–15 as expansion plans are implemented, bolstered by direct and regular accountability of the Tomlinson Center Director and Advisory Board to the Administrative Committee. We encourage churches to continue to give liberally through the channels approved at the 2012 Assembly to aid the Tomlinson Center in educating ministry leaders in North America and around the world.

ARKS Report

ARKS Inc. of Raleigh, North Carolina, performed an extensive and exhaustive analysis of all International Office properties including the International Office complex, White Wing Publishing House, the former Tomlinson College campus, and Fields of the Wood, in 2010. In our report to the 97th International Assembly, we addressed the ARKS report and summarized the decisions made as a result of the report. The summary analysis and recommendations were made available to the field. The report noted the following:

- 1) In the current economic environment the church would be better served to renovate the existing International Office building over a three to five year period, as funds are available;
- 2) We would look to the field to deal with the ongoing budget deficit at Fields of the Wood. We would continue to maintain the park while monitoring the level of support;
- 3) A period of discernment was still needed to determine the best use for developing the Tomlinson College property.

In light of the report and subsequent decisions, we continue to make repairs and upgrades to the International Office complex, as funds are available. The budget deficit at Fields of the Wood continues and the need for ongoing support is essential. The Tomlinson Center Advisory Board has developed a strategic plan to offer bachelor degree level programs that will serve pastors, ministers and emerging leaders throughout the world via a network of extension sites/schools. A portion of the Tomlinson College property can be used to accommodate such a site, although a residential component may not be possible in the short term.

Properties

The International Offices provides oversight for church-owned properties in Cleveland, Tennessee and Murphy, North Carolina including Fields of the Wood and related historical sites, the International Office Complex, and the former Tomlinson College. Our properties represent valuable assets and potential revenue streams. Good stewardship demands that we make the most of the resources that God has given. The Administrative Committee is exploring options for developing and enhancing our properties in an effort to generate funds for ministry and operations. The Committee is not contemplating the sale of the Tomlinson College property.

Child, Youth, and Worker Protection Policy

The fallout from instances of abuse and neglect of children and youth by individuals employed by churches, religious non-profits and other entities continues to be widely reported in local, national and international media. The protection of children from abuse and neglect is one of our most profound convictions. The Administrative Committee articulated and approved the Child, Youth, and Worker Protection policy more than two years ago for all leadership levels in every church and ministry, regardless of size or location, in support of our conviction. The adoption of this policy by all churches, youth camps, family camps, and other ministries involving children and youth throughout the Church of God of Prophecy, is imperative. We encourage all of our ministers and ministries that touch children and youth in any way to be proactive in fostering a safe environment for the children and youth entrusted to us. For more information regarding the implementation of

this policy, please contact your state/regional/national office or download a copy of the policy from the International Office website, www.cogop.org/resources.

Harvest Partner Level One

From its earliest beginnings to the present, the Church of God of Prophecy has embraced the Acts 1:8 mandate to spread the gospel from wherever we are planted to everywhere else in a bold, intentional, and sustained manner. At the center of our movement's approach to global missions is the support of evangelism, church planting, leadership development, discipleship and cross cultural missions through the work of indigenous national leaders who provide inspirational leadership in their nations. The expansion of this movement into over one hundred and thirty-three countries on six continents has been made possible through the faithful mission giving of churches in North America, Central America, the Caribbean and increasingly, in other parts of the world as well. As many have given financially, evangelists, church planters and national workers have made great sacrifices to take the gospel to regions where others could never go. Harvest Partners Level One is the pool of funds that includes second Sunday mission offerings as well as donations given through the March and October mission drives. These funds support our national leadership in each country. Without this support, national leaders will be unable to spearhead the aggressive outreach that expands the gospel throughout the world. We are grateful to those who have given faithfully and encourage every local church and pastor to participate in giving to missions through Harvest Partner Level One.

Malaria Offering

Our former General Overseer, Bishop Randall Howard, was inspired to call on our churches to support a global effort to eradicate malaria. Many churches responded, raised funds in many creative ways and gave \$196,325 potentially saving the lives of thousands of children. We would like to express our gratitude to all who gave so generously.

ECFA Membership

The ECFA (Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability) is an agency that provides accreditation to leading nonprofit organizations that faithfully demonstrates compliance with established standards for financial accountability, fundraising and board governance. It was announced to the 97th International Assembly that the International Offices had received accreditation from the ECFA. Accreditation is reevaluated every year and we are pleased to announce that we have been approved each of the past two years. ECFA accreditation conveys a seal indicating the highest levels of financial integrity and responsibility. We would like to encourage our US State/Regional offices and local churches to explore pursuing ECFA accreditation.

Liability Insurance

This committee would like to encourage our local churches and intermediate offices to keep church liability insurance policies up-to-date. Since liability needs for churches go well beyond physical properties and buildings, we would recommend obtaining coverage from companies that specialize in insuring churches. Such coverage should include property and accident protection, malpractice, as well as coverage for ongoing ministry activities/personnel within the church. We realize that provision for insurance coverage can look different from nation to nation, but we feel it is prudent to take the most appropriate measures to protect our ministries wherever we are in the world.

Balanced Budget

The Administrative Committee has oversight of the International Office budget. Proactive steps and economic conditions have led to an 11 percent reduction in the International Office budget since the 2010–2011 budget year. However, we are pleased to report a balanced budget for both the 2012–2013 and 2013–2014 fiscal years.

Closing & Appreciation

These past two years have presented challenges never faced by our movement. The Administrative Committee would like to give praise to our great and sovereign God for His direction and strength during this time. We are thankful that in spite of these unique challenges, we remain focused on Vision 2020. Further, we want to acknowledge the leadership of our General Presbyters and, in particular, Bishop Sam Clements, who in the absence of a General Overseer, has served as chairman of the Administrative Committee. It is an honor and privilege to serve this global body as members of the Administrative Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sam Clements, Chairman

Don Brock

David Browder

David Bryan

Clayton Endecott

Benjamin Feliz

Paul Holt

Clayton Martin

Stephen Masilela

E. C. McKinley

Aileen Reid

Brian Sutton

Gabriel Vidal

Biblical Doctrine and Polity Committee Statement for Affirmation to the 98th International Assembly

The Pursuit of the Holy God: Answering the Call of the Holy Spirit

Introduction

The subject of sanctification and holiness is of primary importance in our walk with God. As we approach this doctrine, we do so with the modest confession that we will not seek to be dogmatic or condescending toward hundreds, if not thousands, of other expositors, theologians, and pastors who have sought further light on this spiritual relationship. From the apostles and early church fathers, to the Reformers and Holiness movement, each sincere generation of scholars and believers have furthered our understanding and pursuit of holiness, “. . . without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14 KJV). We wish to also confess that we want this document to be more of a call to holiness, rather than just a detailed exegetical study. At the end of the day, this study will demonstrate a need for each believer, as well as the church, to strengthen our resolve to pursue the Holy Spirit in our quest to be a holy people. This mission must be more than a scholarly or doctrinal exercise. Sanctification requires a renewal of actively seeking to make welcome the power of the Holy Spirit, rather than limiting His work to that of a one-time experience. Indeed, we must commit ourselves to become maturing children of God who fulfill the exhortation of Paul: “Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ . . .” (Philippians 1:27 NKJV). Therefore, we recommend to the 98th International Assembly that the following document be held in balance with any past or present declarations or rulings concerning sanctification and holiness:

The Bible on Sanctification

Hallowed be your name

“Hallowed be your name,” a phrase that has been spoken innumerable times, for thousands of years, in hundreds of languages. Yet these simple words contain the core of God’s plan. This plan encapsulates God’s design for Israel, the sacrificial system, the cross and Christ’s suffering. It even deals with our lives now and hints of the future that is still to come. This plan is all about the holiness of God. It is here in a daily calling for God’s name to be holy that one flees from hypocrisy, legalism, or cheap grace, and instead hopes that God’s holiness is clearly reflected into his or her world.

During the most well-known sermon of Jesus' ministry in Matthew 6:9, He taught the crowd and his disciples how to pray. There are multiple requests that are to form this prayer, "your kingdom come," "give us this day" and others. However, the one which Jesus encourages us to pray first and foremost is "hallowed be your name." It is a request that the name of God be made holy,¹ ". . . a prayer that he will bring people to a proper attitude toward him. It expresses an aspiration that he who is holy will be seen to be holy and treated throughout his creation as holy."²

The importance for the study of holiness is rooted in the truth that holiness is not primarily focused on humanity. It is first and foremost rooted in the Holy One who is distinct and separate in person and morals from His creation. It is this holy God who calls His people to a life separated for his service and separated from sin. This prayer for God's name to be holy connects with Ezekiel 39:27 where God states that He will show Himself holy. Israel had profaned God's name through the practice of idolatry and God had sent them into exile. However, the exile had also caused the surrounding nations to ridicule the character of God. YHWH would not allow this derision of His name to remain. He would restore His people to the Promised Land in order that He would be seen as holy.

When I have brought them back from the nations and have gathered them from the countries of their enemies, I will show myself holy through them in the sight of many nations (Ezekiel 39:27 NIV).

Human's perception of God's holiness is important to God and is central to our own holiness. It is in recognizing His holiness that we can clearly see ourselves and our deep need for Him, as well as the depth to which He calls us. This is where the study of holiness must begin, in the first pages of Scripture, where we witness God as He reveals Himself as holy.

The Holy God

The revelation of holiness is illuminated when Moses is drawn to a bush that is burning, yet is not consumed:

Then he said, "Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." And he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God (Exodus 3:5-6 ESV).

This encounter with God begins a flood of revelatory moments where Yahweh reveals His holy nature in contrast to the gods of Egypt and the other pagan religions. Pagan worship was a complex life of appeasement and bribery to manipulate the gods for their favor. These gods were amoral at best and often immoral as Baal, the Canaanite fertility god. Therefore, the problem with worship was not merely idol worship but the perception of the morality of God and His relationship with creation. God was perceived to be too much like us, and a part of us. It is into this worldview that God tells Moses to remove his sandals because

he is in a place that has been made holy by God's presence. At this burning bush theophany, God begins to teach Moses an important lesson concerning His holy nature. Moses' lesson: there is a distinct danger in being in close proximity to God personally without being adequately prepared.

This passage, with its 'come-no-further' command, is remarkably parallel to that of Exodus 19:9-25. In this passage a series of conditions of sanctification, procedures that confer holiness and distance (e.g., "Put limits around the mountain and set it apart as holy" [v. 23]), are imposed upon the Israelites. Thus what the people would eventually have to learn from God through him, Moses now began to learn from God.³ In this first moment of God's self-revelation, Moses hides from God out of fear of what He might see. Moses now understands that glaring into the holiness of God is a life-changing experience that is both comforting and fearful simultaneously. This is indeed a crisis experience in the life of Moses that transformed his life and heightened his own awareness of God.

In Exodus 19, this expanding revelation of God's holiness grows as God now confronts the Hebrew people with the revelation of His holiness. The people are encamped in the same mountainous area in which Moses had previously experienced God's holiness. They have just recently experienced the delivery of the Passover and crossing of the sea. The defeat of the Egyptian gods through the plagues has been powerful and complete. Although God has expressed His power, He now reveals His holiness at Mt. Sinai. The people are commanded to sanctify or consecrate themselves. They are to wash their clothes. They are to put limits which neither man nor animal are to cross. They are not to run into God's presence haphazardly. As Moses was called to remove his sandals, the Israelites are preparing to meet the holy God:

When the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain in smoke, they trembled with fear. They stayed at a distance and said to Moses, "Speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God speak to us or we will die." Moses said to the people "Do not be afraid. God has come to test you, so that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning." The people remained at a distance, while Moses approached the thick darkness where God was (Exodus 20:18-21 NIV).

Just as Moses turned away in fear at the bush, the people are overwhelmed by the presence of a God that they could not control or manipulate. They are confronted by the holy God and they too realized the transforming power of the holiness of God upon Moses.

The Holiness of God

The question is raised then of God's holiness. What exactly is meant by the phrase the holy God? Isaiah 6 is just one of many occasions where individuals are confronted with intimate experiences of the holy God.

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the ho use was filled with smoke (Isaiah 6:1–4 NIV).

Isaiah states that he saw the Lord. This event is transformational in the prophet's life. The whole experience of seeing the Lord (adona—the sovereign one)⁴ shakes him to the very core of his humanity. In this moment Isaiah is confronted with the vast separation between the Most Holy God and himself as a sinful man. Rudolf Otto describes this type of experience as the "awful mystery" where we are drawn to God and yet desire to run from Him.⁵

Isaiah describes in His vision that God is "high and lifted up." This phrase points to God's transcendence. This is how holiness as 'separate from' reveals God's nature. God is completely separate and distinct from that which He created. It is coming to face this completely separate reality that Isaiah, Moses, the children of Israel and later Peter all experience the 'awful mystery' of God (Matthew 17:4). It is in this moment that Isaiah hears the seraphim cry out, "Holy, Holy, Holy." All that his mouth can utter are the words "woe is me."

This transcendence means that God is separate from creation in every way. He is beyond time and space; these are mere components of His creation. In God, there is no sense of need, as all of the rest of creation experiences. He is complete in His own Trinitarian nature. There is infinite moral distance from sinful man, as it is impossible for God to be tempted by sin (James 1:13). Even His reason and purposes exceed our own as expressed in Isaiah;

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts (Isaiah 55:8–9 ESV).

This is the holy God by whom Isaiah was confronted and cried, "woe is me." He transcends or is completely separate from us in every way. He is 'completely other and higher' than we can imagine. Isaiah had a crisis experience by encountering a holy God, and was forever changed by this event in his life. Similarly, at the miracle of the great catch of fish recorded in Luke 5, Peter recognizes that this teacher, Jesus is more than he appears to be. He is confronted by the greatness of Jesus and replies "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" (Luke 5:8 NIV). Even cloaked in human flesh the recognition of the holy nature of Jesus was transformational.

When people were confronted with this God who is holy, whether it was a burning bush, vision of God's throne room, or being with Him in a boat, they have been

changed. The recognition of the transcendent God resulted in these individuals being more desirous to be separated from the corruptions of their world and ready to follow the mission that God had for their lives.

Expanded View of Holiness

This revelation of God as holy then begins to impact the understanding of God's call for His people to be holy. Yahweh begins with an expression of His purpose for the deliverance of this people from the slavery of Egypt:

Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel (Exodus 19:5–6 NIV).

They had the privilege and responsibility of being God's treasured possession among all people. This presented new ideas to this group which had grown up in a polytheistic world. Yahweh was revealing himself as the holy God over the whole earth. This was very different from the polytheistic worldview which perceived gods as over geographic areas, or particular elements such as the sun, fertility, storms and seas. However this unique relationship had purpose, that they might be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. The challenge to be "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" represented the responsibility inherent in the original promise to Abraham in Gen. 12:2, 3 (NIV): "You will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you . . . and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." Priests stand between God and humans to help bring the humans closer to God and to help dispense God's truth, justice, favor, discipline, and holiness to humans. Israel was called to such a function.⁶

Israel as God's treasured possession would have the responsibility to exhibit holiness in her worship and ethical lifestyle. This responsibility was not for the religious elite, but corporately each person in the nation was to portray holiness. This Mt. Sinai event begins to give understanding of the term "holy" (*kdsh*) in the Old Testament. All forms, adjective, noun or verb, of "*kdsh*" carry the idea of being set apart or consecrated.⁷ In its verbal forms it is variously translated: to be set apart, consecrate, be holy, dedicate, purify. In its form as a noun "*kdsh*" it is translated: "consecrated or consecrated thing, dedicated or dedicated gifts, holiness, holy, holies, holy ones, holy portion, holy things, most holy, most holy place, most holy things, sacred, sacred things, sacrifices, sanctuary, set apart."⁸ It is in this way that things were made holy such as the tabernacle or its furnishing, priests and their vestments. They were holy in that they were set apart from the profane for the purposes designed by God. Ultimately people were set apart from the profane for God's purposes.

Unfortunately Israel did not follow through with their call to be holy. Rarely did they give up worship of Yahweh; they just included the worship of the gods of the

nation's surrounding them. They rejected their call to be set apart from those nations; there was very little difference between them and the surrounding nations in their worship or morality. The prophets often describe this sin with the graphic term "Israel played the whore." Ezekiel 16:16 (ESV) is one such example: "You took some of your garments and made yourself colorful shrines, and on them you played the whore . . ."

This failure to be a holy nation is what propels God to reject both Judah and Israel. Judah experiences 70 years of exile as punishment at the hands of the Babylonians. Yet as this punishment is about to begin Jeremiah reveals a very different future for God's people, a time when the law will be known and followed by God's people:

"The time is coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the Lord. "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the Lord. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people." (Jeremiah 31:31–33 NIV).

It is with this hope that we read the New Testament. Although the language has changed to Greek, the noun holy (*hagios*), and its derivatives translate: holy, pure, saints, and sanctification while the verb form (*hagiazō*) translates: "to make holy, consecrate and sanctify."⁹ The Old Testament revelation of God's holiness and His plan for our sanctification carries over and even expands in the New Testament. Peter, drawing on the Old Testament, encourages Christians to holiness: "But as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy'" (1 Peter 1:15–17 ESV). Even God's design for His people to express corporate holiness is brought into the New Testament. But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. "Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy" (1 Peter 2:9 NIV).

The purpose of this corporate holiness is driven by its missional nature, that we might be priesthood for others and to declare the praises of God. Jesus expressed in John 17:17 that His design was to sanctify them, 'set them apart' in order that He could send them into the world. The question remains, will this new people of God take up the challenge of holiness? The difference now is that God will not be coming in a bush or a storm. They will know the holy God, up-close and personal. He will walk with them, eat with them and call them to follow His holy life.

Matthew 16:24, 25, Mark 8:34–38, and Luke 9:23–27 each record an event where Jesus describes what it means to be one of His followers. Mark records it like

this: “And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, ‘If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.’” (Mark 8:34 ESV).

These words of Jesus are instructive for a discussion of holiness. Would His disciples choose to reflect the holy lifestyle of Jesus? Here disciples are called to deny (*aparnesastho*—aorist imperative) themselves take up (*airo*—aorist imperative) a cross and follow (*akolutho*—present imperative) Jesus. Each verb is imperative, which should be translated as commands to action on the part of the followers. Matthew, Mark and Luke use a present imperative verb for ‘follow’. While the aorist imperative denotes a single act of denying (crisis experience)—for today, the present imperative often denotes a continuous act of following (a process)—day after day.¹⁰ Luke goes further and includes the idea of continuous action with his inclusion of the word “daily” in the command to take up one’s cross. So even in this primary passage in the gospels we see an emphasis on the first moment someone denies themselves, and takes up their cross (crisis experience) as well as concern for continuing a life of following Jesus (a process). To deny one’s self is “a rejection of a life based on self-interest and self-fulfillment.”¹¹

This is similar to Paul’s “consider yourself dead” in Romans 6:11. Cross bearing meant that we were prepared to give up our life for our Lord as He has already given his for us. Following Jesus meant more than a mere physical tagging along with Jesus’ group. It meant a following of his words, which represented his lifestyle and mission. In these passages Jesus is concentrating on the actions which man is required to accomplish. There is denying/lifting a cross following that must take place within the lives of Jesus disciples. With these words of Jesus in mind, we can turn to the rest of the New Testament to see how other writers expressed these concepts of the life of holiness.

Sanctifying Work of the Cross

Throughout the book of Romans, Paul shows the human condition under the dominion of sin. In Romans 3:23, (NIV) he states that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Under this reality are included both Jews and Gentiles. In chapter Romans 1:18–32, Paul describes the life of sin in the Gentiles that represented the former lifestyle of many of the Roman believers, as one of complete depravation and reversal of the natural customs established by God in Creation. In Romans 5:12 (ESV), he states that “sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned .” This means that no human has escaped the power and dominion of sin.

Paul says that sin enslaves (*douleuein*) (6:6), exercises dominion (*basileuto*) (6:12), and rules (*kyrieusei*) over man (6:14). Sin entered the world through one man, Adam, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men (5:12). This is what Christ came to deal with. Richard E. Howard in his book *Newness of Life*,

says that “sin has been defined as self-delusion, self-reliance, listening to oneself instead of listening to God, man’s self-assertion in rebellion against God, turning toward oneself and making oneself the center of his self.”¹²

Through sin, man changed the sovereignty of God over him and made himself sovereign over himself. The consequence of changing the sovereignty of God for the sovereignty of the self is that man is now under the dominion of sin and death, being unable to free himself of its tyranny. What is the tyranny of life dominated by sin? In Romans 5:6–10, Paul portrays the human condition and the salvific work of God:

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life (Romans 5:6–10 NRSV).¹³

When Paul describes the condition of man under the power of sin, he describes him as weak, ungodly, sinner and God’s enemy. Man was morally weak, constantly breaking God’s laws, and irreverent to Him. As an enemy of God, man was doomed to God’s wrath, and was actively fighting against His kingdom. Under the dominion of sin, man was powerless to change his condition. But God did not leave us there. The cross of Christ changed the human condition from helplessness and hopelessness to hope and redemption.

In Romans 6, we find Paul’s assurance that the believer can live a life of holiness. To demonstrate that, he states that the believer is identified with Christ through his death and resurrection (vv. 1–14), and that now the believer is a slave to Christ and righteousness (vv. 15–23). Paul considers the new condition of the believer recognizing that now the believer has “died to sin” (v. 2), has been “baptized into Christ” (v. 3), has been “baptized into his death (v. 3), “buried with Him through baptism” (v. 4), his old self has been “crucified so that the body of sin might be rendered powerless” (v. 6), and the believer has “died with Christ” (v. 8).

Continuing in Romans 6:6, Paul moves from death and burial through baptism, to death of our old self through crucifixion. Crucifixion is an internal act of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer, through which the old man is nailed to the cross and rendered powerless, so that he can walk in newness of life. Paul declares that we know that our old self (man) was crucified with Christ, so that the body of sin might be destroyed (made powerless, unproductive), that is, to invalidate the old self, so we might no longer be enslaved to sin but live a victorious life. It is interesting to note that the verb *katargethe* (might be destroyed) is in the subjunctive mood, implying expectation of destruction.

Paul continues developing his argument stating that whoever has died (past tense) is freed (perfect: ongoing results)¹⁴ from sin (v. 7). Whoever has been crucified with Christ is no longer under the dominion of sin. This death produced a freedom that happened in the past but its effect is felt at the present, therefore the person continues being set free from the slavery of sin. The death of the old man produces freedom from sin, so we are not enslaved to sin.

Romans 6: 8–11 deal with the fact that Christ died to sin once and for all. His death was a definitive one, making only one sacrifice. Now he lives to God. Paul states that if we have died with Christ, we will also live with him. That means that in the same way that death no longer has dominion over him; death no longer has dominion over us. The same way that Jesus was raised from the dead, now living to God is the same life that we are called to live. Paul concludes this section giving an imperative call to consider ourselves “dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.” This verb “to consider ourselves” (present imperative), encourages the believer to an ongoing, habitual process. Before, we were dead to God and alive to sin, but now through Christ we have experienced a reversal of the disobedience of Adam, being alive in Christ. In verses 12 through 14, Paul states that as a result of being dead to sin, but alive to God, we have to live according to what we are in Christ. Under this new condition, we must not let sin exercise dominion in our mortal bodies, to make us obey their passions (v. 12). In this section, Paul uses a series of imperatives, two negatives and one positive, to tell us what not to do and what to do as people dead to sin and alive to God.¹⁵

In the first imperative “do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies,” Paul uses the word *basileuto*, which means ‘be a king, control completely.’ If sin is our king, he will exert his control over us to make us obey the passions (lust, deep desires) of our bodies. The second imperative Paul uses is “no longer present” (*peristaneti*: ‘cause to be in place, provide’) your members to sin as instruments (the term refers to a soldier’s weapons) of wickedness (*adikias*: unrighteousness). We are not to make provision for our members to be instruments of unrighteousness. Our physical body is the battleground for temptation. The third imperative is in the positive, and is a command to “present ourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, presenting our members to God as instruments of righteousness.” Paul closes this section assuring that sin will not rule over us, since we are not under law but under grace.¹⁶

Romans 6:18 declares: “. . . and that you, having been set free from sin” (aorist passive participle: the believer has been freed both from the penalty of sin [justification] and the tyranny of sin [sanctification]), “have become slaves of righteousness” (aorist passive indicative: the believer is freed from sin to serve God).¹⁷ This righteousness leads us to holiness (v. 19). This means that the work of the cross has accomplished both justification and sanctification for us.

Subsequently, we must see salvation in different terms than we have often used with no malicious intent. For instance, when a person is converted or ‘born again,’ we often referred to this experience by saying the new believer is now saved. In reality, this is only the beginning of the Christian’s walk with God. Indeed, they have been converted, but the overarching dynamic of salvation comes through a spiritual journey that will not be completely perfected until all believers are changed (delivered) when they meet Christ in the air at His coming:

Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, “Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:50–58 NASB).¹⁸

The Work of the Holy Spirit in Sanctification

The new life in Christ—the result of the work of the cross—sets believers apart and consecrates them for the service of God. This work is immediate and the believer is said to be sanctified ‘positionally’. The work of sanctification continues, however, and must come to full actualization in the life of every believer. The work of God to bring believers to perfection is a cooperative effort that places responsibility on believers to respond appropriately to the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

The response, by necessity, begins with a sincere desire toward self-denial. Jesus admonished his followers saying, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me” (Mark 8:34, NRSV). It is evident that the cross that Jesus was referring to was prophetic of the sacrifice that he would eventually have to make. Jesus himself was sanctified (set apart) for God’s service, but it was realized by his obedience to the will of the Father. The positional aspect of sanctification requires nothing more than the believer’s surrender to Christ. The actualization, however, occurs through continual surrender and self-sacrifice. In Galatians 5:22 Paul describes the reality of the sanctified life as the product (fruit) of the Holy Spirit. The Christological aspects of sanctification are well appreciated and prominent in our doctrinal formulations. In 1 Corinthians 1:2 Paul referred to Corinthians as being “sanctified *in Christ Jesus* [emphasis added].” However, in many

cases, the Pneumatological aspects of sanctification have not been emphasized. The term sanctification of the Spirit (rather, the sanctifying work of the Spirit) is used by Paul several times in his writings. As part of the salvific work of God through Christ, the Holy Spirit effectuates the plan of salvation in the lives of believers. It is the Holy Spirit that sanctifies (sets us apart) and empowers believers to live sanctified (consecrated) lives. In 2 Thessalonians 2:13, Paul uses the term “sanctification *through the Spirit* [emphasis added]. The phrase here is a subjective genitive indicating that the Sanctification is wrought by the Holy Spirit. Peter expresses the same idea in 1 Peter 1:2 as he greets the believers that were scattered because of the persecution. He wrote, “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, **through sanctification** of the Spirit [emphasis added], unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.” (NRSV). It is clear from these two texts that there was a common understanding of the Holy Spirit as both the initial active agent in the work of sanctification and in the ongoing process of sanctification within the believer.

We must embrace as Pentecostals our biblical recognition that our Trinitarian theology recognizes the Holy Spirit as a lifetime influence within a believer’s life. We must never limit the scope of the Holy Spirit’s role in a linear fashion that sees him simply applying the finished work of the cross but unrelated to our daily walk toward holiness. As one Pentecostal scholar has observed: “More recent Trinitarian theology has moved significantly beyond the limitations of this linear approach to the involvement of the Trinity in salvation—in the direction of a more interactive (perichoretic and koinonic) model. Within this model, the Spirit’s role in the giving and sharing of life would be involved in both Christ’s accomplishment of righteousness and our participation in it, with no possibility of confining the Spirit to the subjective appropriation of an atonement that can be described quite well without the Spirit’s help.¹⁹ In reality we must realize that the work of the Holy Spirit in sanctification includes such ministrations as Spirit conviction, experiential transformation, and greater revelations of Christ, strength in our daily walk with God, as well as the infusion and growth of love toward others. Such work of the Holy Spirit is referred to by Jesus when speaking to the disciples about the work of the Comforter (*Paraklete*).

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove (convict) the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment; of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will show you things to come (John 16:7–13).

Although we usually define the sanctified life by the things we refrain from (outward activities), the sanctified life is more accurately pictured by the development of the fruit of the Spirit in our lives. The fruit of the Spirit highlights one side of the collaborative effort. The other side is represented by Paul's statement in Galatians 5:24 and deals with what believers have to do. "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh (*sarx*) with the affections and lusts." Paul then makes the declaration, "If we live (*zao*—to have true life and worthy of the name) in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. The phrase is better rendered as, "Such being your principle of life, adapt your conduct (walk) to it."²⁰

Similarly, Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 6:11, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Although Paul lists sanctification before justification in this litany of action, this in no way should be taken as any order of chronological importance. According to fact, the order would be justified, washed (baptism), sanctified; but as Ellicott justly remarks, "...in this epistle this order is not set forth with any studied precision, since its main purpose is corrective."²¹

In another instance Paul writes to the church at Colossae. He addresses the saints at Colossae as "God's chosen people, and holy (Colossians 3:12). As a result of the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, the believers are then commanded to "clothe yourself." The Greek for clothe (put on in the KJV) is *enduo* which means "to put on as a garment." The verb is in the aorist imperative, which indicates an immediate even urgent, effective action. What the believers are called 'to put on' is enumerated in the following list that Paul uses to contrast with what was 'put off' (Colossians 3:8). The garments which they were to 'put on' (make a part of their lives) were: a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and long-suffering.²² The connection between this text and Galatians 5:19–23 is evident.

In addition to the issues regarding the second coming of Jesus that caused some problems in the churches at Thessalonica, Paul addresses the pervasive problem of sexual immorality. In Thessalonica, besides the ordinary licentious customs of the Gentiles, immorality was fostered by the Cabeiric worship. "About the time of Paul, a political sanction was given to this worship by deifying the emperor as Cabeirus."²³

In 1 Thessalonians 4:1 Paul expresses the importance of believers' response to the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. He says, "We beseech you brethren and exhort you by the Lord." The intensity and the urgency of the apostle's concern are evident by the use of these two terms. The concern is that they obey the word that they "have received." The word instructed them on how they were to "please God." In verse 4 of the same chapter he writes, "For this is the will (*thelema*—refers to a wish, a strong desire, and the willing of some event) of God, even your sanctification (*hagiasmos*—literally means sanctification and includes the ideas of consecration, purification, dedication and holiness). The term *hagiasmos* is found

only in the Greek Bible and among ecclesiastical writers. It has the technical idea of consecration to a god or goddess that did not necessarily include the idea of holiness as we know it. A. T. Robertson observes that: In secular Greek *hagiasmos* conveyed the technical idea of consecration to a god or goddess that did not include holiness in life. So Paul makes a sharp and pointed stand here for the Christian idea of sanctification as being “the will of God” . . . as further explained by the . . . infinitive that ye abstain from fornication. Pagan religion did not demand sexual purity of its devotees. Your sanctification is literally, “your sanctifying.” Keep the cultural context in mind as you study this section. Remember that a major problem for the early church was maintaining sexual purity.²⁴

The call to sanctification (separation, consecration) in the life of the followers of Christ was to be qualitatively different from that of the pagan temple devotees. Their sanctification (in that context) was to be manifested in their abstinence from fornication and to “possess his vessel in sanctification and honor.” Although there is some controversy regarding the term “vessel” (whether it refers to the body or specifically to the wife), there is no doubt that Paul wanted them to know that God’s work of sanctification in their lives was to be reflected in their lifestyle. Although God’s sanctifying work was completed in Christ Jesus on the cross (past) and is being worked out by the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers (present), it is important to always keep in mind that there is always the future expectation of glorification (complete sanctification) at the coming of the Lord. This too will be a work of the Holy Spirit in the believer (I Cor. 15:52, 53). In the letter to the Thessalonians we see that the eschatological (end-time) perspective is always at the fore. The very God that sanctified them was going to preserve them until the end. In 1 Thessalonians 5:23 he writes, “And the very God of peace (a better rendering is the God of peace himself) sanctify (separate, consecrate, cleanse) you wholly (*holotelés*—perfect, complete in all respects). The term *holotelés* also has the meaning of consummation or end.²⁵ God’s sanctification (setting apart) of his people by the Holy Spirit was part of the eternal plan that was to be greater than any individual concern. God’s sanctifying work was to have a corporate aspect as the church, the body of Christ, reflects the glory of the holy God to the world.

Corporate Sanctification

From the inception of Christ’s ministry, when he “turned the water into wine” at Cana (John 2:1–11), there was an underlying recognition of the corporate responsibility to care for the welfare of others beyond one’s own personal agenda or comfort. While some might question such application, the Holy One was remarkable in His actions that were not necessary, yet they were beneficial to those around Him. In a similar vein, Paul in the closing passages of Romans, writes to the Jewish brethren in Rome to help them understand their corporate responsibility to behave themselves in such a way as to demonstrate to unbelievers

the holiness of Jesus Christ (Romans 14:13–15:6). Like Jesus, they are not to please themselves, but to deny even their rights so that others would see their conduct of peace and their love for one another that caused them to “glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (15:6). Corporate sanctification becomes more and more essential in a society inundated with self-centeredness and individualism; especially within cultures that give little or no testimony to Jesus Christ and His holy purpose of selflessness. In Ephesians 5:26, 27, it reads:

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of the water by the word so as to present the church to himself in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind—yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish (NRSV).

This section of Ephesians falls under the section known as the “Household Code.” Paul understood the sacred bond of marriage as a sanctifying relationship. The husband was set apart for the wife and vice versa. The husband’s love for his wife was to be mutually rewarding and sanctifying. The mutual love would be sanctifying love. Any disruption of this relationship was to be seen as sin. Paul understood the sanctifying work of Christ in this context. Christ loved the church and gave (*paradidomi*—to give into the hands of another) himself up for her. He did this in order to make her holy (sanctify). The word sanctify here is translated from the Greek, *hagiase*. The verb is used here in the aorist tense which indicates that it is a past completed event. Because of the sacrifice of Christ, the Ephesians were in fact sanctified. The text indicates their sanctification was accomplished through cleansing. The term cleansing is translated from *katharizo*, which means to cause something to become clean. In a spiritual sense, it means to purify from pollution and guilt of sin. In secular Greek *katharizo* occurs in inscriptions for ceremonial cleansing. This expression is not found anywhere else in the Pauline corpus. He emphasizes the corporate dimension by asserting that it is the church which is sanctified through Christ’s death.

In 1 Corinthians 1:2, Paul writes: “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours” (KJV).

By this opening verse in Corinthians, a person cannot fail to see that a fundamental problem with the Corinthian believers was the selfish attitude of the church members who desired their freedom above the well-being of others. Paul’s writings demonstrate his concern for both the individual and the corporate body. There is a distinctly corporate dimension to his thoughts. This dimension shows up when Paul writes that any act which harms an individual Christian is really an affront to Christ himself (8:12), and most certainly when he says that an act performed in isolation may be insignificant and harmless in one’s own eyes, but as a social act it can become intensely meaningful (10:16–30).²⁶

The church as it reflects or bears more and more the holiness of Christ to one another and to those who are unbelievers and may congregate or socialize with them, can also carry the potency of a sanctifying influence that causes others to want to pursue a relationship with the Holy One:

And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty (2 Corinthians 6:15–18, KJV).

In the Gingrich New Testament Lexicon, we find the Greek term *avforizw*, meaning to “set apart, take away, separate, exclude” (Matthew. 13:49, 25:32; Luke 6:22; Acts 19:9; 2 Corinthians 6:17; Gal. 2:12).²⁷ Again, there is distinct call for the people to separate themselves in conduct and testimony in life. Furthermore, we see the inclusion of holiness as it relates not only to the person, but to the people as a whole. This is pointed out later on in this text in verse 16 by the reference to ‘my people’.

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light” (1 Peter 2:9).

The church is made up of those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy ones or ‘saints’ (1 Corinthians 1:2). In essence Peter was reminding them in the midst of their persecution that they were being built into an edifice by God through Christ and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. “Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ”(1 Peter 2:5 ASV). Christians are “holy brothers” (Hebrews 3:1), a “holy temple of God” (1 Corinthians 3:17; Ephesians 2:21), purged vessels of honor “made holy for the Master’s use” and ready for every good work (2 Timothy 2:12).

As a corporate body or church, we cannot ignore our collective privilege and duty to stand out as lights in darkness. When Christians have a mutual testimony that gives harmonious praise to God, His holiness is exalted and held out as a virtue that attracts those who see so little of it in families, groups and religious sects today. On the opposite hand, this kind of holy unity and passion for righteous living cannot be forced by legalistic rulings or coercion that will lack spiritual appeal to unbelievers already facing militant cults and other carnal religions who try to force adherents into a rigid set of rules. Rather, corporate sanctification must come from sincere Christians who want to please God by offering up spiritual

sacrifices. In truth, only a genuine and voluntary passion for holiness within a church can attract sincere seekers looking for a better way to live.

Missional Sanctification

“Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.” (John 17:17, NASB).

In John ‘sanctification’ has the broader meaning of separation and particularly separation for mission.²⁸ The means for this being accomplished is the truth. Jesus is this truth (John 14:6). This truth comes through the work of the Holy Spirit (16:13) who makes the truth of Jesus come alive in the hearts of disciples.

Therefore, we must address ‘missional sanctification’ since it is critically important to Jesus Christ. All that He has sanctified and continues to sanctify is not only for their betterment and development as Christians, but His sanctifying Spirit continues to help us to be a testimony of the power of the Sanctifier. Nothing has so impacted the various peoples and nations over the span of the ages like the holy work of Christ Jesus in the believers. In the first century, as they beheld the faith of Christians, as well as the radical change in the character and life of these new believers, people were swayed by the holy lives of these men and women that glorified their holy God. The same missional sanctification is needed in the church today so that Christians can evangelize their communities where they need to see the image of Christ lived openly. If we live with this kind of passion to pursue a holy God, men “will see and glorify the Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16).

‘Missional sanctification’ is a glorious subsequent blessing of corporate sanctification. This spiritual outgrowth of holiness emphasizes the relationship and responsibility the church is to have to the global community. The church is God’s gift to the world, and therefore she is called to reach it. Here, we are to reflect God’s glory before the lost, and to participate in calling people to a relationship with Him. As a “royal priesthood, a holy nation” (1 Peter 2:9), the church must be engaged in vital witnessing experiences with the lost as we draw closer to the imminent return of Christ.

Biblical Understanding of Holiness

Definition of Sin

In his classic work, *A Right Conception of Sin*, Richard S. Taylor argues that, “Any doctrine that relates to sin, is affected by our understanding and definition of sin. Most errors in theology can usually find their roots in a defective definition of sin.”²⁹ All unrighteousness is sin. That is, whatever is not of righteousness—by commission or omission—is sin. Sin is both a condition and an act of transgression against the law of God, nature, or society.

Since sin entered the world, sin has become universal, “All have sinned” (Romans 5:12). Thus man is depraved—in fact, totally depraved. Notwithstanding modernism

and the dressings of language and phraseology, we cannot afford to see sin from the standpoint of modern culture and modernism. The one and only right perspective to viewing sin is from the standpoint of God. That is, how does God see sin? It is only by a right perception of sin, its corruption, its smears, and heinous nature that we may correctly extol Jesus Christ who offered Himself for the salvation of humanity.

Sin entered mankind through Adam, and became universal resulting in spiritual death first, and then physical death (Genesis 2:17; Romans 6:23). All men are born in sin (Psalm 51:1–5), but not born to sin (Romans 6:16). Total depravity means that man’s will, intellect, and emotions are corrupted by sin. By total depravity we mean totally lost, which does not mean that there is nothing good at all in man—for man yet bears some signs and evidences of his original good and dignity before ‘the Fall’. Thus, the very principle of sin is unbelief in the Word of God and will lead to a process of gradual decline or deterioration from God’s divine will and purpose for humankind!

Jesus Christ took on human nature so he could die. His death on the cross was our death (Romans 6:23). He died in our stead. God took the initiative for our redemption when He provided the suitable and perfect sacrifice in the person of His begotten son, Jesus; who alone is the complete satisfaction to His justice. This is in full demonstration of God’s love for man (John 3:16). God did not stop at the provision for the complete atonement for sin in Jesus; He continues to give the full benefits of that atonement by Himself through His grace and by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, “as many as believe Him to them gives He power to become the sons of God” (John 1:12 ASV).

Sin is generally seen as a two-fold concept. The first aspect is seen in Psalm 51:5, “In sin did my mother conceive me.” The other is seen in 1 John 3:8, “He that committeth sin is of the devil.” The text from the Psalter refers to a nature that comes with birth. This is often referred to as original sin, inherited sin, total depravity or fallen nature. But, the text in 1 John refers to the act of committing sins—also referred to as actual sin. Oftentimes, there can be some difficulty in ascertaining whether a biblical passage is referring to sin as a state or sin as an act.

The aspect of theology that deals with the issue of sin is known as hamartiology and is inextricably bound to soteriology, which includes the doctrine of salvation and the resultant doctrines of justification and sanctification. Justification is the declarative act of God wherein the sinner is declared righteous. This is known as imputed righteousness. Paul’s exposition on sin in chapters five and six of the letter to the Romans is helpful in understanding the pervasive effects of sin on humanity as well as humanity’s proper response. Paul repeatedly makes the point that the first man’s sin resulted in humanity’s participation in all the effects of sin (Romans 5:12; 17–19). Consequently, all humanity is born with this inherited, sinful nature. It is also from this understanding that the doctrine of original sin emerged.

As it relates to sanctification, the doctrine of original sin becomes critical in understanding the salvific role of this work of grace. In *Five Views on Sanctification*, Melvin Dieter writes, “A central point in any theology is its accepted position on the nature of the human situation. One’s doctrine of original sin is arguably as determinative a concept as any other for one’s view of sanctification.”³⁰

Although the doctrine of original sin was somewhat developed before the time of Augustine, it found its most significant development in Augustine’s work. Augustine believed that through Adam’s sin, “the entire mass of our nature was ruined and fell into the possession of its destroyer. And from him no one—no not one has been delivered, or will ever be delivered, except by the grace of the Redeemer.”³¹ It was the doctrine of original sin and the resultant doctrine of total human depravity that produced some of the fertile ground for the later doctrine of entire sanctification.

History of Holiness and Sanctification

Any attempt to develop a deeper understanding of the biblical doctrines of holiness and sanctification must include an investigation of the historical developments and understandings throughout the history of the church. There are many direct and indirect sources that detail the continued efforts of the church to interpret the canon of Scripture as it relates to holiness and to accurately apply these understandings to the life of the church. These sources include the writings of, and references to many of the early church fathers. In addition, the writings of Augustine and the later Reformers are of equal importance. More contemporary sources include studies of the Holiness and Pentecostal movements. [Note: For further study on these Early Church Fathers and later movements and their effect on the doctrine of holiness/sanctification, please refer to the original 2012 BDP study document on “The Pursuit of the Holy God.”]

Common Understandings of Sanctification/Holiness

It was John Wesley who has addressed sanctification and holiness by writing an abundance of sermons on the subject. In one such sermon he enlarges on the role of the Holy Spirit in the sanctifying process. This is a lengthy citation of his writing, but beneficial:

If we take this in its utmost extent, it will include all that is brought in the soul by what is frequently termed natural conscience, but more properly, preventing grace;—all the drawings of the Father; the desires after God, which, if we yield to them, increase more and more;—all that light wherewith the Son of God “enlighteneth everyone that cometh into the world”; showing every man “to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with his God”;—all the convictions which His Spirit, from time to time, works in every child of man; although, it is true, the generality of men stifle them as soon as possible, and after a while forget, or at least deny, that they ever had them at all.

And at the same time that we are justified, yea, in that very moment sanctification begins. In that instant we are born again, born from above, born of the Spirit: There is a real as well as a relative change. We are inwardly renewed by the power of God. We feel “the love of God shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us”; producing, love to all mankind, and more especially to the children of God; expelling the love of the world, the love of pleasure, of ease, of honor, of money, together with pride, anger, self-will, and every other evil temper; in a word, changing, the earthly, sensual, devilish mind, into the mind which was in Christ Jesus.

How naturally do those who experience such a change imagine that all sin is gone; that it is utterly rooted out of their heart, and has no more any place therein! How easily do they draw that inference, “I feel no sin; therefore, I have none: It does not stir; therefore, it does not exist: It has no motion; therefore, it has no being!”

But it is seldom long before they are undeceived, finding sin was only suspended, not destroyed. Temptations return, and sin revives; showing it was but stunned before, not dead. They now feel two principles in themselves, plainly contrary to each other; “the flesh lusting against the Spirit”; nature opposing the grace of God. They cannot deny, that, although they still feel power to believe in Christ and to love God; and although his “Spirit” still “witnesses with their spirits, that they are children of God”; yet they feel in themselves sometimes pride or self-will, sometimes anger or unbelief. They find one or more of these frequently stirring in their heart, though not, conquering; yea, perhaps, “thrusting sore at them that they may fall”; but the Lord is their help.

From the time of our being born again, the gradual work of sanctification takes place. We are enabled “by the Spirit” to “mortify the deeds of the body,” of our evil nature; and as we are more and more dead to sin, we are more and more alive to God. We go on from grace to grace, while we are careful to “abstain from all appearance of evil,” and are “zealous of good works,” as we have opportunity, doing good to all men; while we walk in all His ordinances blameless, therein worshipping him in spirit and in truth; while we take up our cross, and deny ourselves every pleasure that does not lead us to God.³²

Although Wesley shared many other thoughts in this sermon, his inclusion of the Holy Spirit is critical to our understanding of the pursuit of holiness. For many, the lack of understanding and accepting the role of the Holy Spirit in holiness has left them without the catalyst and we need this constant guidance of the Third Person of the Trinity. It has been thoughtfully expressed that:

To relate rightly to God—that is, to know and to follow God—required a progressive transformative development. Participation in the Pentecostal

worship and witness over time produced an “effective” transformation in which lives were formed and shaped by their experience of God . . . The Spirit would lead into righteousness. The Spirit would search the heart and, by the Word, point out what was not like Christ and therefore carnal. The Spirit would fill and lead in powerful witness. The Spirit would express himself through gifts and fruit that are producing a divine character being formed in the believer by virtue of participation in the divine life. The Father, Son, and Spirit, by the Spirit, came to take up abode in the believer.³³

Presuppositions in the Past COGOP Formation

As we examine the Scriptures, we must keep in focus the pursuit of holiness intertwined throughout the pages of both the Old and New Testaments. Our past presuppositions in the Church of God of Prophecy (hereafter noted as COGOP), and other similar denominations was influenced by the Holiness movement of the nineteenth century. While this movement swept through Wales, Scotland, England, and the United States with positive spiritual revival, it also carried some scriptural misinterpretations that altered some of the original teachings of John Wesley and James Arminius. Phrases such as “entire sanctification,” “instantaneous sanctification” and “sinless perfection” began to imbed themselves with new meanings into the movement and influenced church beliefs and doctrinal interpretations. Our faithful movement corporately embraced these doctrines and strived with all sincerity to live out the implications in and through their lifestyles. Many attribute the rapid growth and global advancement of the church, in this period of its journey, to its unified approach to corporate sanctification and pursuit of holiness. Even though these coined phrases carried with them some incorrect inferences that affected most Pentecostal churches, it did not hinder the church in its focused drive to proclaim the gospel and make disciples for Jesus Christ.

Although some of the church’s earlier literature emphasized an instantaneous experience that was a one-time event, there is evidence to support that these did not greatly impact the church in pursuit of its mission.³⁴ Whilst, these two documents give only some Scriptural verses relating to sanctification and very little on the ongoing process of holiness the reality for many was an inward desire to be in the image of Christ. It has been said that a church’s hymnology reflects its theology. Songs and Hymns like “Down at the Cross” [Elisha Hoffman, 1904], of that period would then reflect our implied and unwritten theology. [“Oh precious fountain that saves from sin, I am so glad I have entered in; there Jesus saves me and keeps me clean ; glory to his name”]. In the same manner, the Holy Spirit is mentioned only as the third experience, but no reference is made to the role of the Holy Spirit in initial sanctification or the need of the Spirit to continue to impassion a believer to seek further sanctifying grace throughout their Christian lifetime. The omission

of these key components by other nineteenth century pioneers of the Holiness movement was considered proof positive. The unintentional exclusion of several passages of Scripture on maturing in holiness promoted the thinking among some that once they were sanctified, there was no need for a growing experience with God after the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, whilst others reflected a strong urge to pursue after God.

In spite of this passion on the initial sanctification experience, there were exceptions that indicated a need to allow the Holy Spirit to continue this pursuit of holiness. In the tract *Sanctification a Second Work of Grace*, A. J. Tomlinson states that “sanctification as a definite work of grace subsequent to regeneration should be desired by everybody” (page 2). Even though Tomlinson stated that sanctification is a definite work of grace, he did not hold to the idea of ‘once sanctified, always sanctified.’ In this same tract he said:

In order to obtain this experience, the believer puts himself at once—or by one act of faith—into the cleansing stream and is immediately made clean. *He then continues in that stream*, or continues faithful, and is kept clean. Purity is retained on the same condition that it is obtained; and to *keep under the cleansing wave* is to be faithful to the conditions of purity. Jesus expressed the continual cleansing by the figure of “abiding in the vine” [italics added for emphasis] (page 4).³⁵

The Normative and the Exception

Sanctification, whether in the initial experience in a believer’s life, or in the ongoing growth within a Christian’s life, may not always take place in the same manner as it has in the life of others. With God, the normative does not exclude the exception, since God is not only Creator but the One who recreates. In 2 Corinthians 10:7, Paul answering those who questioned his calling and experience with Christ, gave this profound truth: “Do you look at things according to the outward appearance? If anyone is convinced in himself that he is Christ’s, let him again consider this in himself, that just as he is Christ’s, even so we are Christ’s.” While Paul’s ministry and apostleship was drastically different from the other apostles like Peter and John, it was no less genuine because it was an exception from the norm. We see also in Acts 15:8, 9 the same observation by Peter who in retelling the events in Cornelius household, points out this exception that radically differed from what he and others saw and heard on Pentecost. He says, “So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us, and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.” The manner and outward manifestations that appeared on Pentecost became the exception (fire setting on each believers’ head, rushing mighty wind and speaking in other known languages), rather than the norm that is found in the rest of the Book of Acts and even in our churches today.

Having examined how the exception to the norm works in other places in the Bible, the experience of initial sanctification does not always occur in believers in the same way. In fact, the story of A. J. Tomlinson's experience of sanctification (refer to the original 2012 BDP study document on "The Pursuit of the Holy God."), as well as many others testimonies, are without question an exception to what thousands of others have experienced as they have sought and received an initial sanctification that helped usher them into an ongoing cleansing, a growing relationship that stimulates the heart to pursue holiness. We must respect this truth of the norm and exception because our Creator God is still recreating in the hearts and lives of Christians today.

Culture and Holiness

One of the tensions that exist within the Holiness movement is recognizing the influence of culture while maintaining the integrity of the message of holiness. Undoubtedly, the holiness message will intersect with culture because humans are beings that are shaped within a particular cultural context. The challenge is how to mediate the holiness message in ways that are relevant while at the same time not losing the integrity of the message. One of the questions we must ask is, "How do we engage cultures and subcultures in ways that are relevant and that embody the power of the holiness message to achieve transformation of lives?" Similarly, we must ask, "What would holiness look like for a church in different socio-economic and political contexts as well as in other cultures who accept the message of the gospel?"

For instance, the cultural view of sanctification in the African culture comes from a different point of view than that of Western culture. Holiness is not a strange word or doctrine in Africa and in African religion. Many deities and gods are worshipped in traditional African religion. As a matter of fact there are gods of almost everything and every endeavor—god of trade, god of war, god of harvest, god of marriage/fertility, god of iron, god of safety and so on and so forth. There are also deities in lands and territories, to which total oversight of that land or territory is submitted, thus "god of our land."³⁶

In fact, some people who are ardent followers to African traditional religion say that since the coming of the Christian religion and its attendant 'civilization' in our society and communities, evil and sin has aggravated. Adultery, fornication, robbery, indecency, kidnapping, genocides, political wars, and such vices are rampant and on the increase. The point being made here is not that Christianity has absolutely brought vices and/or woes, but that Christianity not lived out fully is an aberration, a license to moral decadence and licentiousness. Paul warned against using Christian liberty as an occasion to commit sins: "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another" (Galatians 5:13 [note also James 1:25, 1 Peter 2:16]).

To this then, we dare say that to bring back on the radar of spirituality in our culture, consecration and holiness is not only a great welcome but a revival and restoration of values and accreditation of virtues with which we can readily identify and associate. Cognizant of the fact that culture affects the holiness message and churches because man is a socially shaped being; the challenge is how best to appropriate biblical holiness in an African cultural milieu that has become very much influenced by western modernism and postmodernism. Culture challenges us to mediate holiness in ways that are relevant and transforming without losing the integrity of the message.

Culture often played a significant role in how the moral imperatives were understood and applied. Often, the cultural distinctives of the first century which produced the particular tensions within the first century believers are not easily translated into contemporary contexts. Therefore, the distinctive moral-ethical demands relating to Christians have required some re-interpretation throughout the history of the church, especially as it relates to the doctrine of holiness. This is especially true regarding 'external distinctives' such as apparel, adornment, and secular activities.

Chapter nineteen of Leviticus deals primarily with holiness in social ethics. The chapter begins with the divine declaration, ". . . Be ye holy, because I, the Lord your God, am holy" (Leviticus 19:1 NIV). The chapter defines and describes holiness in all areas of life. The following quote captures the spirit in this section of the Holiness Code:

Holiness stands as the foundational principle in the long list of precepts set forth in this chapter. Holiness is the object of all of the moral and ceremonial law. But since God sets the norm and defines just what holiness does and does not include, God's holiness acts both as model and as motivating force in the development and maintenance of a holy character. To make sure that the point is not lost, fifteen times the sixteen subsections end with the reminder that, "I am the Lord your God."³⁷

It is obvious that many of the culture-specific injunctions of Leviticus cannot be translated into contemporary social conditions and therefore necessitates some cultural re-interpretation in order to maintain the relevancy of the principles to contemporary readers as well as those whom they were originally presented.

The Holiness and Pentecostal movements were birthed out of an American "cultural cradle" and thus reflected a culturally distinct view of the social aspects of personal holiness. This culturally distinct view produced certain prohibitions that were targeted against some of the pervasive social ills. Similarly, the position of women in society during this time informed some of the doctrinal positions as well. Many of the prohibitions which became part and parcel of holiness doctrine in America and other Western cultures reveal little or no relevance when placed in different cultural contexts around the globe. Social issues such as apparel, adornment,

social activities, and others are sensitive issues that are inextricably bound to culture and may not have identical applications in relation to defining holiness.

The obvious challenge faced when holiness and culture are juxtaposed is coming to some determination of the “necessary things” (see Acts 15:28) of holiness, regardless of culture, while avoiding perceptions that the decisions are simply the result of some kind of ‘cultural compromise.’

Acts chapter fifteen is considered to be a watershed event in the book of Acts. In this chapter, the Lucan account provides the narrative surrounding the events of the so called Jerusalem Council. Although this narrative is usually interpreted in a soteriological context, there is a salient sociological context with accompanying cultural implications. The cultural aspects dealt with whether or not it was necessary for the Gentiles to observe the Jewish cultural observances—many of which were inextricably bound to their identity as God’s holy people.

The consensus of the council (“it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us”) was to recognize the ‘cultural specificity’ of the gospel message in certain social contexts. Consequently, they were careful to identify certain non-negotiable elements (“necessary things”—KJV, “essentials”—NRSV) that were required to live holy lives regardless of the cultural context. It is the identification of the ‘non-negotiables’ for their day in contrast to the cultural-specific ‘negotiable’ elements that will aid in dealing with the tension that exists in maintaining the holiness standard in a culturally diverse Christian context.

Dynamics between Personal and Corporate Sanctification

Although the personal aspect of sanctification is usually the most emphasized aspect, the corporate aspect (refer to the original 2012 BDP study document on “The Pursuit of the Holy God.”) is equally important in God’s salvific work in the world. The call to holiness both includes and transcends the individual response to the work of grace. Personal sanctification deals primarily with the experience and expression of sanctification in the area of personal ethics and morality while corporate sanctification involves the interaction of the entire community of faith.

In the New Testament all believers were called saints or ‘holy ones.’ Eventually saintliness or holiness was only selectively ascribed to a few living Christians or those who had suffered or became martyrs. This shift became a “narrowing from the witness of all members down to the extraordinary achievement of a few.”³⁸

Personal holiness lost the force it had as a catalyst for the propagation of the gospel. Consequently, holiness was relegated to the realm of the clergy under the close control of the church. The responsibility of personal holiness was mediated through the system of penance. McClendon writes:

The elevation of some church members to distinctive roles of holiness, to sainthood, implied that not all were saints, and before A.D. 1000 it appeared

that there were two Christian paths to heaven, a superior path taken by the saints, the way of the perfect, and an inferior path for ordinary Christians—the practice of penance.³⁹

The quest for personal holiness is a pursuit that unites the believer with God in a transformative relationship. The following terms are important in the understanding of personal holiness:

Consecration is a volunteer surrender, an act by man to separate himself to God. It is more than surrendering something, whether it is money, or job, or whatever, to God. It is the surrender of the self and all its appurtenances to Him. It is a choice to be separate to God no matter the cost. Although it is an offering or surrender of the self to Him, it also involves His acceptance of the offering: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, **acceptable** unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1 [bold letters added for emphasis]). Those who desire to be holy must and will separate themselves in pursuit of God from the majority who are satisfied with a deistic existence at best. The pursuit of God and His holiness necessitates that we refuse to let the majority determine and shape our standard or pursuit of God. Believers must pursue God and desire to see what God shows, hear what God says, and be where God sends: “I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved” (Habakkuk 2:1).

Sanctification is subsequent to regeneration. Note: This does not imply a timeline or chronological order as if these could not happen in some people as a simultaneous event; at least in the experience of initial sanctification. Regeneration is the impartation of spiritual life to a previously dead, albeit spiritual, individual. Sanctification is the cleansing of the individual from the pollution of inbred sin. Sanctification is received by faith that imparts a desire to live a dedicated life of consecration and a pursuit of right living. The evidence of sanctification is holiness, because sin is abolished by the blood of Jesus in the life of the sanctified person (Hebrews 9:22; Revelation 1:15).

Holiness is the attitude of agreeing and confessing what God upholds in Words and judgment; the habit of being of one mind with God, according as we find His mind described in Scripture. It is the habit of agreeing in God’s judgment: that is, hating what He hates and loving what He loves and so measuring everything in this world by the standard of His Word. He who most entirely agrees with God, he is the most holy man.

A holy man will endeavor to shun every known sin, and to keep every known commandment. He will have a mind fixed on God, a hearty desire to do His will, a greater fear of displeasing Him than of displeasing the world, and a love to all the ways of God. He will feel what Paul felt when he said, “I delight in the law of God after the inward man” (Romans 7:22); and what David felt when he said, “I

esteem all Thy precepts concerning all things to be right and I hate every false way” (Psalm 119:128). A holy man will strive to be like our Lord Jesus Christ. He will not only live the life of faith in Him, and draw from Him all his daily peace and strength, but he will also labor to have the mind that was in Him, and to be “conformed to His image” (Romans 8:29). It will be his aim to bear with and forgive others, even as Christ forgave us; to be unselfish, even as Christ pleased not Himself; to walk in love, even as Christ loved us; to be lowly-minded and humble, even as Christ made Himself of no reputation and humbled Himself. He will remember that Christ was a faithful witness for the truth; that He came not to do His own will; that it was His meat and drink to do His Father’s will; that He would continually deny Himself in order to minister to others; that He was meek and patient under undeserved insults; that He thought more of godly poor men than of kings; that He was full of love and compassion to sinners; that He was bold and uncompromising in denouncing sin; that He sought not the praise of men, when He might have had it; that He went about doing good; that He was separate from worldly people; that He continued instant in prayer; that He would not let even His nearest relations stand in His way when God’s work was to be done. These things a holy man will try to remember. By them he will endeavor to shape his course in life. He will take to heart the saying of John, “He that saith he abideth in Christ ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked” (1 John 2:6); and the saying of Peter that, “Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow His steps” (1 Peter 2:21). Happy is he who has learned to make Christ his ALL, both for salvation and example! Much time would be saved, and much sin prevented, if men would oftener ask themselves the question, “What would Christ have said and done, if He were in my place?”

The concept of corporate holiness is found in the fact that holiness cannot be limited to only the personal (individual) relationship with God, but it also incorporates the relationship with people in the context of corporate bodies (i.e. organizations, nations, or families). Dieter writes, “As we grow closer to Christ, we grow closer to each other. We are sanctified through fellowship with those who are in Christ with us.”⁴⁰ This concept is initially seen in Israel’s relationship with God. After the deliverance from Egyptian bondage, God established a covenant with them in the wilderness (Exodus 19: 3–6).

Israel’s holiness was established based on their obedience to the word that God had spoken. The corporate holiness was to be exhibited in the requirements for a social holiness which prescribed the responsibility of the nation to issues such as justice and equality as seen throughout the Old Testament, especially in the prophetic writings. On the other hand, in being the ultimate sacrifice and sanctifier of God’s people, Jesus was crucified outside of the city gate, that is, “Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate” (Hebrews 13:12). Christ’s church must even more so now bear the true

marks of God's holiness; for Christ is not coming back for a suffocating, wasting, polluted, and sick church; rather He is coming back for a going, doing, prevailing, vibrant, and holy (without spot, without wrinkle, without blemish) church, His body.

In the New Testament, Peter picks up the corporate theme in 1 Peter 2: 9, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an **holy nation** . . ." Peter's focus on holiness in the corporate context again underscores the fact that holiness transcends individual responsibility and identity. One of the more contemporary metaphors for the church is that of a community of faith. As we reflect on this ecclesial understanding, we are forced to consider the issue of holiness in this context. One question that is engendered by this consideration is, "How do we relevantly define holiness within the context of a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural community whose members are trying to live out their faith in the world?"

Vital Nature of Prayer and Holiness

"To have found God and still to pursue Him is the soul's paradox of love."⁴¹ This quote by A.W. Tozer underscores the continuous nature of the pursuit of holiness. Holiness is not a static state, but it is a dynamic relationship with God that requires constant interaction with God's grace. One of the catalysts of this dynamic relationship is prayer. In his groundbreaking work on prayer, E.M. Bounds wrote:

Prayer is related to all the gifts of grace. Its relationship to character and conduct is that of a helper. Prayer helps to establish character and to fashion conduct. Both, for their successful continuance, depend on prayer. There may be a certain degree of moral character and conduct independent of prayer, but there cannot be any distinctive religious character and Christian conduct without it. Prayer helps where all other aids fail. The more we pray, the better we are, and the purer and better our lives become.⁴²

Prayer, without a doubt, is the quintessential element in the pursuit of holiness. When we understand that holiness is more than a state, but a dynamic relationship, we will also understand that it is the relationship that produces and maintains the life of holiness. There is a certain irony in the fact that while prayer purifies the heart, a pure heart empowers the life of prayer. Prayer both fulfills the desire for holiness and at the same time recreates and fuels the desire. It is from this creative tension that emerges the "hunger and thirst for righteousness." Undoubtedly, this is why the Bible, especially the New Testament, consistently emphasized the need for prayer in the life of believers.

The Holiness movement was a movement grounded in prayer. The history of the movement shows a total dependence on prayer to effectuate the grace of God in their lives. Their rejection of human efforts in relation to what God was doing in their lives became the foundation for much of their doctrinal formulations. The Pentecostal movement also grounded the experience of the Spirit in the life of prayer. The

narratives in the book of Acts of the Apostles underscores the role of the Spirit in prayer as the early church sought to pursue the holiness modeled by Jesus.

Initial Sanctification/Ongoing Sanctification

Several Pentecostal scholars have alluded to this departure from the more accurate and full definitions given by John Wesley and other holiness preachers. We see this revealed by comments like:

Where the Wesleyan-Arminian teaching stresses the crisis aspect of sanctification to the neglect of the post-sanctification development and problems, the Keswickian (later Calvinistic ministers) tends to stress either the separation aspect (distinction between nature and grace and the conflict between them) or the growth aspect, to the neglect of the critical crisis aspect . . . the Scriptures to which both cling hold both crisis and process in creative unity and encourage deep involvement in life.⁴³

Furthermore, we read the following observation made after examining those phrases instantaneous sanctification and entire sanctification:

Righteousness speaks of the ordering of all of life according to the will of God. It describes the structure, limits and contours of that relationship. There can be no peace with God and no true joy without righteousness. But righteousness will never be perfectly realized in this world because of human fallibility and worldly rebellion. The interim fulfillment of the Law and thus of all righteousness is love . . . The awareness of this struggle, the vigilance, consecration and the travail of praying through to peace, all contribute to the compassionate drive of Pentecostals toward the world; their neighbors are not only transgressors, but also, like themselves, are defiled and inwardly alienated from the life of holiness and happiness. This peace borne of perfect love and reverence is a moment-by-moment abiding in Christ through the Spirit and the Word.⁴⁴

Therefore, the pursuit of holiness should always be the focus rather than theoretical phrases that can often be misleading and discouraging to the believer who desires to walk holy before God. It was Paul, the most theological of apostles, who teaches the followers of Jesus Christ by his own admission:

And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those

things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:9–14).

More Biblical Explorations of Sanctification/Holiness

It is true that we are caught up into a unique relationship as newborn creatures in Christ Jesus. Within the Bible there are pivotal truths that are essential to a believer's understanding and growth. These include two concepts that we cannot ignore: 1) the truths related to our salvation, including what God has already done for us, and yet what He will still do; and, 2) the imperatives that reveal how we as Christians should live as a consequence of His ongoing work of sanctification. The beginning point of sanctification is our belief in salvation—that believes what God has done for us in salvation. Therefore, our relationship entails what He has done in the past and what He will yet do for us in the future. Both require an infusion of the Holy Spirit to open for us the way that we should walk. A voice that came out of the nineteenth century Holiness movement fire, Horatius Bonar, wrote so applicably:

The gospel does not command us to do anything in order to obtain life, but it bids us live by that which another has done; and the knowledge of its life-giving truth is not labor but rest—rest of soul, which is the root of all true labor, but we rest in order to work.⁴⁵

In reality, our sanctification is reliant upon believing the truth of “who we are in Christ,” trusting in His finished work at Calvary, and then living out through the help of the Spirit the implications of this new standing in Christ Jesus.

For many years, there has been too much contrasting of instantaneous sanctification against progressive sanctification. Instead, this misunderstanding can be better addressed by recognizing the need for both the initial crisis experience and for an ongoing relationship with the Holy Spirit that must be embraced in close association. As we move toward a more completely understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit, we will not weaken the complete work of Jesus Christ, but will enlarge upon our understanding to see the Triune nature of God operating more perfectly through the continuing operation of the Holy Spirit in the believer from the moment of conversion until the final change has moved us from mortality to immortality (i.e. 2 Corinthians 3:18, 1 Corinthians 15:52–53).

A little known book stated the beauty of this juxtaposition that takes place in the believer:

Our sanctification is dependent upon believing the truth of who we are in Christ, resting in His finished work, and then living out the implications of this new perspective . . . In actual practice, it is the dawning of this perspective which is the foundation for all practical sanctification. Hence Paul's emphasis on 'knowing' that this is the situation (Romans 6:3–9) leads to his summons to believers to 'count' themselves dead to sin and alive to

God in Christ Jesus (v. 11). Sanctification is therefore the consistent practical outworking of what it means to belong to the new creation in Christ . . . We believe that God's desire for us in the ongoing process of sanctification is for us to experience in real life who we really are in Christ. This necessitates choosing to believe who we are on a daily basis.⁴⁶

During the late nineteenth century, conflicts divided and hindered the pursuit of holiness and planted seeds of internal strife that crept deceptively into the powerful awakening to the moving of the Holy Spirit in the early years of the twentieth century. In fact, the transition to Pentecostalism that was birthed through the Holiness movement can continue to blossom in the twenty-first century if churches and theologians will pursue with passion both sanctification and holiness.⁴⁷ As in the crux of time that wedded the Holiness and Pentecostal movements together, our 'pursuit of holiness' must be initiated and cultivated by answering the call of the Holy Spirit that embraces both our initial need to be sanctified and the ongoing relational aspects of sanctification. This brings us to the powerful statement of Hebrews 10:14 that has both a positional and ongoing sense in the original language: "For by one offering he has perfected forever those who are being sanctified" (NKJV). (Refer to the original 2012 BDP study document on "The Pursuit of the Holy God.")

Washing of the Blood/Water/Spirit

The image of Jesus Christ at Calvary informs us a great deal about the proper relationship of the believer through the suffering and mediated death of Christ on the cross. When the soldiers came to him and found the Savior dead on the cross, they did not break His legs as customary.

But without full comprehension that they were fulfilling Scripture, one of them took a spear and pierced his side from which flowed both blood and water (John 19:34). It is more than coincidental that the next verse (35) records a remark that John is a witness to this particular action and that he reiterates this truth to cause others to believe. As one comes to understand the beauty of this symphonic act of divine provision, you will come to appreciate this vital illustration of how the work the Holy Spirit will perform this cleansing in our lives and usher us into a life of holiness. The Scriptures clearly follow this truth by giving evidence of the initial act of sanctification in the believer through the blood (i.e. Hebrews 13:12, Colossians 1:19–20), yet gives ample witness to the ongoing work of sanctification through the Word of God (i.e. Ephesians 5:25–26, Hebrews 10:19–22). Both of these are a glorious and harmonious act that will be continually played out through centuries in the life of every believer who looks upon Christ for the hope of holiness. As the Holy Spirit applies the shed blood of Jesus as the initial act of sanctification to bring us into good standing with the Father through the Son, so will the Holy Spirit apply the "washing of the water by the word of God" (Ephesians

5:26) to continually sanctify the believer in Christ as an onward movement toward the Father. Since the word of God is always clean, it acts like the pure water that washes us holy before the Lord.

The Pastoral Call to Holiness

When the Holy Spirit moved upon Zacharias, he prophesied that God was visiting His people and sending a redeemer that we “. . . might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life” (Luke 1:74–75). The writer of Hebrews said that “. . . without holiness, no one would see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14 NIV). From these and numerous other passages in the New Testament it is clear that holiness is an important doctrine regardless of the fact that many fear legalism on the one hand and fanaticism on the other anytime the subject is addressed. Nonetheless, even though the definition may be debated, the New Testament is clear that holiness is expected and required of all Christians.

Biblical holiness has to do with the inner character or condition of the human heart. Righteousness which is rooted in holiness has more to do with ‘right conduct’ in an ethical sense of uprightness. Any right conduct, which does not grow out of holiness, can be a form of legalism. For example, the Pharisees were meticulous about tithing the tiniest herbs (right conduct) but neglected the holiness of the heart. Thus Jesus condemned them for washing the outside of the cup while leaving the inside full of corruption. His imperative to them was to first clean the inside of the cup or the heart (holiness) so that the outside of the cup (righteousness) would be clean also. A person may behave exemplary in many ways and yet have a rotten heart. For example, a person may be outwardly faithful to his/her companion and be an adulterer in the heart. Such a person would not be living a holy life even though appearances suggest otherwise. Thus one can live uprightly and not be holy, but one can never be holy and not also live uprightly.

Therefore, we might add that holiness is not something that we humans can measure in one another because only God knows the heart (Jeremiah 17:9). Nor can we impose or force one another to obtain holiness. However, we can study the characteristics of holiness and encourage one another to hunger and thirst after it and thus to be filled.

The psalmist states of God in 51:6, “You desire truth in the inward parts” and then in a few more verses he says, “Purge me . . . wash me . . . create in me a clean heart, O God.” These verses tell us what God desires in us is “a clean heart” and that a pure heart is a work of God. It also suggests that our role in the pursuit of holiness is to allow the Spirit of God to show us where we are inwardly untruthful or conflicted. For example, a person may be inwardly jealous of another individual and fail to admit such a thing to himself or to God, let alone to anyone else. In fact, outwardly he/she may be very nice to that person, act kindly, and have only good things to say and, yet, be eaten up with inward jealousy. The God who desires

truthfulness in the inward parts wants that individual to slow down and listen to Him in prayer so that He can reveal to him/her the cruel jealousy that has taken hold in his/her heart. Only then, after confession and repentance will God purge, wash, and cleanse that heart of jealousy.

As the leader of the local church it is the pastor's (or pastoral team's) responsibility to lead his/her congregation in the pursuit of holiness. Holiness or a cleansing of the heart only occurs as one encounters the living God. Individuals and congregations do not become holy through preaching, teaching, or singing that is merely entertaining. Programs designed to attract people to our churches with no thought of seeking God does not lead to holiness of life. Paul says that we are changed or transformed into the holy image of God by the Spirit as we behold Him (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Therefore, the pastor must first seek God for his/her own transformation toward holiness. The pastor must spend large segments of unhurried time in vocal prayer, silence, solitude, meditating on Scripture, and self-reflection in allowing the Spirit to expose hidden sin and unholy attitudes in his/her heart. Then as God exposes ugliness in the pastor's heart, he/she can pray for forgiveness and ask for the sanctifying grace of God to wash his/her heart clean. Moses had to stand before God's burning bush on holy ground before he could lead the children of Israel to God's holy mountain.

From this newly sanctified ground of the heart, the pastor leads the congregation into God's presence. Therefore, when he/she preaches, it is not for informational purposes only. Now the preaching is for the purpose of causing the people to gaze upon the glory of the Lord in Scripture (glass, mirror—2 Cor. 3:18) so that they are changed into the same image that they are beholding in those Scriptures. In this atmosphere and attitude, the pastoral prayer before or after the sermon is more than a religious exercise. The prayer is another opportunity to lift the congregation into God's presence. Visitation becomes more than just becoming better friends (though that is acceptable), but it takes on a weightier purpose. In other words, almost everything a pastor does (if starting from a heart of holiness) calls the church, the community, and the individual to holiness of life as well.

Recommendations

In light of the above affirmations of our need to pursue a holy relationship with God, we therefore recommend the following:

- 1) Every pastor, minister or teacher is encouraged to guide people through ongoing teaching into seeking the sanctifying presence of God.
- 2) Every believer should be encouraged to pursue a lifelong walk in the Holy Spirit.

- 3) Every believer should desire to live in holiness through an active prayer life that engages the power of the Holy Spirit as an intricate part of a holy life.
- 4) Let us affirm the truth that our individual walk in the Spirit affects the corporate testimony of the church, either positive or negative.
- 5) Every believer should be encouraged in their pursuit of holiness to surrender their personal will to the active Lordship of Christ that His glorious life may be freely expressed through them (Gal 2:20).

Respectfully submitted with prayer and gratefulness to God,

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The Value and Spiritual Life of Children

Preface

The purpose of this paper is to contribute to the development of a sound, concise, theological statement regarding both the value of children and the spiritual life of children within the global Church of God of Prophecy (COGOP). The task set before both the Assembly Committee on Biblical Doctrine and Polity (BDP) and International Children's Ministries (ICM) Committee is multifaceted, especially considering the many cultures, countries, and people groups that operate within the COGOP.

Introduction

The realities and challenges that face the church today regarding the present culture's values and mindset towards children do not differ from the realities and challenges God's people faced regarding children found throughout the Bible. Children have been and still are the smallest, weakest, and most vulnerable humans in society. Children are easily exploited and are the primary recipients of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse. They often are silenced, treated in a condescending manner, patronized, and deemed as second-class citizens in society. While progress has been made in light of children's rights, there still exists an acceptable cultural norm of ignoring the "least of these." At times, the church has allowed the culture to dictate our view of children, even narrowing our conceptions of children's place in the kingdom of God. As members of the body of Christ, we affirm that humans are a unique and distinct creation of God in that each person is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). Yet, while we may affirm the image of God in children, we may still fail to value their personhood and spiritual life. This lack of integration becomes evident in the ministry models used in the church today.

The goal of this project is to challenge every person and church to assess its present view regarding the value of children and their spiritual life so that it reflects God's commitment to every child. As a child matures emotionally, physically, and mentally, the child must also be given the resources to mature spiritually. This research will examine the biblical witness, historical witness, and practical witness so that we may develop a sound theology for the Church of God of Prophecy regarding the value of children and their spiritual life. The biblical witness aims to provide examples of children in the Bible and God's point of view. It will also examine what it meant that God became a child as well as Jesus' response to children in the New Testament. The historical witness will explore how children have been regarded throughout the history of the church, especially in the early stages of the COGOP. The practical witness will provide concrete evidence that children are to be spiritually nourished and that children can receive salvation, be baptized, be full of the Holy Spirit,

and minister within the church body and community. These three aspects are the building blocks in the foundation of a theology that truly values children and their spiritual life.

The Biblical Witness

Children in the Image of God

In the opening moments of human existence, we are thrust into the reality of a deep difference existing between people and the rest of the creation. This elevated distinction was a decision in the eternal council of the Triune God.

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground”
(Genesis 1:26 NIV).

Adam and Eve were created in the image of God. These words at once give the context of humankind’s relationship with God and the rest of creation. There was a unique possibility of relationship and leadership with creation. At the same moment, there was potential for intimacy and thoughtful relationship with God Himself. Humanity, though thoroughly earthly, was also capable of heavenly dimensions.

David wrestles with these questions of God’s special attention to humanity in Psalm 8:4, 5:

What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.¹

Although perplexed by God’s concern for humankind, he proclaims that God crowns humanity with glory. This was not just a past reality, but also the ongoing reality for David. God continues to crown man with glory. This seems to point towards the eternal significance, which God places on each member of the human race. Above all earthly creation, we are His special delight and receive His unwavering attention and care. The scope of this unreserved care is revealed as David continues to wrestle with his value in Psalm 139:15, 16:

My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.²

God’s attention began before birth and included every day of David’s life. God knew him as the godly king of Israel, the man willing to surrender to temptation, and as the shepherd boy. God’s attention was continuous and resolute. Yet David was not unique or isolated. God’s care extends similarly to all people. This care

is not based on gender, race, or age. We will never look eyes with another human that God does not eternally care about. Children, as all humans, are in His image and are His beloved creation, no matter their age. This is the core of our human value—we are loved uniquely by our Creator.

The Stewardship of Children

This unique position of humankind is represented as one of a steward. We are placed here to act on God's behalf with His creation, to build, serve, and lead for Him. Within this exalted position there is enormous responsibility and accountability. However, everything remains His possession.

“The earth is the LORD'S and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it” (Psalm 24:1 NIV).³ Even children fall into this relationship of stewardship. They are not “ours” in the truest sense. There is no ownership, only stewardship. God has entrusted children into the care of adults for His purpose. Jesus reveals this reality when, at twelve years of age, He understands that Mary and Joseph are stewards for the Father. Luke states that Jesus continued to submit to their leadership as stewards:

“Why were you searching for me?” he asked. “Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?” But they did not understand what he was saying to them. Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them . . . (Luke 2:49–51 NIV).

This understanding of stewardship, instead of ownership, challenges cultural understandings of parenting and the church's commitment to children. The accountability of all our stewardship, including our stewardship of children, is clearly portrayed in the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:19: “After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them.” Could there be anything more important than our role of stewarding those who bear His image and were given into our trust as God's agents for building His kingdom?

God as Protector and Defender

God is an attentive Creator who responds to the plight of children. In the Old Testament there are numerous references to infanticide, child-sacrifice, and even child cannibalism at times of war.⁴ The Scripture is clear that these practices are abhorrent to God and were often brought about due to the wickedness of humanity. However, there are two instances that demonstrate God's desire to spare children in a combined effort of divine and human agency.

The first example is that of Abraham's firstborn, Ishmael, who is the product of Abraham's misunderstanding of God's covenant and promise. The boy Ishmael is cast away from his earthly father's dwelling only to find himself on the verge of death in the desert. But God does not ignore him:

And God heard the voice of the boy; and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven, and said to her, “What troubles you, Hagar? Do not be afraid; for God has heard the voice of the boy where he is” (Genesis 21:17 NRSV).

Verse 16 states that it is Hagar who is crying, but God is moved to compassion because of Ishmael’s voice. The very meaning of Ishmael’s name is “God hears,” thus it holds a powerful prophetic meaning for the life of this boy. This story is significant in that it demonstrates God’s love towards all children, not just those whom we decide are important or worthy. In this story, “God is involved in the life of an unchosen child.”⁵

The second of these deals with God’s chosen people, the Israelites. In Exodus 1, we encounter the infanticide of Hebrew boys at the command of Pharaoh, who is fearful of the potential of future generations. The midwives are commanded by Pharaoh to destroy all the Hebrew boys at their birth. However, the midwives did not follow this command, at great risk, out of their reverence of God. Exodus 1:20 states that God showed His favor to the midwives for this courageous action of joining Him in the protection of children.

In the case of the unchosen child and in the case of the chosen children, we see God shows no partiality when it comes to responding to the most vulnerable members of society. In Psalm 82:3, 4 we read, “Give justice to the weak and the orphan; maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy, deliver them from the hand of the wicked.” An adult’s response to children should mimic God’s response to children. God desires and needs human agency when it comes to caring for children in desperate situations regardless of race, class, or sex. Had it not been for Hagar who cared for her son, or the midwives who spared the Hebrew boys, the fates of these children and their families would have been quite different. Thus, as a church, we must not only see ourselves as agents with whom God works, but like Pharaoh, we must see the potential that even infants bring to our community. Unlike Pharaoh, however, we must offer life instead of (spiritual) death.

Children Set-Apart

Just as God uses adults to bring about the work of the Kingdom in this world, God also chooses children to carry out the divine plan. On several occasions, children are set apart for a specific purpose that is tied to the fate of Israel. In Exodus, the emphasis is placed on the birth and rescue of Moses, whose life is inextricably tied with that of Israelite history. Miriam, Moses’ sister, is used by God to secure Moses’ well-being after he is pulled out of the Nile by Pharaoh’s daughter. She accomplishes this through her courage to speak up to the daughter of the oppressor. The part Miriam plays in the life of her brother also has lasting impact on the fate of the Hebrews.

The tale of the barren woman and God's divine intervention to provide children is a recurring theme throughout the Old Testament. Both Samson and Samuel are products of this tradition, and both are set apart for a purpose. Samson, from infancy, is set apart by God to begin the deliverance of Israel from the bondage of the Philistines. God choosing Samson was to be illustrated by his commitment to a lifelong Nazarite vow (Judges 13:4, 5). Therefore, from an early age we can see God's work in Samson's life.

Samuel is also set apart from an early age in a bleak time in Israel's history.

1 Samuel 3:1 specifically makes mention that "The word of the Lord was rare in those days; visions were not widespread." However, God speaks directly to the boy Samuel to confirm the prophecy of judgment which had been given to Eli the High Priest. This event reveals that even as a young boy, Samuel was used by God in the office of prophet—which he would fill the remainder of his life.

These examples only further reinforce that God chooses to set apart children for divine purpose. In each of these instances, we cannot ignore the role that these children played in the life of Israel. We should not be surprised that God speaks to children and we, as a church, must nurture in them an ability to recognize that voice allowing them to participate in the life of our community of faith.

God with Us

The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us (John 1:14). The reality of the incarnation, that God became one of us, heightens our understanding of the value and dignity of humanity. The eternal God became a vulnerable human baby at a dangerous time for baby boys (Matthew 2:16–18). God chose not only to become human, but to become a baby who would pass through the stages of childhood, understanding the totality of the human experience. He would experience the growing pains of childhood with all its confusion, learning processes, emotional and spiritual maturation. Luke 2:40 tells us, "The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him."

While the Christian faith has utilized the incarnation to say that each human has dignity and worth, children are often left out of this equation due to the fact that there is very little emphasis placed upon Jesus the child.⁶ However, we must grant the same dignity and worth to children, from infancy throughout childhood, as we do adults. It was not by accident that God decided to share in all of our human experiences and it is the very fact that God, the creator of the universe, became a child that moves us to see the value of children among us. Therefore, at the very heart of the incarnation is an affirmation of the value that God places on all humans, but especially points to the dignity of children.⁷

Children and the Kingdom of God

The gospels record Jesus' statements concerning the question "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" (Matthew 18:1-5; Mark 9:33-37; Luke 9:46-48). In the Roman world, the notion of "greatness" or being the "greatest" had to do with status, wealth, and power among the imperial elite. The disciple's reaction to children and babies being brought to Jesus in Luke 18:15-17 points out that they were not far from the Roman view of children. They did not view babies or children as having enough value to be involved in Jesus' busy schedule. It appears that they viewed them as a nuisance who needed to be sidelined. Jesus' answer to the question "Who is the greatest" is illustrated by His pointing to a child as the example. It is the humble, the servants of all, and the least of all who are accepted into His kingdom. Jesus is making a shocking, counter-cultural statement by placing a child in their midst who was viewed as "excluded from adult, male society, powerless, without economic resources, vulnerable, unpredictable, threatening (and) submissive."⁸

This answer must have been a shock for those listening. The Kingdom is comprised of those who retain childlike faith and humility. All, both adults and children, who possess this childlike faith, are welcome into His kingdom. Therefore children continue to be an example of the kind of heart required to come into the Kingdom.

The church today can also view children as nuisances who cannot fully understand the Gospel or God. Jesus invites us to redefine what we believe the kingdom of God looks like. Jesus' kingdom is not made of those whom the world deems worthy but is composed of those who embrace humility and servitude, no matter their age. In order to be a part of His kingdom, we must become "like children."

The Historical Witness

Early Church and Children

Contrary to the devalued status of children in the ancient world, the early church considered the assimilation of children into the life of the church to be of vital importance. Of course, the process of assimilation began with baptism and the participation in the Eucharist. To be sure, the Reformation challenged and changed the views of the sacramental practices of the church in the Protestant tradition as it relates to children.

The writings of the early church Fathers left a wealth of information that formed the doctrine of the church regarding the place of children in the Christian tradition. Gregory of Nazianzus wrote, "Do you have an infant child? Allow sin no opportunity. Let the infant be sanctified from childhood. From his most tender age, let him be consecrated by the Spirit."⁹ Regarding the salvific work of Christ, Irenaeus said:

He came to save all through himself; I say, who through him are reborn, becoming an infant for infants sanctifying infants, a child for children, sanctifying those who are of that age so that he might be the perfect teacher in all things, perfect not only in respect to the setting forth of truth, perfect also in respect to relative age.¹⁰

John Chrysostom is considered to be the most prolific of the early church Fathers. He was raised as an orphan and his early Christian upbringing had a tremendous influence on his life and his concern for children. He says, “Having children is a matter of nature, but raising them in the virtues is a matter of mind and will.”¹¹ He spoke against the indifference toward children in society. Children were considered as nothing more than pawns in the individualistic pursuit of wealth and power. He made this point:

The downfall of society stems from this disregard for children. Many seek the preservation of their estates, but not for the preservation of the souls in their care.¹²

The theological sentiments of Chrysostom in particular and the early church in general are captured in the following statement by Chrysostom:

Neglect of children is one of the greatest sins, and it is the highest degree of impiety. And so that I might not seem to draw unfounded conclusions, I will demonstrate this with experience itself, so that you will know that even though we may have everything we need, and it is beautifully arranged, we will nevertheless be subjected to the most extreme punishment if we do not take care for the salvation of our children.¹³

The Reformers Approach to Children’s Ministry

The church reformers of the fifteenth century have in many ways left indelible imprints on the mission and ministry of the universal church. Christian families, their beliefs, lifestyle, and praxis have been influenced from then until the present age. Given that children were seen as the hope of their posterity, the reformers like Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, and Simons were concerned that they should be nurtured and educated with sound biblical values in the wake of the division within the Catholic Church.

The early reformers like Luther, Calvin, and Simons were adamant about the responsibility of children giving due honor and respect; obedience, and assistance to their parents. In addition to this, parents had an equivalent duty to **love, nurture, and discipline** their children; this was done for the protection of the children and in the interest of constructing a stable community, especially in the wake of the division. It is worth mentioning that this responsibility extended to children that were conceived and born out of wedlock. “Godly” parents were expected to nurture their children physically and spiritually; this included a strict

but compassionate discipline. Calvin wrote, “Unless men regard their children as the gift of God, they are careless and reluctant in providing for their support” (quoted in Pitkin, p. 171).

Affirmation of the Historical Value of Children in the Church of God of Prophecy

From its inception, the Church of God of Prophecy has placed a high value on children. Discussions on discipling children in an official Assembly can be found as early as 1906. These earliest dialogs usually involved the discussion of Sunday school or some other auxiliary, but, it was evident from the context that children were the primary focus:

We highly favor this important service as a means to teach the children to reverence God’s Word and the house appointed for worship, and also, to elevate the morals of a community. It is, therefore, the sense of this Assembly to recommend, advise, and urge every local Church to have a Sunday school every Sunday during the whole year.¹⁴

As the church expanded rapidly so did its ideas and thoughts toward children. Although the Church of God of Prophecy was taking root in rural areas of the southeastern United States, during a time when children were largely thought by the wider culture of the region to need very little attention, the church found itself going against this cultural norm. A great example of this developing thought is found in a discourse by A. J. Lawson. His sermon to the 1912 Assembly is notable for its progressive ideas of children in the Sunday school being likened unto a horticultural nursery full of young and tender plants. Perhaps his most surprising statements are those in which he stresses what he calls the “shallow idea” that if a class of boys and girls can be made to sit quietly and hear the lesson a suitable goal has been achieved. He sees in children kernels of valuable seed that, if given attention, will soon become a great harvest. His discourse is as follows:

I will commence by asking a question. What relation has the Sunday school to the church? It is the nursery of the church. I never realized the need of a nursery until I visited one in a large florist establishment. The gentleman in charge of it told me that they take any kind of seed, just so it has a kernel, and plant it. They depend upon the budding for the fruit. I have since thought that we ought to bring into the Sunday school all the material we can find, not matter what they are and see if we can’t raise sturdy men and women, with clean, pure characters for Christ. In a few years, the church will look for new members from the ranks of the Sunday school. There is not enough attention given by the teachers to the salvation of their pupils. It is thought that just so long as a class has someone standing in front of it, and the children do not misbehave too much, it is all right, but that is a shallow idea. The teacher has in his or her hands the lives of boys and girls who will

one day become the very ones who will sit in the seats of authority, and the after life depends largely on the training in Sunday school.¹⁵

From this time forward the push for Sunday schools as means for reaching children was given great emphasis. Only one year later, in the 1913 Assembly, the church began to feel a great burden and yielded themselves to the Holy Spirit—which produced cries, tears, and prayers for children to be reached. The official Church wanted a Sunday school in every town.

Following these early years, the Church of God developed and talked about many avenues for reaching children with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Programs such as the Cradle Roll, Gleaners, Vacation Bible Schools, Victory Leaders Band, and youth camps were developed and promoted. Children were encouraged and expected to receive the full blessings of God.

In the letter to Timothy from the apostle Paul, there is a clear indication of the importance of children being brought up in the faith. When Timothy's spiritual father addresses the faith that "dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois and thy mother Eunice" (2 Timothy 1:5), he is clearly alluding to the positive benefits of children being exposed early in childhood to God. In many areas of the COGOP, we have had a wonderful heritage of children being reared and disciplined in Jesus Christ. Many of our greatest leaders are the product of the great value we have placed on a child in our community of faith. Thankfully, we have a strong heritage of ministering to children and recognizing their value. Yet, by honest confession, we must admit that in our present times, we have been lacking the same due diligence. Therefore, moving forward, we must continue to create a greater recognition for intentional discipleship, the need of providing better facilities and ministers for them, and also by fostering an accepting environment and attitude that sees children for their inestimable worth to God, to our families, to this church, and to our communities.

The Practical Witness

God's Presence and Work—Conception, Infancy, and Dedication

Conception is not just the beginning of physical life but also the beginning of a child's spiritual life. Throughout the Scripture we find examples of this truth. The Lord spoke to Jeremiah, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart" (Jeremiah 1:5 NIV). David declares, "Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be" (Psalm 139:16 NIV). Isaiah 49:1 says, "Before I was born the LORD called me; from my mother's womb he has spoken my name." We understand through these Scripture verses that God is present and at work even before a child's birth. Because of this biblical understanding, the Church can proclaim the value of and protect the life of the unborn.

Infancy is a time of developing a trusting relationship between parents and the infant. A trusting relationship with the infant is built through caring touches, affectionate tone of voice, and appropriate, timely responses to the infant's physical needs. A strong relationship between the infant and parents forms a foundation for all future relationships. As the parents are developing this bond of trust by attending to the child's physical needs, they must also be attentive to the child's spiritual development.

The church has an important role to play during infancy as well. They provide support and guidance to the parents of infants and young children. They declare God's love for the infant by providing a safe, loving environment where the infant's needs are met and foundational truths about who God is are taught using age-appropriate methods.

Dedication of an infant or young child reflects the parents' commitment to their child's spiritual development. Infant dedication is a ceremony in which believing parents, and sometimes entire families, make a commitment before the Lord to submit a child to God's will and to raise that child according to God's Word and God's ways. While infant dedication is not a scriptural command, we do see an example in Hannah's dedication of Samuel. Hannah intentionally gave her child back to the Lord in fulfillment of a vow she made while praying at the tabernacle (1 Samuel 1:11). The words Hannah spoke when she presented her son to Eli the priest expresses what should be the sincere desire of believing parents. "I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him. So now I give him to the Lord. For his whole life he will be given over to the Lord" (1 Samuel 1:27, 28 NIV). Infant or child dedication is a commitment the parents make before the faith community to accept their scriptural responsibility to love God, keep His commandments foremost in their hearts, and impress them on their children through everyday instruction and modeling (Deuteronomy 6:4-7).

Dedication allows the community of faith to express its commitment and responsibility toward the child as well. Passages from both the Old and New Testament help us understand that the community of faith (the local church) should encircle the family providing love, support, and guidance. The community of faith is responsible to tell the next generation (infants, children, and youth) about the works of God (Psalm 78:4). It is responsible to help believing children become spiritually mature (Ephesians 4:12, 13). And it is responsible to prepare parents for the work of service God has assigned to them, to bring their children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 4:12, 6:4).

Infant dedication does not assure the child's salvation. An infant is not able to understand sin, forgiveness, the sacrifice our Savior made for us, and what it means to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Infant dedication represents a commitment made by the infant's family and by the congregation. It is not a decision made by the infant and therefore cannot be seen as a response to

salvation. Only after the child understands that he is a sinner, willingly admits his sinfulness, and believes on Jesus as his Savior from sin can he choose to be baptized as a testimony of his personal decision to follow Christ.

Pregnancy, birth, and infancy are significant opportunities for the local church to establish the value of children and affirm God's work in their lives. This understanding of God's presence and work in the life of the unborn and infants:

Provides scriptural basis for the church to proclaim the value of and protect the life of the unborn.

Offers parents the opportunity through the process of child dedication to understand and embrace their Scriptural responsibility (Deuteronomy 6:4–9; Ephesians 6:4) and make a public commitment to fulfill that responsibility.

Offers the church an opportunity to celebrate life and make a public commitment to partner with parents in nurturing faith in the soul of every child.

Mandates that the church fulfill its role of preparing Christian families for the “works of service” God has purposed for them to do, namely, the spiritual training of their children (Ephesians 2:10; 4:12; 6:4). The church accepts its scriptural responsibility to provide expectant and adopting families, as well as families of young children, with scriptural guidance, relevant parenting tools, and a relational support system.

Mandates that the church affirm the value and spiritual life of infants and young children by providing age-appropriate biblical instruction in a loving and safe environment.

The Child's Response

Salvation

God desires a relationship with every child and is reaching out to all children. Even children who are not exposed to biblical teaching can sense God's presence and care through creation (Psalm 19:1–3), through circumstances, and through relationships.

Can a child be saved? A significant step in responding to the presence and work of God is admission of sin and repentance that brings salvation. Some individuals question whether or not a child can be saved. They doubt that a child has the intellectual or spiritual understanding to grasp the biblical truths of salvation. What is the requirement for being saved? In Matthew 18:6 Jesus describes children as “these little ones who *believe* in me.” When the Philippian jailer asked Paul and Silas, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” Paul replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household” (Acts 16:30, 31 NIV). According to this and other verses such as John 3:16, the requisite for being saved from our sins is believing in Jesus. If children can believe (Matthew 18: 6), then it follows that children can be saved.

Why do children need to be saved? Romans 3:23 verifies that all of us are sinners, including children. Children inherited a sin nature because of Adam's disobedience (Romans 5:12). Because of that sin nature individuals, including children, commit acts of sin.

How can a child be saved? The Scripture teaches that when we become aware of our sinfulness, there must be an appropriate response (Acts 2:37, 16:30). The child's response to his conscious and deliberate sinfulness is repentance. Repentance leads to a change of heart and lifestyle. Children can admit their sins to God. To lay a biblical foundation that enables the child to make the appropriate response to the awareness of sin, we must teach the following biblical truths:

- Who God is, including the holiness of God and the love of God
- The nature of sin and the need for a Savior
- The provision made by Christ's death on the cross
- The response the child must make
- The assurance of salvation

Experiencing a Sanctified Life

The Greek word for sanctify is *hagiazō*, which means to be "separate" or "set apart." Throughout the Bible, especially in the Old Testament, people, places, and things were set apart by God in order that His purposes could be accomplished. Believing children are also "set apart" through sanctification. (See the Biblical Witness section, "Children Set Apart.")

Even though through sanctification they are "set apart", children continue to experience an inner struggle—a struggle between their Spirit-led nature that wants to do what pleases God and their self nature that wants to do what pleases self. Paul understood this conflict and describes it in Galatians 5:17 (NIV),

For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.

This inner conflict can be detrimental to believing children. Their struggle with sin can cause them to doubt their salvation and their ability to live lives that are pleasing to God. If children are to experience victorious Christian living and become fully mature, they must understand their part in sanctification and become fully engaged in the sanctification process.

While sanctification is God's ongoing work in the heart of a child, the child has a responsibility to do his part in the sanctification process. A believing child must learn to yield self-will to God, to give Him lordship in particular areas of their lives. Through a time of repentance, children can cleanse themselves from sinful

thoughts, desires, attitudes, and actions. Children can work with God in the process of spiritual growth by participating in spiritual disciplines such as prayer, reading God's Word, worship, service, fasting, solitude, etc.

Children can learn what temptation is and how to respond to temptation. Children can understand why they sometimes "give in" to temptation. These experiences can be used to help children understand the wrong desires that are in their hearts, confess them and turn away from them. Children can learn to respond correctly to temptation. Children can learn to respond correctly when they sin.

Living a Spirit Filled Life

Believing children can live a Spirit-filled life. Every believing child has the presence of the Holy Spirit in his life. When a child believes in Jesus as his Savior from sin and receives God's gift of salvation, the Holy Spirit comes to live in his life. (Scriptures that verify this truth include Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 6:19, and 2 Timothy 1:14.)

Holy Spirit Baptism

The prophet Joel prophesied of the outpouring of Holy Spirit baptism saying, "I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions" (Joel 2:28, 29 NIV). This prophecy, which was first fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost after Jesus' return to heaven, states clearly that Holy Spirit baptism is for all people, including children. Parents, pastors, and those who minister to children in the local church are to prepare children's hearts to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Children can understand the truths related to Holy Spirit baptism. Share biblical accounts of the Holy Spirit's work and Holy Spirit baptism.

Share accounts of children who have recently experienced Holy Spirit baptism and of the Holy Spirit's work in the lives of children.

Create an environment of praise that allows children to focus on God and freely express their worship to Him.

The Holy Spirit comes to us as we ask in faith. Increase children's faith by reminding them of God's desire to baptize them in the Holy Spirit. Encourage the children to ask God for the gift of Holy Spirit baptism and believe that He is going to answer using the biblical illustration in Luke 11:9-13.

Invite children to receive the gift of Holy Spirit baptism. Fear and doubt often keep us from inviting children to receive Holy Spirit baptism. We are afraid that the children will not respond, that we won't know how to pray with them, or that the children who do respond will be disappointed. But it is God's responsibility to baptize children in the Holy Spirit. As parents,

pastors, and children's ministers we are to do our part—teach basic truths, create an atmosphere of worship and expectation, and invite children to receive what God has for them.

Experiencing the Spirit-filled Life

Children can experience the Spirit-filled life by examining the fruit of the Spirit in their lives. God's Word tells us in Galatians 5:22 that the Holy Spirit produces good fruit in our lives. Children can work with God, allowing the fruit of the Holy Spirit to grow in their lives.

Children can experience the Spirit-filled life as they recognize and exercise the spiritual gifts that God has given them to serve others. We must:

Provide a variety of opportunities for the children to serve so that they can begin to recognize their spiritual gifts.

Make sure that these opportunities begin and end with prayer so that the children understand that these spiritual gifts are effective only as we depend on the Holy Spirit to work through us.

The Church's Response

Discipleship

Statistical research by various Christian research organizations reveals that a majority of young adults who attended church throughout childhood and youth are no longer committed to Christ. Their lifestyles do not reflect a strong adherence to biblical teaching. Ministry to children in the local church seems to have strayed from its original purpose—leading children to Christ and helping them become mature disciples.¹⁶

Responsibility

If the church is to reverse this trend and develop strategies that effectively disciple children, we must first understand and accept our responsibility. Passages in both the Old and New Testament clearly place responsibility for spiritual development of children not only on the family but also on the community of believers, the local church.

The writer of Psalm 78 was addressing the Israelite community when he said, "My people, hear my teachings," (v. 1). He continues his instructions saying, "We (the Israelite community) will not hide them (God's laws) from their descendants; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done" (v. 4). What would be the result of the Israelite community telling the next generation? "So the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children" (v. 6). Ephesians 4:11–16 outlines the church's responsibility to disciple using phrases such as

“prepare God’s people for works of service”, “until we all...become mature”, and “we will in all things grow up in him.” Often we infer that this passage refers to the discipleship of adults, not children. However, in chapters 5 and 6 of the same book Paul gives specific instruction to husbands, wives, parents, children, slaves, and masters. The inclusion of children in Paul’s address fully suggests that Paul considered children to be members of the Body of Christ who are in need of spiritual instruction and discipline.

Transformational

The church must not only accept responsibility for the spiritual development of children and young people, it must also have an accurate understanding of what discipleship is. The church often equates discipleship with Bible knowledge. Children’s programs focus on learning the stories of the Bible and memorizing Bible passages and Bible facts. While Bible knowledge is foundational in discipleship, the essence of discipleship is not informational. Jesus did not merely ask us to teach everything He commanded. He asked us to teach people to obey everything He commanded (Matthew 28:19). The end result of discipleship is not just the knowledge of all Jesus commanded but the obedience to all Jesus commanded.

Intentional

When we develop a discipleship plan for the children of our congregations we should plan with the end in mind:

- What do we want children to know?
- What do we want children to do?
- What do we want children to become?

To effectively disciple children three elements must be in place—prayer, relationship, and content. These elements must not occur randomly. They must be intentionally and strategically implemented.

Prayer

Throughout the Scriptures, we understand that transformational discipleship is God’s work. Philippians 1:6 says, “For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus. Philippians 2:13 says, “For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

Dependence on God is always evidenced in prayer. We see this dependence exhibited in Jesus when He corrected Peter during His last supper with the disciples:

- And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren (Luke 22:31, 32).

Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers (NIV).

Effective discipleship ministries are birthed in prayer and sustained by consistent prayer. Children are prayed over by individuals and groups of people in the faith community. These prayers are consistent and focused prayers. Children are taught the value of prayer, learn how to pray, and are involved in the ministry of prayer.

Relationship

Effective discipleship ministries are relational ministries. Jesus recognized the powerful influence of relationship. Mark 3:14 tells that He chose twelve men to “be with Him.” It was in the context of relationship that they became disciples. Children will never become Christ-centered simply through programs and events. They, too, will become true disciples in the context of relationships. Again, effective discipleship ministries must strategically plan to develop impacting relationships between the child and his family, the congregation and children’s ministers.

Content

The final element of discipleship is content. We must look intently at the content we are teaching children. Before children reach adolescence their belief system is in place. In children’s ministry we have the opportunity to help them develop a belief system that is consistent with the truths of God’s Word. How will we do this?

We must help our children develop a commanding knowledge of the Bible. A commanding knowledge of the Bible goes beyond being able to retell a Bible story or recite a Bible verse. A commanding knowledge of the Bible is a knowledge that includes:

Understanding principle Bible truths

Committing Bible verses to long term memory that affirm these principles and provide insight on how to live out Bible truth

Correctly applying Bible truths to life situations so that the child’s responses honor God

The ability to use the Bible and basic study tools so the child is able to study God’s Word independently

Children in Ministry

“What would happen if we got kids excited about doing something with their faith at an earlier age? Perhaps the next generation would grow up with the understanding that serving was simply a way of life for a follower of Christ.”¹⁷

Throughout the Old and New Testament, we see children involved in ministry. Miriam carefully guarded her infant brother Moses. The slave girl witnessed to her unbelieving master Naaman and he experienced healing. Josiah who became king at the age of eight brought religious reform to Israel. A boy shared his lunch allowing five thousand people to be fed. The children in the Temple recognized Jesus as God's Son and shouted His praises.

Perhaps the most significant biblical instance of children in ministry is Samuel's service at the tabernacle. The Scripture tells us that Samuel ministered before the Lord, a child wearing a linen ephod (1 Samuel 2:18). We also learn from the beginning chapters of first Samuel that Samuel lit the lamps and opened the doors of the tabernacle (1 Samuel 3:15).

Samuel's ministry helps us to understand that children can serve God practically just as Samuel lit the lamps and opened the doors of the tabernacle, the children of our local churches can greet visitors, serve as ushers, provide care for younger children (with supervision), help with janitorial and maintenance duties, serve on technical teams, and more. But children can also minister before the Lord as Samuel did. With inspirational and practical training children can be powerful intercessors, witnesses, and worshipers. As children minister before the Lord we can help them identify and develop their spiritual gifts, gifts such as giving, leadership, teaching, pastoring, evangelizing, healing and more.

Statistically, it is true that many children choose to leave the church when they become young adults. But what if we engaged them as children in kingdom work? What if we challenged them to find God's purpose for their lives and begin fulfilling it NOW? What if we invited them to minister before the Lord as children? Teaching children to participate in ministry, we allow opportunities not only for spiritual growth, but to identify and develop their spiritual gifts.

Recommendations

We recommend that—

1. The Church of God of Prophecy prioritize this facet of ministry through its global vision and mission statements so that each local church values children and encourages their spiritual development.
2. Each local church assesses its present view of children and ministry to them using a diagnostic tool available through the international children's ministry office.
3. Each local church develops and implements a ministry model that includes evangelization of unchurched children and on going discipleship of all children.

4. That every pastor becomes an advocate speaking out for the value of children and ministry to them and takes a leading role to ensure that qualified individuals lead children's ministry.
5. Each local church provides a safe environment using the Church of God of Prophecy Child, Youth, and Worker Protection Policy.
6. Each local church provides adequate resources (human, physical, and financial) to support effective ministry to children.
7. Each local church provides ministry training and leadership development for those who serve children. Ministry training and leadership development resources and events are available through the international children's ministry office.
8. Each local church provides support, resources, and guidance to families so that they may accomplish the task of spiritually nurturing their children.
9. Each local church is sensitive and responsive to diverse and broken families.
10. Each local church creates an environment that encourages children to be saved, live a holy life, and receive Holy Spirit baptism.
11. Children be incorporated into the life and worship of the local church.
12. Believing children be instructed in the meaning of the sacraments (i.e. baptism and communion) and be given opportunity to participate under the guidance of church leadership and Christian parents.
13. The spiritual gifts of children be recognized and developed so they are prepared for a life of service now and in the future.

Respectfully submitted with prayer and gratefulness to God,

Assembly Committee for Biblical Doctrine and Polity:

Wallace R. Pratt, Chairman
Elias Rodriguez, Secretary
Carswell Leonard, Asst. Secretary
Daniel Chatham
James Kolawole
Tedroy Powell
Timothy McCaleb

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- ⁴ Roy B. Zuck, *Precious in His Sight: Childhood and Children in the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), 82.
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- ⁶ Marcia J. Bunge, “Children, the Image of God, and Christology.” *Who is Jesus Christ for Us Today? Pathways to Contemporary Christology*, ed. Andreas Schuele and Gunter Thomas (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 167–174.
- ⁷ *Ibid.* 167–174.
- ⁸ Warren Carter, “Matthew,” in the *New Interpreter’s Study Bible: NRSV with the Apocrypha* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003), 1178.
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- ¹⁴ *Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Churches of East Tennessee, North Georgia and Western North Carolina*, Held January 26 & 27 1906, at Camp Creek, N.C., 8.
- ¹⁵ *Minutes of the Seventh Assembly Of the Churches of God*, Held at Cleveland, Tenn., January 9-14, 1912, 26.
- ¹⁶ Ivy Beckwith, *Postmodern Children’s Ministry*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 9–11.
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Report of the Finance and Stewardship Committee To the 98th International Assembly

I. ECFA Recognition (Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability)

The Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA) is an accrediting organization dedicated to helping Christian ministries earn the public's trust through adherence to Seven Standards of Responsible Stewardship™, which focus on board governance, financial transparency, integrity in fundraising, and proper use of charity resources.

The basis for establishing the ECFA and developing Seven Standards of Responsible Stewardship™ is stated clearly by the apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 8:21 (NIV), “For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of men.”

We are pleased to report the Church of God of Prophecy continues, since the past International Assembly, to meet the criteria for recognition by the ECFA. The Church's Executive Director of Finance & Administration, Paul Holt, and the entire finance team are to be commended for their efforts and diligence in maintaining this accreditation.

II. Statement of Reaffirmation Regarding Pastoral Compensation

“The treasurer of the local church is to send 10 percent of all tithes received into the local church each month along with the monthly treasurer's report to the International Offices (United States, Virgin Islands): all other locations, reports should be sent to their national/regional office, in their respective area, or contact their national overseer for the correct information.” (Present Financial System, p.76, 96th International Assembly Minutes)

Pastoral compensation is to receive first consideration of the 90 percent of tithes remaining in the local church. A minimum base salary for pastors where funds are available is suggested each year by the Administrative Committee. This amount is not intended to reflect a maximum compensation, but a base upon which to build. Health insurance coverage, retirement assistance, educational assistance, and other benefits should be considered in addition to the base salary and should be funded from the 90 percent of tithes remaining in the local church treasury.

In those local churches where funds are not available to pay the minimum base salary, the 90 percent of tithes remaining in the local church is designated as pastoral compensation until the recommended base salary is met. The key role of pastors must not be underestimated. In this church, we want to be pastor passionate.

III. Financial Ethics

RATIONALE

The goal of living “above reproach” should be our target in every aspect of Christian living. Within the body of Christ we strive to serve with the highest ethics. Financial accountability is imperative at all levels.

The conduct of individuals given responsibility for handling church finances has a direct effect on the reputation and trust level of that particular body. It also affects the level of trust individuals have in giving. A good reputation is earned on a continuing basis by performing one’s responsibility with competence, appropriate confidentiality, and integrity. Our commitment should be to maintain the highest standards of financial accountability.

We recognize the difficulty at times to find one who is qualified and willing to assume the responsibility of church treasurer. Since it is a position that must be filled, at times it may appear there is no alternative but for the pastor, his/her spouse, or another pastoral family member to be appointed to this position. Though made with the best intentions, this decision places the pastor and his/her family in a vulnerable position.

RECOMMENDATION

In order to provide protection to the pastoral/ministry family and avoid a possible conflict of interest, and in the interest of fiscal integrity, pastors or members of the pastoral family should not serve as treasurer of the ministry body served. (This also applies to the state/regional/national levels of ministry)

In extreme circumstances, where there appears to be no other option, approval must be granted by the state/regional/national overseer. For states/regions/nations, approval must be granted by the respective general presbyter.

Respectfully submitted,

Bishop Tim Coalter, Chairman

Bishop Franklin Ferguson

Bishop George McLaughlin

Bishop Jesse Yanez

Bishop Jay Croyle

Bishop H. Wayne Hall

Londa Richardson, Recording Secretary

Angie Zamora

Tomlinson Center Advisory Board Report to the 98th International Assembly

Introduction

The 2012-14 period was marked by a number of transitions in personnel and structural relationships of the Tomlinson Center. In response to the expressed desire of former General Overseer, Bishop Randall Howard, and the General Presbyters, to see greater synergy among the departments providing leadership development programs, the Tomlinson Center, International Youth Ministries Department, International Children's Ministries Department and the Center for Biblical Leadership (CBL) began collaborating more closely through the formation of a Leadership Development Advisory Group. The Tomlinson Center Director, Bishop David Bryan, and the reconstituted Tomlinson Center Advisory Board, began a process of review and discernment in October 2012, assisted by Dr. H. E. Cardin, former Director of Tomlinson Center.

Review

We would be remiss if we did not express our profound gratitude for the generous and candid reflections of Dr. Tim Harper, former Chairman of the TC Board, and many of the other members, as we entered the period of review.

The review process underscored the many and varied challenges encountered since the inception of the Tomlinson Center, significant among which were the lack of funding for major capital investment and difficulty attracting Church of God of Prophecy pastors/leaders to the online classes offered in partnership with Lee University beginning in 2006 and the CIMS (Certificate in Ministry Studies) video-based courses. Despite the high quality of both programs and the consistent marketing efforts of the former Director and the Board, approximately 200 Church of God of Prophecy students took online courses between 2006 and 2012 through the online partnership with Lee University. Note that completion of this program would lead to a fully accredited Bachelor's degree in Bible/Christian Ministry. One hundred and forty students participated in the CIMS program, completing cumulatively 328 courses over a span of about three years.

Tomlinson Center Global Schools for Biblical and Ministerial Studies Initiative

The Advisory Board which is comprised of a wonderfully diverse group of leaders, was challenged by its research into contemporary trends in Christian higher education, discussions with key leaders including General Presbyters, overseers, and pastors, feedback from ministry leaders involved in academic

training programs, and consultations with a variety of well-known theological educators including Drs. Daniel Aleshire, President of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), Eldin Villafane, founding director of Gordon-Conwell's Center for Urban Ministerial Education, and Juan Martinez, Associate Provost of Fuller Theological Seminary. Research revealed a variety of campus types in the world of Christian higher education: residential campuses, regional satellite campuses, regional study group sites, classroom only campuses, local church campuses and virtual campuses offering everything from ministerial training (degreed and non-degreed), liberal arts/multidisciplinary academic education, ministry skill development in areas such as media, performing arts, and evangelism/missions to Christian discipleship or spiritual formation programs. A number of critical success factors for program design in light of our prioritized needs and current situation were identified:

- i) knowledge of rapidly evolving technology that facilitates non-traditional approaches;
- ii) low overall cost for students, leading to a high affordability index;
- iii) awareness of recent shifts in the accreditation regulatory environment by accrediting bodies, particularly the Association of Theological Schools (ATS);
- iv) financial feasibility for states/regions/nations and the International Office;
- v) accessibility for interested students throughout North America, as well as other nations and cultures;
- vi) a highly formational approach that equips leaders in a Wesleyan-Pentecostal framework for ministry in the Church of God of Prophecy;
- vii) flexibility of delivery and relevance for present and future ministers, along with "full-time" and bi-vocational "tent-making" ministers; and
- viii) appeal to younger pastors/leaders and potential ministers (18-30 years of age).

After consideration of various approaches, one model emerged that met the criteria for educational credibility, affordability, accessibility, sustainability and flexibility. This modular approach was recommended to, and approved by, the General Presbyters. It is a field-originated strategy that began in California in 2001 as a local church-based Bible Institute, pioneered by Bishop Lionel Ochoa, and then followed by Dr. Rufino Merlo, one of our pastors, who was attending Fuller Theological Seminary at the time. With strong support from overseer Jose Garcia, this modular approach currently has 1,100 students and has expanded to 45 Bible Institute sites and 10 Bible College sites meeting throughout California,

as well as Oregon, Washington, Louisiana, Mexico and Bolivia. The model entails ‘classroom-based campuses’ in church-owned buildings, with between 20-100 students, being taught by qualified adjunct faculty. This program is now the foundation of the Tomlinson Center Global Schools for Biblical and Ministerial Studies. The TC Global Schools is currently going through the AETH (i.e. Association of Hispanic Theological Educators) certification process. In light of the recent joint agreement between ATS (i.e. Association of Theological Schools in United States and Canada) and AETH, the certification from AETH will allow the graduates of TC Global Schools to receive automatic eligibility to enter any graduate programs (i.e. Masters) of ATS member schools, including Fuller Seminary or the Pentecostal Theological Seminary (PTS), for example.

Students attend classes with flexible schedules, in church-owned facilities and must complete 22 courses for 66 credits for the Diploma (Bible Institute level) and an additional 20 courses for 60 credits for the baccalaureate degree level. Tuition for a three-credit course at the Bible Institute level is \$65 (may be lower in some countries in the Two-Thirds world). Cost for a three-credit course at the Bible college level is \$150 (may be lower in some countries in the Two-Thirds world). The programs include classroom components with a focus on effective ministry functioning.

A number of factors have been providential in the emergence of this approach to advancing the vision for Bachelor’s level training for ministers in the church: a) the certification agreement between ATS and AETH which was only finalized within the last two years; b) the existence of a widening pool of qualified instructors as a rapidly increasing number of pastors and overseers are training formally and graduating from excellent seminaries like Gordon-Conwell, PTS, and Fuller; c) the high degree of cost effectiveness for students and administrative offices; d) the time-tested nature of the California model which has operated successfully for more than a dozen years; and e) the opportunity it provides for many more leaders to access high quality ministry training and advance to Master’s level training at Gordon-Conwell, PTS, or other seminaries.

The Tomlinson Center Director will be working closely with General Presbyters and national/state/regional overseers to identify appropriate locations for establishing TC Global Schools sites throughout the world.

Tomlinson College Property

A Cleveland-based site is envisioned that could utilize a portion of the former Tomlinson College property, if deemed most cost effective, and develop incrementally as this model grows. This would allow for exploration of potential uses of other portions for development, community ministry and revenue generation.

Current Partnerships

The partnership with Lee University's Department of Adult Learning allows Church of God of Prophecy students to pursue fully accredited Bachelor's degrees online in Bible/ministry studies at a significant savings of 50 percent off the regular tuition. This continues to be a viable option for qualified persons.

The CIMS Program (Certificate in Ministry Studies) has provided a vehicle for some of our ministers to receive training through individual or small group study. The program consists of non-accredited video-based courses, many of which are available in a number of languages in which quality training materials are at a premium.

Appreciation

As we have engaged in this challenging work, we have been struck by our ongoing need for a keener sense of dependence on God and awareness of the limits of our best efforts. We are not so arrogant as to insinuate that our work is complete. We accomplish in our entire life times only a miniscule fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work. In this matter of seeking a way forward in enhancing our leadership development efforts we recognize we are taking steps, which may be variously assessed as small and significant. However, we are grateful for the opportunity and we continue to pray for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest, as He charts a future that we can only glimpse. We thank all those who have invested the vision of equipping leaders for the church with their prayers and passion and pray that God will continue to show us the way.

With humble joy and anticipation,
Tomlinson Center Advisory Board

David Bryan, Chairman and Director of Tomlinson Center
Morais Cassell
Jose Garcia
Don Knoblich
Carswell Leonard
Wade Patterson
Wayne Pense
Steve Spears
Abigail Spears-Velázquez

Section 5

Financial Reports

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Administrative Committee of the Church of God of Prophecy
International Offices • Cleveland, Tennessee

We have audited the accompanying combined financial statements of Church of God of Prophecy International Office (domestic and international operating accounts as controlled by the Administrative Committee), which comprise the combined statements of financial position as of May 31, 2014 and 2013, and the related combined statements of activities and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the combined financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Combined Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these combined financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these combined financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the combined financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the combined financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the combined financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the combined financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the combined financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the combined financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Church of God of Prophecy International Office as of May 31, 2014 and 2013, and the changes in its net assets and cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Capin Crouse LLP
Atlanta, Georgia • July 18, 2014

**CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY
INTERNATIONAL OFFICE
Combined Statements of Financial Position**

	May 31	
	2014	2013
ASSETS:		
Current assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 3,622,112	\$ 3,171,117
Investments	4,493,948	4,737,982
Accounts receivable—net	240,368	366,509
Inventory—net	682,973	631,041
Prepays and other assets	668,357	512,388
	9,707,758	9,419,037
Assets held for long-term purposes	1,701,042	1,700,007
Property and equipment—net	1,412,016	1,557,582
Total Assets	\$ 12,820,816	\$ 12,676,626
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS:		
Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable	\$ 41,739	\$ 175,989
Accrued expenses	181,764	212,756
Deferred revenue	34,602	27,562
	258,105	416,307
Deferred compensation liability	1,701,042	1,700,007
Total liabilities	1,959,147	2,116,314
Net assets:		
Unrestricted:		
Undesignated	8,173,751	7,451,060
Designated	-	157,768
Equity in property and equipment	1,412,016	1,557,582
	9,585,767	9,166,410
Temporarily restricted	1,275,902	1,393,902
Total net assets	10,861,669	10,560,312
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 12,820,816	\$ 12,676,626

CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY
INTERNATIONAL OFFICE
Combined Statements of Activities
Year Ended May 31, 2014

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
Support and Revenue:			
Member and church contributions	\$ 7,169,879	\$ 2,061,494	\$ 9,231,373
Conferences and retreats	40,925	-	40,925
Sales revenue	1,242,915	-	1,242,915
Rental income	143,224	-	143,224
Publications revenue	57,281	-	57,281
Investment income	412,203	-	412,203
Other income	<u>789,446</u>	-	<u>789,446</u>
Total Support and Revenue	<u>9,855,873</u>	<u>2,061,494</u>	<u>11,917,367</u>
Reclassifications:			
Net assets released due to satisfaction of purpose restrictions	<u>2,179,494</u>	<u>(2,179,494)</u>	<u>-</u>
Expenses:			
Program services:			
Inspirational Leadership	1,985,675	-	1,985,675
Global Outreach Ministry	3,751,499	-	3,751,499
Leadership Development and Discipleship	1,398,808	-	1,398,808
Tomlinson Center	49,609	-	49,609
Communications	757,463	-	757,463
Finance and Publications Ministries	488,879	-	488,879
Heritage and FOW Ministry	329,656	-	329,656
White Wing Publishing House and Resource Center	1,143,705	-	1,143,705
International Assembly	<u>306,823</u>	-	<u>306,823</u>
	<u>10,211,389</u>	-	<u>10,211,389</u>
Supporting activities:			
Management and general	1,197,956	-	1,197,956
Fund-raising	<u>181,339</u>	-	<u>181,339</u>
	<u>1,379,295</u>	-	<u>1,379,295</u>
Total Expenses	<u>11,590,684</u>	-	<u>11,590,684</u>
Change in Net Assets before Translation Adjustment	444,683	(118,000)	326,683
Translation Adjustment	<u>(25,326)</u>	-	<u>(25,326)</u>
Change in Net Assets	419,357	(118,000)	301,357
Net Assets, Beginning of Year:	<u>9,166,410</u>	<u>1,393,902</u>	<u>10,560,312</u>
Net Assets, End of Year	<u>\$ 9,585,767</u>	<u>\$ 1,275,902</u>	<u>\$ 10,861,669</u>

CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY
INTERNATIONAL OFFICE
Combined Statements of Activities
Year Ended May 31, 2013

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
Support and Revenue:			
Member and church contributions	\$ 7,699,963	\$ 2,804,593	\$ 10,504,556
Conferences and retreats	343,921	-	343,921
Sales revenue	1,312,004	-	1,312,004
Rental income	145,392	-	145,392
Publications revenue	67,009	-	67,009
Investment income	456,601	-	456,601
Other income	<u>787,881</u>	-	<u>787,881</u>
Total Support and Revenue	<u>10,812,771</u>	<u>2,804,593</u>	<u>13,617,364</u>
Reclassifications:			
Net assets released due to satisfaction of purpose restrictions	2,661,580	(2,661,580)	-
Expenses:			
Program services:			
Inspirational Leadership	1,998,175	-	1,998,175
Global Outreach Ministry	4,561,948	-	4,561,948
Leadership Development and Discipleship	1,386,278	-	1,386,278
Tomlinson Center	132,662	-	132,662
Communications	774,616	-	774,616
Finance and Publications Ministries	776,945	-	776,945
Heritage and FOW Ministry	397,752	-	397,752
White Wing Publishing House and Resource Center	1,154,224	-	1,154,224
International Assembly	<u>1,072,004</u>	-	<u>1,072,004</u>
	<u>12,254,604</u>	-	<u>12,254,604</u>
Supporting activities:			
Management and general	1,266,620	-	1,266,620
Fund-raising	152,214	-	152,214
	<u>1,418,834</u>	-	<u>1,418,834</u>
Total Expenses	<u>13,673,438</u>	-	<u>13,673,438</u>
Change in Net Assets before Translation Adjustment	(199,087)	143,013	(56,074)
Translation Adjustment	<u>(40,638)</u>	-	<u>(40,638)</u>
Change in Net Assets	(239,725)	143,013	(96,712)
Net Assets, Beginning of Year:	<u>9,406,135</u>	<u>1,250,889</u>	<u>10,657,024</u>
Net Assets, End of Year	<u>\$ 9,166,410</u>	<u>\$ 1,393,902</u>	<u>\$ 10,560,312</u>

Present Financial System

Note to Ministers and Local Church Treasurers:

Fill in all reports accurately and completely. Write or print plainly. If assistance is needed, write to the Financial Services Director; P.O. Box 2970; Cleveland, Tennessee 37320-2970, or call (423) 559-5114.

Tithing:

Members should pay their tithes into the treasury of the local church where they are members. Licensed ministers and lay ministers, who have been appointed to a pastorate, should pay their tithes on income from the ministry with their monthly report to the national/ regional/state office. National/Regional/State Overseers tithe to their respective General Presbyter's Office. Ministers under general appointment tithe and report to the International Offices. This includes those assigned "trans-local" ministries at the International Offices. Tithes on income earned by ministers outside their ministry are paid into the treasury of the local church where they are members. Lay ministers should pay their tithes into the local church treasury where they are members until they are licensed unless they are serving as a pastor.

Allocation of Tithes:

The treasurer of the local church is to send ten percent (10 percent) of all tithes received into the local church each month along with the monthly treasurer's report to the International Offices (United States, Virgin Islands): all other locations, reports should be sent to their national/regional office, in their respective area, or contact their national overseer for the correct information.

Overseer and Pastoral Compensation:

The General Assembly has given authorization to the Administrative Committee to decide the present base allotment for pastors and overseers each year. The Finance and Stewardship Committee accepted the responsibility, at the request of the Administrative Committee, to decide the allotments of General Workers, the General Presbytery, and the General Overseer each year.

The Administrative Committee is in agreement with the Finance and Stewardship Committee's recommendation that the pastor and overseer allotments be at a set rate per year. This can be paid monthly or weekly (for 52 weeks). However, it is recognized that there are several factors that would present a need to increase the present allotments, which include performance, level of responsibility, and the cost of living in a particular locality. When tithe funds are available, and considering all of the financial needs of that local church, state, region, or nation, an appropriate increase above the present allotment should be considered.

A task force should be chosen at both the local church and the national/ regional/state level to study the feasibility and appropriateness of an increase in

the pastor's or overseer's compensation, respectively. The local church task force should be chosen by members of that local church, and the national/regional/state task force should be chosen by its ministers (those paying tithes to these offices). This task force would serve for a period of two years.

If the Finance and Stewardship Committee (or its equivalent) for the nation, region, state, or local church is vested with the delegated authority of the convention or conference, correspondingly, to consider overseer or pastoral compensation, then any increase in compensation, merit, or cost of living adjustment may be approved by this same commissioned group, who is serving as the fiduciary agent of accountability for the convention or conference being served; otherwise, any increase in compensation, merit, or cost of living adjustment should be approved by a task force as explained above via the ministers paying tithes to that office (nation, region, or state) at their convention or by the members paying tithes to the local church at their regular conference, respectively. However, the Finance and Stewardship Committee (or its equivalent) is not authorized to increase overseer or pastoral compensation in cases when and where the national, regional, state, or local offices have personnel who are supplemented from sources external to their offices and/or conventions/conferences. In such cases, said personnel are subject to the decisions of the Finance and Stewardship Committee (or its equivalent) of the offices supplementing them with funds. (Please note the Finance and Stewardship Committee Report in the *89th Assembly Minutes*, July 1996, for additional information on this subject.)

We have also agreed that all local church treasurers should mail their reports and appropriate portion of tithes to the International Offices and the national/regional/state treasurer no later than the 5th of each month. After the appropriate portion of tithes is sent to the International Offices and the national/regional/state treasurer, the local church treasurer will pay the pastor the amount approved by the local church conference (if different from the present amount), as funds are available.

The national/regional/state treasurer, after receiving the reports from the local churches and the ministry, will pay the overseer the amount approved as outlined above as funds are available. Office expense and/or legitimate business expenses in the ministry incurred by the national/regional/state overseers will be paid by the national/regional/state treasurer from the general funds of that nation/region/state, as funds are available and appropriated by the National/Regional/State Finance and Appropriations Committee.

Overseer's Love Offering:

It is recommended that a love offering for all overseers be received once or twice each year.

Surplus Tithes:

Tithes received by the local church after June 1, 1996, are no longer subject to being accrued and left in the local church treasury for distribution at the end of the fiscal year.

Local Church Ministries Responsibilities:

Local churches retaining a greater percentage of the funds given by the members are at once challenged to . . .

1. Understand the Church's global mission in today's world.
2. Focus on a local ministry, while maintaining involvement with national and international projects.
3. Ensure sufficient financial support is available to reduce the number of bi-vocational pastors and the existence of appropriate pastoral care to meet the needs for growth and maturity.
4. Promote and provide a consistent opportunity to worship the Lord in giving. This should include presently recognized offerings: Harvest and Leadership Development offering, Heritage Ministries (formerly known as CPMA), in addition to special causes and responses in needs. There is a danger of the local church becoming self-serving instead of balancing concern for its own with a desire to bring good news to people everywhere. As we commit to prayer, we believe that God will give us the eyes to see human need and the courage to respond in faith and love.

Mission Fund

The Harvest Partners Ministry Coordinator will work directly with local churches and/or with the assistance of the national/regional/state overseers and the Global Outreach Committee, to implement mission giving through the Harvest Partners Ministry.

This giving also includes support for the national overseers in non-supporting nations. The local churches' regular monthly mission giving and March/October World Mission Drives will be channeled through the Harvest Partners Ministry to the selected nation of choice by each local church. The transition process is still underway, and the following steps should ensure success:

1. The Harvest Partners Ministry Coordinator will coordinate the transition of local churches, connecting with specific nations for their mission giving.
2. Local churches that are not connected through the Harvest Partners Ministry, at this point, will continue to follow the present mission financial system [as indicated below] until they become directly connected through the Harvest Partners Ministry. Effective June 1, 1997, the second Sunday, or regular monthly mission offerings should be sent monthly with the Monthly Treasurer's Report to the International Offices, or the respective Field Office.
3. Consideration will continue to be given to the geographical grouping of local churches to support a given nation/missionary so that a greater opportunity can be afforded for the national overseer/missionary to visit the local church(es).

4. Consideration will be given to a local church as to their choice of national overseer/missionary.

5. The local church will commit to a monthly or yearly amount for a designated nation/missionary. This amount should be mailed to the International Offices with the Monthly Treasurer's Report, to be facilitated in conjunction with the Harvest Partners Ministry Coordinator.

6. The amount of funds received will be earmarked one-hundred percent for that local church's nation/missionary.

7. The Harvest Partners Ministry Coordinator will inform any overseer when a church within his area of responsibility desires to start participating as a Harvest Partner.

8. When participating in the Harvest Partners Ministry, second Sunday, or regular monthly mission giving, and March/October World Mission Drive offerings will help support the local church's yearly commitment to their nation/missionary.

9. In addition to regular monthly offerings for the support of a nation/missionary, other mission projects will arise and can be assumed by a local church, such as building construction, vehicles, equipment, disaster relief, etc. Funding for such special projects is in addition to the local church's yearly commitment and will be distributed as so designated by the local church.

Local Churches Yet to Implement the Harvest Partners Ministry:

If the local church has not yet implemented their mission giving through the Harvest Partners Ministry, as described above, they should continue giving their mission offerings following these procedures:

1. One-hundred percent of all second Sunday or regular monthly mission offerings should be sent monthly to the International Offices with the Monthly Treasurer's Report and will be disbursed accordingly under the direction of the Global Outreach Director/Committee.

2. One-hundred percent of the March and October World Mission Drive offerings should be sent, as soon as collected, to the International Offices with the Monthly Treasurer's Report and will be disbursed accordingly under the direction of the Global Outreach Director/Committee.

Harvest and Leadership Development Offering:

The Harvest and Leadership and Development offering is received and then sent in full (i.e., 100 percent) to the respective National/Regional/State offices from the local church on a monthly basis. This offering should be used by these offices for outreach projects (i.e., ministry education, harvesting souls, discipleship training, leadership development, evangelization, church planting). This offering should equip the National/Regional/State offices with some funds so that they may strategically promote and coordinate collective efforts to enter into the harvest to

win souls, plant churches, train pastors and leaders, and grow the Kingdom of God and the Church of God within their respective nation/region/state.

Supplementary Funds for National/Regional/State Offices:

When there is a need for more operational funds at the National/Regional/State offices beyond the ministerial tithe, these intermediate offices may adopt resolutions in their respective conventions (i.e., that are not in contradiction to the current Assembly rulings or the present financial system) in order to provide them with much-needed additional financial support. For example, some conventions have approved that their local churches send in an additional amount (i.e., equivalent to a certain percentage of the tithe sent to the International Offices) to their respective National/Regional/State offices. Therefore, we encourage these intermediate offices, which have not already done so, to consider adopting similar resolutions in their respective conventions that could provide them with additional financial support.

Heritage Ministries Expense Fund

Membership in Heritage Ministries (CPMA) is \$10 per year and may be paid by each person to the local church treasurer anytime during the year. The local church treasurer should send these funds as collected to the Financial Service's Director (International Offices) or the respective field office, monthly, along with the Monthly Treasurer's Report. In nations outside the United States, the membership fee is set by the national overseer and the appropriate committee.

Membership fees are used for the maintenance of Fields of the Wood and other markers.

Reference to Specific Nations

In recognition that the Church is worldwide, financial procedures necessary for business operations, tax rulings, legal issues, local church conferences, regional/national committees, etc., which are related to specific nations, should be handled through actions of the Administrative Committee. No reference in the *Assembly Minutes* will be required for the future.

Fiscal Responsibility

In order to maintain accountability before the local church communities, the local church, the churches in the nation/region/state, and the International Offices, each level of the Church should prepare a yearly budget with full accountability of how the Church finances perform against the budget presented to the local conference, national/regional/state convention, or General Assembly, as is applicable. Additionally, the National/Regional/State Offices will submit to their respective General Presbyter's Office a copy of their annual financial statement that is reported to their National/Regional/State Convention within 30 days following the said convention. This financial statement is to reflect at a minimum, the following information:

1) National/Regional/State Offices Budget for the previous and current convention

years (with columns showing items budgeted, actual and variance); 2) an income and expense statement; and 3) a balance sheet report showing the total assets and liabilities.

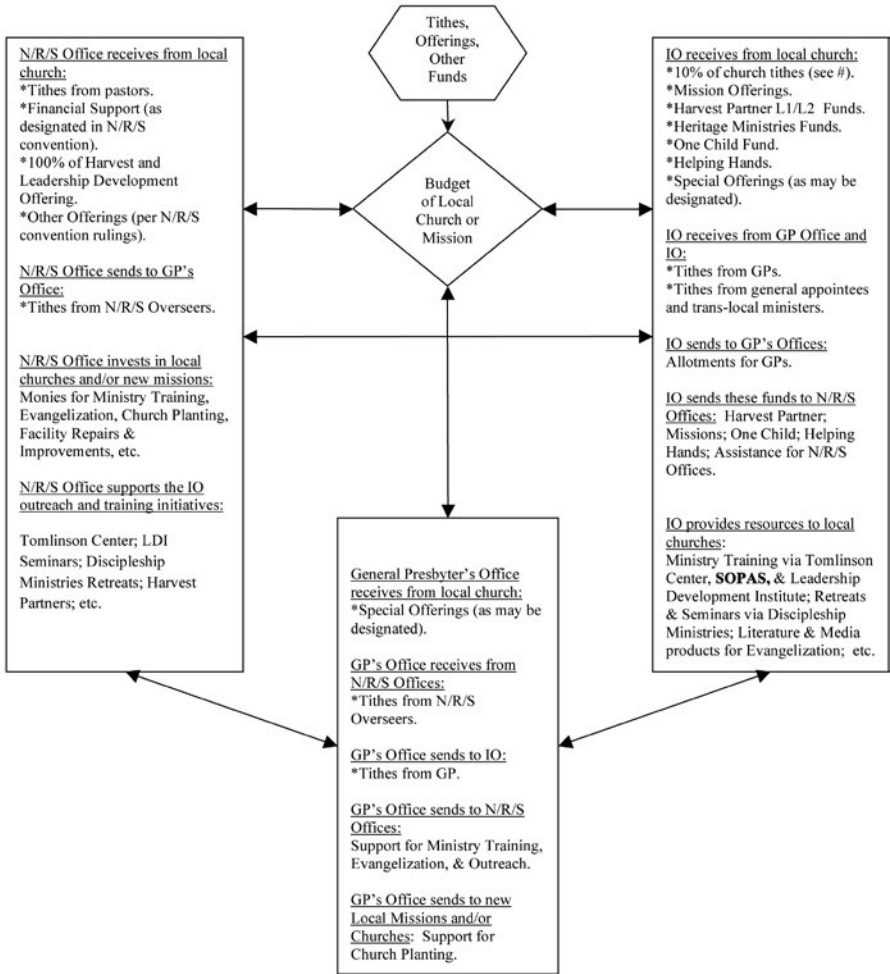
In order to develop consistency in timing of fund-raising, financial reporting, and statistical reporting, it is suggested that the church fiscal year be June 1 through May 31, where possible.

Furthermore, the Finance & Stewardship Chairperson or equivalent at each church office level (i.e., local, national/regional/state, presbytery, international, etc.) will receive an annual report from the supervising office showing that the minister, pastor, overseer, presbyter, general appointee, etc., respectively, has reported and paid tithes faithfully to that supervising office. This practice should encourage accountability and transparency among our church leadership who are serving under appointment. This report will not contain the dollar amount of tithes paid, but would just show how many times the minister, pastor, overseer, presbyter, or other general appointee reported and that he/she did pay tithes faithfully and according to the current Assembly guidelines on record (*94th Assembly Minutes*, Tithing, p. 191).

Retirement Planning and Housing/Parsonage Allowance

We recommend that all ministers under appointment participate in a retirement plan in conjunction with their local churches or national/regional/state/presbytery/international offices, allotting a portion of their annual budget to include some amount to give to their respective pastor/overseer (national, regional, state)/general presbyter/general overseer/or international offices' ministry director, as matching funds for retirement. All ministers under appointment serving as pastor/overseer (national, regional, state)/general presbyter/general overseer/or international offices' ministry director are encouraged to participate in a retirement plan available to them. Where no retirement plan currently exists, the National Overseers, in coordination with the International Offices (i.e., Stewardship Ministries) and their respective General Presbyter, are asked to establish an appropriate retirement plan for their ministers under appointment serving as pastors/overseers/presbyters within the existing laws of their sovereign nations. Additionally, we recommend that each local church or national/regional/state/presbytery/international offices, with respect to the laws of their sovereign nations, designate a reasonable portion of the monthly allotment as a housing or parsonage allowance for their respective pastor/overseer (national, regional, state)/general presbyter/general overseer/or international offices' ministry director, to assist him/her in the upkeep of his/her residence (whether owned personally or by the church) to defray the costs of maintenance, repairs, rent/mortgage, utilities, furnishings, etc.

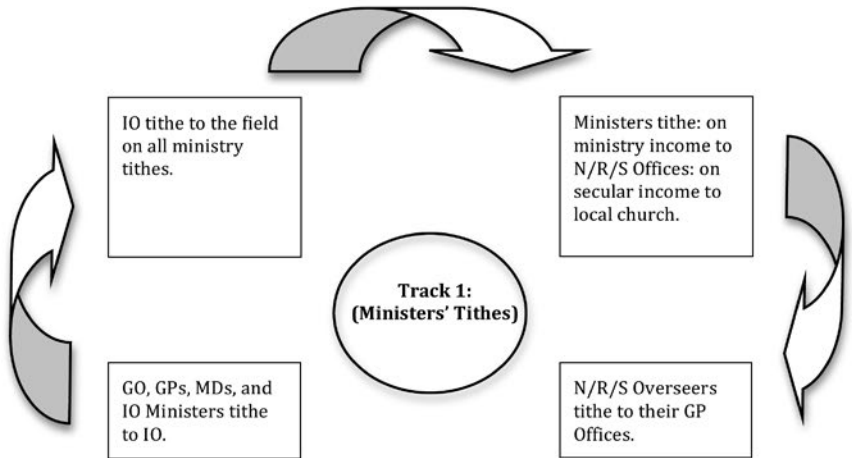
Flowchart/Diagram of Present Financial System



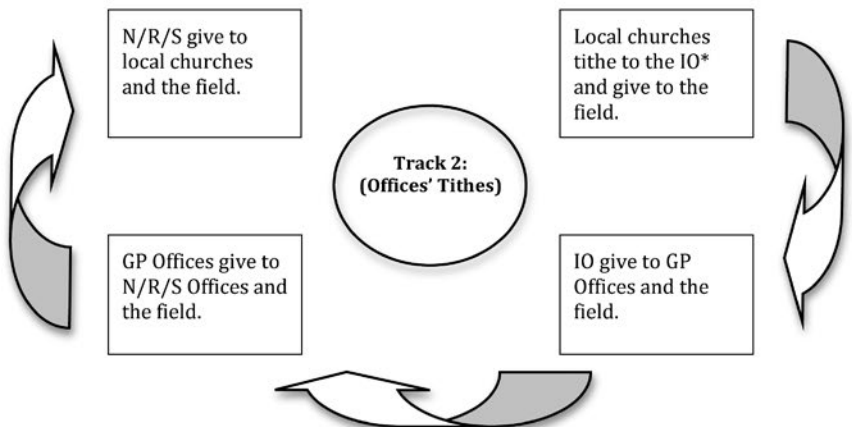
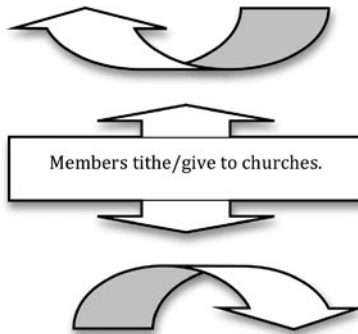
Legend: GP=General Presbyter; IO=International Offices; L1=Level One; L2=Level Two; N/R/S=National/Regional/State.

Note: This flowchart/diagram does not reflect individual donors giving outside the local church treasury. It presumes that all funds from all sources flow through the local treasury. It is to be viewed from the perspective of the treasurers at the local, national, regional, state, Presbytery, and International Offices.

Flowchart/Diagram of Present Financial System



IO=International Offices
 N/R/S=National/Regional/State
 GO=General Overseer
 GP=General Presbyter
 MD=Ministry Director
 * see Allocation of Tithes for Present Financial System



SECTION 5 FINANCIAL REPORTS

Section 6

General Presbyters
and International Offices
Staff Reports
to the 98th
International Assembly

Report of General Presbyter David L. Browder Asia/Oceania for 2012-2014

In the last two years, the Lord has granted great favor in our area of the world. Last year we went into two new countries: Nepal and Kiribati. Those countries have made great progress in spite of the fact that there was no regular flow of financial assistance. As I write this report, Bishop Gary Langley is getting ready to make a trip that will take him to Fiji, Kiribati, and a new island for us, the island of Tuvalu. Bishop Dennis Huang has also organized the church in East Asia this year for which we are very grateful.

Kiribati has established a Bible School/Trade School using material from the International School of Ministry and the skills of local skilled tradesmen. The school is doing well, and is hoping to expand to other South Pacific Islands in the near future.

The work in Nepal continues to make progress, and has now expanded to more of the country. We are scheduled to begin the ACTS/COGOP Consortium there in 2015. This will provide them not only with Bible and Theological Training, but also Entrepreneurial Training that will help them to support the work in their country, as well as participating in the support of the Church of God of Prophecy internationally.

The ACTS/COGOP Consortium is also slated to begin classes in the Philippine Islands and India during the 2015 period. This consortium has also expanded into the continent of Africa for which we are very thankful.

While we have experienced some fluctuation in our statistical information, we have seen significant growth in several of the countries. We are trying to provide accurate accounting of our work. The General Presbyters and the International Offices Administrative Committee have worked closely together to develop new reporting tools to accurately measure the progress of our work in the nations. Asia/Oceania has made a commitment to use these tools to give accountability for the work that is being done in the area.

General Presbyter's Travel

During the 2012-2014 period, I have made extensive trips into Asia/Oceania. I have traveled to India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Myanmar, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Fiji, the Samoan Islands, East Asia, as well as making trips to South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to establish the ACTS/COGOP Consortium in the African Continent. Most of the countries listed were visited twice. I have also attended the Gordon-Conwell/COGOP Consortium meetings during this period. I have participated in meetings of the International Administrative Committee when possible. I have also was a part of the International Counsel of Higher Education (ICHE) meeting in 2012.

It has been a great pleasure serving in the Asia/Oceania Area and the Church of God of Prophecy internationally for these past two years. I count it a great privilege, and honor to be able to represent such a wonderful group of people that my wife and I consider our extended family.

—David L. Browder, General Presbyter

**Report of General Presbyter Sam N. Clements (North America)
2012-2014**

Bishops	1,097
Male Ministers	2,028
Female Ministers	1,001
Sermons	261,172
Converted	41,152
Sanctified	17,878
Holy Ghost	9,722
Baptized in Water	8,877
New Members	9,507
Current Membership	97,268
New Churches Organized	41
Total Churches	1,800
Missions Operating	117
Youth Camp statistics for North America	
Saved	4,088
Sanctified	3,356
Holy Ghost	2,087
Water Baptized	2,208

—Sam N. Clements, General Presbyter

**General Presbyter Clayton Endecott
Europe, the CIS and the Middle East
2012-2014**

There are presently 27 nations who have Church of God of Prophecy ministries in Europe, Commonwealth of Independent States, and the Middle East. As General Presbyter for this area, I've served these last years together with six others, who we call the Shared Leadership Team. These were selected or confirmed every two years by the national overseers. The Shared Leadership Team meets together one to two times a year. We maintain contact and have meetings through conference calls on a regular basis, making many decisions as a team including appointments of national and region bishops. This area includes many historical nations in the Church of God of Prophecy, who are well established, the nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Central Europe, which were established between 10–20 years past, as well as some newer nations. Twelve of these nations are newer/smaller works, where we've been able to penetrate the culture and are working on the next phase of saturation. While we have established works in these countries, they are smaller in number and therefore remain part of the mission field. Over the past two years many of our countries have encountered incredible challenges: political upheaval, financial crisis, and personal and church loss in leaders and workers. Two of our stronger works have been under great duress just in the last few months, (and this is, most likely not over) are Egypt and Ukraine. Even in the midst of turmoil, we are able to plant churches, develop leaders, and continue with multiple ministries of compassion and care for those in need.

In the past two years, I have made more than 70 trips to serve in training, conferences, and conventions and have visited most of the regions in the area annually, some several times. I have met with national overseers each year and two times annually with the area shared leadership team selected by our national overseers. In addition to serving as a General Presbyter, I served as overseer over several smaller national works with the support of the Shared Leadership Team of the area. Twice annually I joined with the other General Presbyters for weeklong meetings at the International offices in Cleveland, Tennessee. We met with International Offices staff and committees and served there in plurality to initiate and evaluate strategic inspirational plans as well as address problems and opportunities. We also as a shared leadership team attenuated administrative and leadership decisions, most of which we had been working towards throughout the year by e-mail and numerous conference calls. When I traveled to the United States for the GP meetings I connected with local churches to share with them in Sunday services concerning Church of God of Prophecy international network and vision. This past two years, in fulfilling my General Presbytery duties, I have served in meetings in three continental areas outside my own. Each year I serve in several interdenominational and ecumenical meetings in Europe. In addition,

I have served the past six years as an active member of the Board of European Theological Seminary in Kniebis, Germany, an institute of the Church of God and Lee University from which we now have several graduates ministering in our churches in the nations. I had the privilege to serve as a teacher in several SOPAS conferences and to help support the Gordon-Conwell consortium in our area. My wife and family support our local church in Langen, Germany, daily with faithful attendance and ministry and when I am at home I attend that church faithfully and preach and teach there as needed. I am deeply moved by the love of my dear wife, Wanda, for her companionship and service with me. Her love as a helpmate and the closeness of my family all of whom reside and serve in Germany, which is our home, keeps me whole and provides strength for every journey. On a part-time basis I am presently engaged in a spiritual and academic directive at Bangor University of Wales towards a Ph.D. in constructive Pentecostal theology, which I hope will help me in teaching and writing to serve our church and beyond in the future.

The area has fully embraced the three core values of the Church of God of Prophecy of prayer, the harvest, and leadership development and strategies are being implemented area-wide, and within the nations to see these values fulfilled. In a recent meeting with the national overseers, an area-wide commitment was developed which will help us to evaluate our progress toward this vision with clear benchmarks. There are currently only 13 national overseers serving in 27 nations and the work is expanding. We work with national teams and coordinate where an overseer is not resident, where we commonly rely on a strong national mother church. We have a commitment not to appoint overseers until there are sufficient funds from the nations, and in several cases, rely on all or a portion of the overseer's income to be provided by the local church where he pastors as pastor/overseer. We are currently working strategically toward strong, new, national leaders for these areas.

I want very much to express thanks to my fellow General Presbyters who served so faithfully in the interim as we prepared for the selection of a General Overseer. They have not only ministered to this movement faithfully but often ministered to and with me in my times of need. With great love we embraced our former General Overseer, Bishop Randal Howard, in the time of family need. We worked alongside him in this process initially and eventually agreed to accept his resignation in order for him to focus on his family. Our deep sense of shared leadership birthed by many hands and helpers was greatly strengthened under his leadership. We have missed his service in the remaining part of this term, but were pleased he had from the beginning included us in his multifarious duties which eventually enabled us to address the needs of the this movement over the past 18 months as we labored towards the selection of a new General Overseer. We are indebted to Bishop Howard's service and continue to pray for him and his family. I particularly

wish to express sincere thanks to my fellow Vice-Chair of the General Presbyters Bishop Sam Clements who we as GPs selected to serve as our moderator and often chair our meetings in the absence of a General Overseer. Bishop Clements ministered faithfully as our moderator with international vision where he particularly attended to duties at the International Offices as we prepared for the assembly decision for a new General Overseer. It was my joy to serve with him as the other Vice Chairmen of the General Presbyters. He and the rest of us are deeply grateful we will receive a new General Overseer select at this General Assembly and we look forward to sharing in the leadership of this church with him. All of us are grateful for the service of Bishop Scott Gillum who accepted the task of serving the GPs in helping to plan and coordinate our part of this assembly as well as the Assembly Task Force Chair, Bishop Paul Holt. I personally could not have made it through these past two years of service without the faithful ministry and friendship of the Shared Leadership Team of Europe, CIS, and Middle East and the faithful overseers and pastors in our area for their excellent sacrifices to the master in their clearly front line harvest ministry. You're not only friends, you are also my family.

To God be the Glory for all things good have been His work alone,

Clayton Endecott, General Presbyter

EUROPE, CIS, MIDDLE EAST REPORT										
Statistical Data	Greece	Cyprus**	Israel	Bulgaria	Spain***	Portugal	Belarus	Russia	Netherlands	
Number of covenant members	180	472	see Cyprus	2236	138	see Spain	160	3280	90	
Number of organized churches	5	9		41	4		4	64	4	
Number of missions	1	2		9	1		1		3	
Number of licensed ministers*	3	9		15	2		2	1	0	
Number of Bishops	1			1					0	
Statistical Data	Belgium	U.K.***	France	Egypt	Finland	Ukraine	Germany	Czech Rep.	Georgia	
Number of covenant members	142	6500	see U.K.	2654	31	140,000+	124	129	93	
Number of organized churches	3	80		27	1	1073****	2	4	2	
Number of missions	1	0		2	1	70	2	6	4	
Number of licensed ministers*	1	191		20	2	0	0	0	0	
Number of Bishops	0	21		1	1	3	1	0	0	
Statistical Data	Bosnia	Italy	Malta	Romania	Hungary	Azerbaijan				
Number of covenant members	42	36	80	35	1000	46				
Number of organized churches	1	2	1	1	18	1				
Number of missions	0	1	0	3	1	0				
Number of licensed ministers*	2	2	0	0	15	0				
Number of Bishops	0	0	0	0	0	0				

*Number Licensed by CoGP

**Statistics for Cyprus and Israel

*** Statistics for U.K. and France

****Statistics for Spain and Portugal

*****Due to the recent political difficulties, we only received this for the time being. We are anticipating adding 70 churches, some are missions and some are churches preparing to join with us.

**Report of General Presbyter Benjamin Feliz
Mexico, Central America, and Spanish-speaking Caribbean
2012-2014**

I am honored to serve the church in Mexico, Central America and the Spanish-speaking nations of the Caribbean. I thank God for his blessings. During this assembly period 270 new churches were organized and 14,984 new members were added to the church. To God be the glory! An incentive program is in place to assist financially in the planting of new churches.

Particular emphasis is being placed in the young harvest. For the last four years a solid partnership with Children's Ministries has been developed. As a result, hundreds of children pastors have been trained to do their ministries effectively. Also, a youth ministry regional initiative is being developed to mentor youth pastors in the area.

Cuba is a great opportunity. Our church has grown significantly in the island during the last two years. Several church buildings are under construction; many new churches are being planted and a new leadership is emerging. This nation is ready for the harvest. Many young pastors are planting new churches and people are being saved daily.

In the area of leadership development, we continue with our mentoring program. The program includes 125 new bishops and candidates to the office of bishop. We meet periodically to pray, study the word and receive instruction from different guest speakers. The candidates' wives are a very important part of the program.

Our area currently has 50 students in the Leader of Leaders program. A new consortium school started in Honduras in 2013. Leaders from the area are pursuing a Master in Ministry degree from Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary. Since our last Assembly hundreds of pastors and leaders have participated in SOPAS, bringing to the area a great sense of inspiration, fellowship and direction. I would like to thank Dr. Hector Ortiz and his team for their support to our area efforts.

I appreciate the support received from Bishop Paul Holt and the Global Outreach Committee in helping finance some of these ventures. Also, the insight and counsel received from the office of the General Overseer, fellow General Presbyters and our shared leadership team have been a great blessing to the area and to me personally.

During the last two years I have visited every nation; some, several times. I have also ministered in North America, South America, the Caribbean and Europe.

In August, 2013 we celebrated our second Pastors and Pastors' wives Summit in San Salvador. Three General Presbyters, several General Appointees and guest speakers participated. Eight hundred pastors and leaders attended this great gathering.

I thank God for every member, leader, pastor, and overseer of this great church in Mexico, Central America, and Spanish-speaking Caribbean. It is through their anointed ministry that our church has a strong presence in this beautiful area of the world. These results are obtained in the midst of great danger. Violence, extortion, kidnapping and gang activity are some of the challenges that our brothers and sisters have to overcome to serve the Lord in our area. Please continue to pray for our area.

Last, but not least, I thank God for the anointed ministry of my wife, Damaris. Her companionship, encouragement, and leadership continue to inspire me. Her passion for our pastors' wives is evident. Her ministry, "Precious Pearls," continues to grow in our area. Most of our nations have already implemented this great ministry. "All glory to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, forever. Amen" (Romans 16:27).

—Benjamin Feliz, General Presbyter

Report of General Presbyter Stephen T. Masilela Africa for 2012-2014

Since coming to this office in the past Assembly, I have shared a vision for a holistic development of the work in Africa. As a continent, we have asked ourselves difficult questions and sought answers to the challenges that are still facing our church after so many years. We still continue to struggle with reporting, stewardship, and accountability.

I have challenged our leaders to raise the bar about empowering and building capacity for the thousands of members we have in Africa in order to achieve self-sustenance. This needs urgent attention because we cannot afford to be regarded as spiritual giants, winning thousands of souls, but remain emotional, intellectual, and financial dwarfs. Our people have heard many good sermons, but now it's time to live those great sermon.

Together, with the Africa Administrative and Finance committee, I have implemented a regional leadership structure, to set up sound administrative structure in all our nations and to develop sustainable church planting models and means to strengthen our weaker nations. I strongly believe time has come for Africa to come out of poverty. It's time to reject poverty as Africa's half-brother. Together we have identified two important steps out of poverty as education and empowerment. The AAFC has invested huge amounts in the education and empowerment of our national leaders in the Gordon / COGOP Consortium. Twenty-one national leaders and appointees are involved in the Leader of Leaders program.

In June, 2013, we launched the ACTS/ AFRICA consortium for our pastors and key leaders in the local church. I believe this is key to ignite our churches towards self-sustainability, because this program has the entrepreneurship which aims to empower the local church leadership to break the dependency syndrome. We are taking a long-term view to finally get down to our members to change the outlook of our great continent. We are looking at a new kind of partnership, both local and international, that is to invest in the education and empowerment of our leaders and the thousands of members. “Give a man a fish, you feed him for the day, but train him how to fish and you feed him for the rest of his life.”

Africa continues to enjoy enormous opportunities for evangelism and church planting. There are great reports of revival in Brazzaville, Southern Sudan and southern Africa; as a result 37 new churches were planted this year. We have helped Brother Peter Koyea to be more organized while going on with his apostolic anointing to focus on developing one area before venturing into a new one. The organised and strong nations will be able to support initiatives to reach new nations.

With the help of our zonal leaders, I have made a thorough analysis of our membership and reporting to insure that our statistics are a true reflection of our current membership. We are serious about issues of accountability, stewardship at all levels and participate and align our continent fully with the church polity and financial system. We trust the Lord to help us turn this corner.

I have made 17 trips within our continent to teach and preach. I also made two trips to South America and Asia. The overseer of Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Bishop Kenneth Nyamhuka passed on to glory this year.

Measures

Salvation	76,250	Number of members	331,301
Sanctification	61,306	Number of members added	7069
Holy Ghost	52,519	New churches Organized	35
Licensed Ministers	942	Missions Operating	818

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen T. Masilela, General Presbyter

Report of General Presbyter Clayton N. Martin Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands for 2012-2014

Greetings to the 98th International Assembly of the Church of God of Prophecy gathered in beautiful Orlando, Florida. Once again, it has been a privilege to serve the Lord in the Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean Islands. This area is home to a diverse group of people who are multicultural, multiethnic, and multilingual who are seeking to advance the cause of Christ through the ministry in Church of God of Prophecy. I have travelled to all the conventions in the past two years, and have taken note that the leadership of the region embraced Vision 2020 and encouraged their constituents to do the same.

Many are pressing forward in the core value of prayer. Prayer is foundational to the success of individual Christians and local churches. We have many local churches that have turned up the prayer fire are getting the members engaging in regular prayer activities weekly.

Throughout the Caribbean we are making significant progress in the area of harvesting. Several new missions have been organized into local churches with many more new churches to be planted soon. The records have shown that the period under review, we have added almost 10,000 new members! Praise the Lord! I believe that as we pray the Lord of the harvest, he will send forth laborers into his harvest.

Leadership development is being given priority in this region and so many of our leaders are studying with Gordon-Conwell in the consortium as well as the Leader of leaders track. Commendation and congratulation to all the students who have graduated from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary with their Master of Arts in Religion, especially those from the Caribbean. This achievement also demands that these graduates represent Christ well in the proclamation of the Gospel. I trust that this new milestone will be an encouragement to others to become life long learners.

In the Caribbean, Stewardship has been adopted as a fourth core value. The encouragement to all the local churches is to be faithful in the areas of treasure, time and talents. Over the years we have been blessed by others who have generously given to the work of ministry in this region. It is our hope and prayer that with Vision 2020 the Caribbean will achieve financial independence.

Despite the challenges we anticipate great progress as we glorify God through prayer, leadership development and stewardship all for the harvest.

—Clayton N. Martin, General Presbyter

Turks & Caicos

Churches in nation/region	15	Camp enrollment	81
Members in nation/region	806	Saved	11
Missions operating	2	Sanctified	5
SOPAS students	74	Holy Ghost	4

Bahamas

Churches in Nation	58	SOPAS students	195
Members in Nation	4,063	Number attended youth camps the last 2 years	102
Missions operating	5	Camp experiences—saved	5

St. Maarten & Leeward Islands

Churches in nation/region	30	SOPAS students	145
Members in nation/region	2,390	New church since the last assembly	1
Missions operating	2		

Haiti

Churches in nation/region	317	Camp enrollment	1,500
Members in nation/region	82,797	Camp experiences	500
Number of missions operating	10	Church since the last assembly	18
SOPAS students	175		

Jamaica

Churches in Nation	298	SOPAS attendance	280
Members in Nation	35,748	Camp attendance	885
Missions operating	5		
Camping experiences:			
Number saved	124	Number filled with the Holy Spirit	123
Number baptized in water	44		
Churches since the last Assembly	5		

ABC Islands, British & U.S. Virgin Islands

Churches in nation/region	21	Camp attendance	122
Members in nation/region	1,822	Camp experiences—saved	15
Missions operating	3	Churches since the last assembly	1
SOPAS students	327		

Trinidad & Tobago

Number of local churches	25	Members in region	1701
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SOPAS students in the last two years:

2012	71	2013	70
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Number enrolled in youth camps:

2012	250	2013	160
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2012—saved	20	sanctified	40
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baptized in water	1	2013—saved	25
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sanctified	15	Churches since the last assembly	1
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Cayman

Church in region	1	Members in nation	325
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French Guiana

Church in nation	1	Members	75
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Guyana

Churches in region	11	SOPAS students	190
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Members in region	713	Camp enrollment	160
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Missions operating	1	Church since the last assembly	2
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Barbados and Windward Islands

Churches in Nation	9	3	7	1
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Members in Nation	572	382	358	210
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Missions operating	0	1	0	0
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Attended SOPAS

within the last 2 years	47	8	8	3
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Attended youth camps

within the last 2 years	15	30	20	0
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Results from Camping Program

Saved	15	Saved	35
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Baptized in water	10	Baptized in water	0
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New churches organized

within the last Assembly	1	0	0	0
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Below is a summary of the reports from the Caribbean region

Churches in Caribbean	797	Membership in Caribbean	131,962
Missions operating	29	SOPAS students	1,552
Number enrolled in		Camp experiences	920
Youth Camps	3,320	New Churches since	
		the last assembly	29

Yours in Christ,

Clayton N. Martin

**Report of General Presbyter Gabriel Elias Vidal
South America for 2012–2014**

This is my report for the period of June 1, 2012 to May 31, 2014. My plan for the past two years was to better connect with pastors and overseers in the area, by attending at least one of the ministers' conferences and every national convention, as well as other kinds of events. I held special meetings with the national overseers five times during this period.

Vision 2020

We continue to concentrate on the three areas of Vision 2020, giving special emphasis on the Core Values of Prayer, Leadership Development and the Harvest.

Prayer

We are promoting the need for prayer in the region. Various nations have many different approaches to prayer. Many of them have prayer networks, have held prayer concerts, prayer crusades, Facebook prayer connections, added prayer services during the week and have included prayer in their national events like never before. In the next two years we will continue to find ways to get our people closer to God through prayer.

Leadership Development

We are promoting SOPAS in the region. So, we had all the levels in most of the nations. I also started to teach a seminar on the character of a believer (leader); these classes were held in Chile, Ecuador, Argentina, Venezuela, Colombia, and Brazil. We had two special SOPAS classes in Venezuela and Chile (See CBL report for more information on SOPAS classes in South America).

We held our second International Leadership Conference in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, with an attendance of at least 200 of the key leaders of the continent as well as over 400 pastors and local leaders of Bolivia. We had staff from the International Offices as our special guests, Pastor Mario Vega, from El Salvador and Dr. Esteban

Voth from International Bible Societies and five of the seven General Presbyters were present. Furthermore, I was able to teach the 21 Laws of Leadership in Cuba and Ecuador. Every country in South America is now involved in some kind of Bible and harvest (church planting) school; some of them were established for the first time in the last two years. Peru is well advanced in different levels of education. They are currently looking for accreditation in the nation for a bachelor's degree in Theology. Finally, we are promoting higher education by continuing the Gordon-Conwell Consortium School in Peru, now a permanent school, and during 2013 one of the classes was taught in Bolivia. We have 33 students, who are prominent leaders in their nations, and we are in the process of adding a few more. Eventually we intend to establish a Bible college in every nation of the continent using Gordon-Conwell graduates and others.

Harvest

We decided that the best approach to the harvest of souls is through planting new churches. According to the experts in the matter, the best way to establish the kingdom of God is through the establishment of new churches, thus during the last two years, we have begun training more than 1000 church planters in the area. We partnered with the Multiplication Network for the purpose of training leaders in the region. In June 2013, 50 of our key leaders traveled to Quito, Ecuador, for three days of intense church planting training. The idea is to train at least five of our key leaders in the nations and turn them into church planting trainers. The national overseers, with the exception of Venezuela and Chile, returned in September 2013 to Guayaquil, Ecuador with the purpose of being trained in church planting mentoring. The idea is to train pastors of local churches that are planting new churches to become mentors of the church planters.

Since June 2013, the nations of the continent have continued to have church planting training schools. The goal is to multiply the church planting effort in every nation. In Ecuador, we have the first permanent church planting school every Saturday.

Peru started a few years before the region, they have church plantings and pastor training schools as part of their leadership development strategy. In the next two years, we will continue to explore new ways to educate our pastors by working closely with other organizations to increase the theological knowledge of our ministry, as well as their ability to establish new preaching points in every South American city.

In a joint effort with the office of the General Presbyter of Central America, Mexico and the Spanish Caribbean, we were able to send a missionary to Quito, Ecuador to plant the first Church of God of Prophecy in that city. In the next report, I will include more information about the progress of this effort. We also partnered with Central America, Mexico and the Spanish Caribbean to plant a

church in Madrid, Spain. Last year, during Spain's national convention, Bishop José Antonio Gómez organized the first COGOP in Madrid, for the glory of our Lord. We hope to continue to work blessing our church in other areas because we are one family in the Lord.

Trips Outside of My Region

I was part of the Central America International Conference in El Salvador as well as Youth Camps and SOPAS in Cuba. I visited and ministered in the following countries: the United States, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Cuba, El Salvador, Panama, Spain, and I also able to attend the Global Leadership Summits in Chicago, Illinois.

In the next two years, our plan is to continue exploring better options to get closer to our Lord through prayer and fasting, develop more church planters and continue to development new leaders. We ask for your prayers for “the harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few” (Luke 10:2).

—Gabriel Elias Vidal
South America General Presbyter

Finance Director's Report to the 98th International Assembly

It has been a great honor for me to serve this Church as the Executive Director of Finance and Administration.

I would like to take a moment to commend and recognize the departments in the Finance and Administrative Division: Information Technology, Mike Luithle; Retail Operations and WWPH, Gene Browning; Financial Services and Ministerial Services, Paulette Wilbanks; Global Missions, Cathy Payne.

The Administrative Services Department. is an arm of my office and is managed by Eddie Hartman. I don't believe anyone works more closely with me than Eddie. I would like publically thank him today for his excellent service. I would also like to give special thanks to my secretary, Sarah Rising. Many of you spoke with Sarah as you made your hotel reservations for this Assembly. She is always positive and encouraging and I appreciate her hard work.

I would like to express my appreciation to every member of the Finance and Administration team. Most are rarely up front, but they work hard in service to this Church. I want to publicly say thank you.

I would like to commend the United States for their ongoing contribution to this global church. Your commitment to stewardship serves as a model to the rest of

the world and the rest of the world is picking up this banner of stewardship one country after another. Central America is contributing to needs around the world, including North America. Financial strength is growing in the Caribbean, as well as South America. We are a global church and that should be reflected in our financial connectivity. In every nation, the desire to give should always exceed the desire to receive.

At the International Offices, we continue to work on optimizing our service and support ministries. Since 2010, the International Office budget has been reduced by \$835,000. Some departments have been eliminated and their responsibilities absorbed by other areas without adding additional personnel. Outsourcing, strategic partnerships, and other avenues have been pursued to help reduce expenses. The goal is to constantly be looking for ways to improve our stewardship. These changes are not as a result of a fiscal crisis. They are a proactive effort to bring all operations in line with our core values of prayer, the harvest, and leadership development. We are pleased to be able to report that even in our efforts to operate on less, we have closed both the 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 fiscal years with balanced budgets. Our budget managers are to be commended for their commitment to stewardship.

As Finance and Administration Director, I have partnered with our General Overseer, General Presbyters, Ministry Directors, Administrative Committee, and the Finance and Stewardship Committee in all areas of finance and administration. The Audit committee has also been a valuable partner as they review our financials each month. I have worked closely with our Auditing Firm, Capin Crouse LLP, to ensure that adequate controls are in place. I have also worked with legal counsel to protect the interests of the Church of God of Prophecy. I have endeavored to provide oversight for the daily administrative duties for the Church worldwide.

To maintain fiscal accountability, the Church of God of Prophecy receives an annual audit of its financial statements by Capin Crouse, LLC, and independent accounting firm that specializes in non-profit organizations. Capin Crouse will be sharing with you the results of that audit.

The Finance and Administrative Division and the Administrative Committee are fully committed to financial accountability, integrity, and stewardship. Our ongoing accreditation by the Evangelical Council of Financial Accountability (ECFA) is testament to that commitment.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul Holt
Executive Director of Finance and Administration

Report for Global Mission Ministries
June 1, 2012 - May 31, 2014

“O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!” (Psalm 8:9). When the recognition of the glory and sovereignty of the Lord is made known in all the earth, all of creation is released to rejoice and celebrate our God!

I am thankful for the opportunity of service to the Lord in this fellowship. In the past two years, He has continued to open doors and provide ministry opportunities in every area of the world in which we have work. He is faithful and I thank Him for His present presence and sufficient grace as I have personally been blessed to travel and minister in His name.

Our home and family have also been blessed during the past two years. God’s faithfulness has granted John and I the blessing of healing, strength, and ministering together through revivals, retreats and conferences, conventions, and an assortment of His providential possibilities that are life changing and a source of great joy. We are also blessed by the work of the Holy Spirit through the ministry of our son and his family as they continue to pastor. I rejoice in and am thankful for the gift of family and for their love and support in our work through Global Missions Ministries.

As we review these past two years, I am thankful to the Lord’s calling and anointing in service and ministry within The Church of God of Prophecy, a fellowship who has a heart for the harvest potential throughout the world. We continue to witness the wonders of the Lord as we have labored together with many anointed and inspired state, regional, and national leaders. I am grateful for the opportunity to work with such vessels of the Lord and give recognition for the ministry they have provided where they serve. It is also my blessing to work among the employees and staff at the International Offices filled with Christian men and women. I am continually appreciative for their hard work, support, and encouragement.

Over the past two years, this office has been actively partnering as a resource center and support office to our local/state/regional/national ministries around the world. In addition to handling the day-to-day correspondence and communication networking, when requested, we have supplied resource materials; prepared and mailed newsletters and other ministry and connection information; maintained personal profile portfolios on leadership; and hosted our international family at the Assembly. In addition, we prepared copy for inclusion in the White Wing Messenger to update and promote ministry ideas and plans; led the semi-annual March/October Mission Drives with local and national connection; prepared copy for the Connections newsletter from the Communications department; communicated regularly with state/regional/national presiding bishops; maintained a yearly pastor’s mailing; and continued a prayer ministry specifically for our workers on the field.

It has been my privilege to represent Global Missions Ministries and the Church of God of Prophecy through ministry travel in the past two years. This travel helped to increase awareness of mission efforts throughout our global network. These opportunities included attending and ministering in area leadership conferences in Bolivia, Honduras, and Ukraine; attending and ministering in state/regional/national conventions in Alabama, California, Florida, Heartland (Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma), IOU Region (Idaho, Oregon, and Utah), Midwest Region (Colorado, Iowa, Minnesota, and Nebraska), Mississippi/Louisiana, North Carolina, Northwest Territory (Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming), Ohio/West Virginia, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Bahamas, Haiti, Liberia, Tanzania, and Uganda; teaching in the CBL SOPA's School in Nigeria; state/national conferences in California, Midwest Region, Heartland, Ohio/West Virginia, Southeast Spanish, France, and St. Marten; three regional ladies retreats in North Carolina, Kentucky, and Canada; and revivals, conferences, mission rallies, and local services in Alabama, California, Georgia, Hawaii, Kansas, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and Canada.

We continue to develop specialized tri-lingual (English, French, and Spanish) printing and media projects for connecting local churches to the nations to reach the harvest. This cooperative effort with the nations is one of participation in and promotion of the ministries including Harvest Partners, Helping Hand Ministry, One Child Fund and Servant Partners/Global Cooperative. It is always exciting to correspond with the National Overseers and other missionaries concerning ways in which we can support and be a part of the harvest in their nations. Our lives have been enriched by our association and fellowship with the children and the orphanage ministry. We have seen the lives of children touched with the love and grace of Christ and changed by the compassion of sponsors from a world away.

At the International Assembly this year, Global Missions Ministries will sponsor the Mission Clothes Closet which serves to provide clothing, toiletries, materials, etc., to our mission workers. This annual event is a special blessing to those working and “shopping” there. We give special thanks to Doug and Renate Spainhower and their team from Kentucky who led the effort for this responsibility at the last Assembly, and for Linnette Christian and her team from Florida and all the volunteers who will make this massive effort more manageable and serviceable at the Assembly.

Additionally, Global Missions will sponsor two highlight mission ministries at the International Assembly including the Mission Breakfast and the Mission Encounter; Both of these events work together to increase mission awareness among assembly delegates. Special thanks to John Payne, Annette Taylor, Carolyn Erwin, and Brent and Mary Hoefling and all of the volunteers who make these events memorable.

Finally, I would like to especially express thanks to the office staff who have worked with us during the past two years. Annette Taylor who serves as our Liaison to the Harvest Partner ministry works tirelessly to open connection and communication between local church fellowships and national works. Amanda Lawson came on board our first year in Global Missions as an administrative assistant to the work and brought a new perspective and a young eye to the ministry. Shelly Wilbanks has joined us this year and been a delight to initiate new opportunities to touch the field by way of missions ministries. As always, John Payne is a blessing to those who work with him in the office and in the opportunities for ministry in conferences and retreats. The expertise, prayers, love and support of these, as well as the hundreds of volunteers who service the efforts of Global Missions Ministries over these past two years have been a blessing for me personally, and a great blessing to the office.

As I complete our first two years of effort and ministry in the new Global Missions Ministries office, I am enriched by and grateful for the opportunity to serve, and for the thousands of lives I have been witness to who have been changed by the hand of God. His name is indeed excellent in all the earth! To His name we give thanks and all glory! He has given grace, provision, ministry opportunity, and anointing.

Sermons	105	Saved	47
Sanctified	34	Filled with the	
States Visited	22	Holy Ghost	16
Nations Visited	12		

Respectfully submitted,
Catherine H. Payne

Report of the Executive Director of Leadership Development and Discipleship September 1, 2012–May 31, 2014

Over the past six years God has strongly impressed on the church's leadership the need for clear focus on Spirit-initiated priorities, backed up by strategic, consistent, and persistent actions. Leadership development has emerged as one of our most central values that is critical for the significant advancement of our Harvest call. This emphatic commitment has been evident in the themes and programming of recent Assemblies as well as in the roles, resourcing and re-direction of Leadership Development and Discipleship departments at the International Office. As we cast a backward glance over the past 22 months, it is appropriate to express our gratitude to God and the leaders who have invested incredible energy in the work

of developing leaders through the International Children's Ministries Department, led by Kathy Creasy, the International Youth Ministries Department, co-led by Trevor and Aileen Reid, the Center for Biblical Leadership (CBL), led by Hector Ortiz, and the Tomlinson Center.

A Longer Look Back

A more longitudinal review of the work of the aforementioned ministries from 2008-2013 is a helpful foundation for the current report. International Children's Ministries has held 1-Day training intensives, International Institutes, ICMs in North America, leadership conferences and other miscellaneous trainings involving more than 3,993 attendees at 79 events. The ten-module IMPACT! Training video curriculum was completed in English and Spanish and is now available online. The International Youth Ministries Department has trained 5,107 people in 34 Youth Harvest Trainings (YHTs), not inclusive of more than 39,000 individuals who attended youth conferences, conventions, retreats and youth camps. They launched a youth missions emphasis initiative called Youth Missions in Action (YMIA). Two hundred Church of God of Prophecy students took accredited courses through the Tomlinson Center online partnership with Lee University and 144 individuals participated in the non-accredited CIMS program, taking 340 courses. CBL hosted 176 SOPAS (Schools of Practical and Advanced Studies) with 16,902 attendees. The Gordon-Conwell Consortium pastoral track and Leader of Leaders track had a total active enrollment of 483 students working toward an accredited Master of Arts degree. Nineteen leaders graduated from these programs in May, 2013. These results are not all-encompassing, for other achievements can be mentioned, but the cumulative impact of these programs though difficult to quantify has certainly been extremely significant. The scope of influence has been truly global with leaders on every continent and area being served by multiple Leadership Development ministries.

Formation of the Leadership Development Advisory Group

In order to fulfill the goal of achieving greater synergy among the departments tasked with developing leaders for the global church, an advisory team was created. The terms of reference that govern this group were approved by the General Presbytery in its Spring 2013 session. The group is comprised of department heads of all Leadership Development and Discipleship departments or their designees i.e., CBL, Tomlinson Center, Youth Ministries, Children's Ministries, and the Executive Director of Leadership Development and Discipleship. This team of leaders functions under the leading of the Holy Spirit consultatively with the General Presbytery as they seek to follow the Spirit's guidance in fulfilling a number of vital functions including:

1. Facilitating strategic integration of the multi-faceted leadership development approaches being pursued by Leadership Development and Discipleship Ministries,

- i.e., formal accredited, non-accredited, and informal;
2. Clarifying global standards and values for leadership formation;
 3. Serving as the leadership training research and development arm of the General Presbytery, responsible for maintaining a dialogue with key internal leadership development stakeholders: General Overseer, General Presbyters, overseers, pastors, emerging leaders; and external stakeholders: seminaries, Bible schools, Institutes and universities;
 4. Evaluating the effectiveness of key strategies of all leadership development functions;
 5. Devising new leadership development approaches as needed to accomplish our movement's leadership development goals;
 6. Promoting the prioritization of leadership development as a crucial and strategic value in resource allocation and event planning in all forums by leaders at all levels of the church.

This team was responsible for developing central commitments regarding our approach to leadership development that were approved by the General Presbyters in April 2014. These values will provide a compass for how the leadership development departments work as a whole and in the areas supervised by the General Presbyters, including program development, curriculum planning, implementation, assessment, and program enhancements:

- ◆ Team ministry, team work and reproduction
 - Modeling the team concept in our interdepartmental relationships
 - Planning with area, national, regional, and state leaders
 - Developing networks of area, national, regional, and state mentors to train leaders (training the trainers)
 - Facilitating strong connections between all leadership levels for ongoing cooperation and coordination of international and local initiatives
- ◆ Spiritually healthy leader empowerment
 - Focusing on spiritual formation, character development, relationships and fruitfulness of pastors and other leaders
 - Marked by the Holy Spirit's unction and wisdom
 - Encouraging contextualization by competent local leaders (adopt and adapt)
 - Intentionally incorporating a philosophy of development of indigenous/ local leaders for creation and development of training strategies
- ◆ Easy Access to training
 - Combining high touch and high tech for greatest reach
 - Using most cost effective strategies to reduce barriers to training
- ◆ Accountability
 - Encouraging regular reporting to track progress
 - Insisting on faithfulness to God, His kingdom, and His church

The Leadership Development Advisory Group has also given thought and prayer to a guiding statement of purpose for Leadership Development and Discipleship, viz., equipping leaders to further mobilize the church for mission in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Appreciation

Despite the many challenges that are inherent in the huge task of addressing the leadership development needs of a diverse global movement, I am profoundly grateful to the Administrative Committee for its continued commitment to providing resources to support the development of leaders. I am thankful to my executive administrative assistant, Kathy Green, for her skillful work and her passion for the leaders whose lives we are privileged to touch and shape. Kudos to each of the department heads who continue to implement their many and varied programs and strategies with vision and vigor, even as we worked on strategic elements for enhancing interdepartmental working relationships. The critical functions of other faculty, administrative and support staff cannot be minimized and thanks are due to Bishops Adrian Varlack, Mark Menke, Elias Rodriguez, along with Jeanette Rollins, Katherine Osborn, Melisa Thompson, Leslie Green, and Joy Hensley.

It has been gratifying to see these gifted leaders collaborating with specific General Presbyters and Overseers to create multi-year leadership development strategies whose execution will significantly impact our leaders' ministries. The General Presbyters have been cooperative partners in supporting the work of the Leadership Development corporately and individually. The patience and understanding of the staff, department heads, General Presbyters, Overseers, and other leaders is greatly appreciated as we have navigated through the recent currents of change. My wife, Rosita, has displayed her characteristic and consistent devotion to God and our life together that has allowed me to serve.

Finally, I thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has enabled us to play some small part in the magnificent enterprise that is His work.

Empowering leaders, impacting churches, reaching the harvest,
David Bryan

Report of Center for Biblical Leadership (CBL) Instructor/ Church Historian June 1, 2012 – May 31, 2014

Over the last two years, as a member of the faculty of CBL, I made 48 visits to the field ministering in 14 states and regions of the United States and in 19 other nations and territories. I developed and presented 234 lessons and sermons for

SOPAS and at other Church leadership events and forums including 5 state and national conventions and 3 pastors and ministers conferences. I represented CBL on the Leadership Development and Discipleship Advisory Group and attended several meetings in this capacity. In the literary/historical area my research, writing, and editing efforts were as follows:

- Contributed the history/polity section of the one-volume “Essentials for Ministerial Licensure in the Church of God of Prophecy” which volume was compiled by CBL
- Prepared and submitted three sermons and articles to the White Wing Messenger
- Reviewed, compared, and edited (together with Dr. Elias Rodriguez) the Spanish translation of Section One, Diary of A. J. Tomlinson, 1901-1924, now published
- Contributed a Sermon Outline to the “Quest for Holiness Project” sponsored by the Sunday School Literature Division of the White Wing Publishing House
- Responded to written requests and telephone inquiries regarding historical records for interoffice use, for churches, scholars, presbyters, and other researchers
- Coordinated (planned, arranged, scripted, and directed) the Parade of Nations for Global Outreach Ministries at the 97th International Assembly
- Moderated the Center for Biblical Leadership Program at said Assembly
- Prepared copy for CBL’s article in the Progress Edition of the Cleveland Daily Banner

I express sincere gratitude to: Former General Overseer Bishop Randy Howard and his staff; our seven General Presbyters; Bishop David Bryan, executive director of Leadership Development and Discipleship; CBL Director Dr. Hector Ortiz and his secretary, Katherine Osborn; to CBL office secretary, Jeanette Rollins; and to my co-laborers in this ministry, Mark Menke, Dr. Elias Rodriguez, and several adjunct faculty who assisted us in the various schools. The field-leadership and membership of the Church of God of Prophecy around the world has hosted us graciously and generously. The other staff members at our International Offices have given much encouragement and shown loving concern through their undergirding prayers and helpfulness to me and to my family. My lovely and faithful wife, Jan, has continued to extend her usual care and gracious understanding during the 41-plus years of international traveling ministry. Our beautiful children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren continue their love and support and light up our family gatherings with their God-given gifts and graces. I thank them all.

Finally, I am grateful to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has sustained me by His tender mercies, loving compassion, and abundant grace. In the midst of our work, the blessed Holy Spirit continues to teach us of Christ and to guide us in His ways. Praise, honor, and glory to our God!

The 2-year combined statistical summary of my activities follows:

- | | |
|--|-----|
| • CBL Schools (SOPAS), Leadership Training Sessions and other Events | 48 |
| • Lessons, Sermons, and Presentations | 234 |

• Overseers, Pastors, Leaders, Ministers and Members (attendees)	11,160
• States and Regions ministered in (US)	14
• Other Countries ministered in	19

Respectfully Submitted,
Adrian L. Varlack Sr.

**Report of Center for Biblical Leadership Instructor
June 01, 2012–May 31, 2014**

“But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.” (1 Corinthians 15:57-58. NRSV).

When I look back, after two years of labor, seeing what the Lord has done in me, for me and through me, I can only say as Paul, “thanks be to God,” acknowledging that everything that we can accomplish is because of Him. Like Paul, I know that God is the One who enables us through His Spirit to do what we do. That thought inspires me to be “steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord,” because I know that what I do for the Lord “is not in vain.”

Following is the account of my ministry as a CBL Instructor for the last two years:

- Taught Pastoral Leadership Development III, in the Dominican Republic, May 30-June 2, 2012.
- Taught Pastoral Development II, in Georgia, SE Spanish Region, June 14-16, 2012.
- Attended the International Assembly in Louisville, KY, July 25-29, 2012.
- Taught Pastoral Development I, Pastoral Development II and Ministerial Formation and Discipleship in California, August 22-24, 2012.
- Taught Theology II in Costa Rica, September 13-16, 2012.
- Taught Pastoral Development I in Cuba, Oct.31-Nov. 1, 2012
- Taught Preaching Seminar in Venezuela, Nov. 9-11, 2012.
- Attended the Consortium Planning Meeting in Punta Cana, Santo Domingo, Dec. 3-7, 2012.
- Taught Pastoral Leadership Development III in NE Spanish Region, January 10-12, 2013.
- Taught Pastoral Development II in Tanzania, January 23-25, 2013.
- Taught Theology I and Theology II in Macon, GA., Jan. 31-Feb. 2, 2013.
- Taught Ecclesial Formation III in Perú, Feb. 11-13.
- Preached one sermon at the Peruvian Convention, and translated both

the SOPAS class and the sermons at the Peruvian Convention for Bishop David Bryan.

- Taught Theological Perspectives III in Campeche, Mexico, Feb. 20-23, 2013.
- Taught Pastoral Leadership Development III and Theological Perspectives III, along with Bishop Adrian Varlack, in Belize, Feb. 28-March 3, 2013.
- Taught Pastoral Development and Theology II in Colombia, March 7-10, 2013.
- Taught Theological Perspectives III in Puebla, México, March 14-16, 2013.
- Taught Pastoral Leadership Development III in Honduras, March 18-20, and El Salvador, March 21-23, 2013.
- Taught Pastoral Leadership I and Theology I in Alaska, April 12-14, 2013.
- Taught Theological Perspectives III in Nicaragua, April 28-May 1, 2013.
- Taught Pastoral Leadership Development III in Antigua (Spanish and English), May 24-26, 2013.
- Taught Ecclesial Formation III, Kentucky, SE Spanish Region, May 30–June 1, 2013.
- Taught Pastoral Development II and Theology II in Barcelona, Spain, June 20-22, 2013.
- Taught Ecclesial Identity I and Ecclesial Identity II in Kenya, August 12-14, 2013.
- Taught Pastoral Development I and Theology I in Western Colorado, Sept. 20-22, 2013.
- Taught Pastoral Leadership Development III in Georgia, SE Spanish Region, October 10-12, 2013.
- Taught Pastoral Leadership Development III in Costa Rica, October 17-19, 2013.
- Taught Pastoral Leadership Development III in Venezuela, Nov. 7-9, 2013.
- Taught Theology II in Ecuador, Nov. 14-17, 2013.
- Taught Pastoral Development and Theology II in Cuba, Jan. 9-11, 2013.
- Taught Theology I, and Pastoral Leadership Development III in Brazil, Jan. 27-30, 2014.
- Taught Theological Perspectives III in Tanzania, Feb. 13-15, 2014.
- Taught Theology I, Theology II, and Theological Perspectives III in Arizona, Feb. 20-22, 2014.
- Taught Preaching Seminar in Belize, March 7-10, 2014.
- Taught Pastoral Development, Ecclesial Identity and Theology II in Curacao (Spanish). Preached one sermon on Sunday. April 3-5, 2014.
- Taught Pastoral Development and Ecclesial Identity II in Alaska, April 11-13, 2014.
- Taught Theology II and Pastoral Development II (Spanish) in Tortola, BVI, May 14-16, 2014.
- Taught Pastoral Leadership Development, Ecclesial Formation and Theological Perspectives III in Vancouver, BC. Preached one sermon. May 20-24, 2014.

- Graduated from my Doctor of Ministry degree from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, in May 2014.
- I wrote articles for the WWM related to the work of CBL in Latin America and with different topics.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the CBL Director, Dr. Hector Ortiz, his wife, Sister Dolly, and his personal secretary, Sister Kathy Osborn, to the office secretary, Sister Jeanette Rollins, and to my fellow companions, Bishop Adrian L. Varlack, Sr, and Bishop Mark Menke, wonderful team to work with.

I have been blessed with a family who supports me in my ministry. My beautiful wife, María Elena, and my children have been a great support for my ministry, and I greatly appreciate them, and thank them for allowing me to do my job.

Finally, I would like to end thanking God for this great privilege and with Paul I say: “Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen” (Ephesians 3:20-21).

Respectfully Submitted,
Elias Rodriguez

Report of Center for Biblical Leadership Faculty 98th International Assembly for June 1, 2012–May 31, 2014

At the Center for Biblical Leadership (CBL) I serve mainly as an instructor in the School of Practical and Advanced Studies (SOPAS). Since the school’s inception in April 2009, we have conducted 176 schools worldwide with total attendance of over 18,000 students. Administratively, I have coordinated scheduling and logistics for many of the SOPAS schools, with the help of Bishops Adrian Varlack and Elias Rodriguez.

As part of the faculty at CBL, I have taught first, second, and third term classes in all three SOPAS subjects – Pastoral Leadership Development, Ecclesial Identity, and Theology. I have also written a few reports and provided photos for the White Wing Messenger and Connections email list, covering various CBL activities. I have continued to revise SOPAS Pastoral Leadership lessons. I have participated in ongoing strategy and planning sessions related to the work of CBL. We are grateful for input that pastors, overseers and students have given us, which hopefully helps us provide more effective leadership development.

During this two-year reporting period, I have continued the pursuit of a Doctor of Ministry degree in Pastoral Skills through Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

This journey began in October 2011. I hope to begin work soon on the final thesis. Since 2008, I have been a member of the International Presbytery. I have written occasional articles for the White Wing Messenger.

Here is a list of the various schools and ministry events I have participated in during the time frame of this report:

- Preached in local church services in my home church—Keith Street Ministries, and other local churches in Arizona, Trinidad, Idaho, New Jersey, Jamaica, Kenya, Bahamas, Canada-East, Canada-West, Ohio, Washington, and Tortola.
- Served as International Office representative at the 2012 Washington State Convention, Kennewick, WA, and at the 2013 Ohio/West Virginia Regional Convention, Cambridge, OH.
- Attended the annual Gordon-Conwell/COGOP Consortium planning meeting at Cleveland, TN, October 2013.
- Presented an “Introduction to SOPAS” at the Pennsylvania Pastors’ Retreat, February 2014.
- Taught Pastoral Leadership Development, Theology, and some Ecclesial Identity classes for the School of Practical and Advanced Studies in the following terms and locations:
 - Term I: Philippines; California; St. Thomas; Tortola; Georgia; Arizona; Mid-Atlantic Region - New Jersey; Cyprus; Georgia (Europe); Kenya; Arizona; Haiti;
 - Term II: California; Nevis/Anguilla; Tennessee; Tanzania; Georgia; Trinidad & Tobago; United Kingdom; Bulgaria; Jamaica; Kenya; Canada—West; Guyana; South Carolina; Arizona; Haiti; Curacao; Mid-Atlantic Region—New Jersey; Tortola.
 - Term III: California; Alabama; NE Spanish Region - New York; IOU Region—Idaho; SE Spanish Region—Florida; United Kingdom; Antigua; Freeport, Bahamas; Nassau, Bahamas; SE Spanish Region—Georgia; Canada—East; Nevis; Jamaica.

All the schools mentioned above bear witness to the tremendous adventure I have been blessed to experience while working at CBL. This has been some of the most personally fulfilling Christian ministry I’ve ever undertaken. I thank God for this opportunity.

I want to extend heartfelt thanks to all who have hosted our CBL schools around the world. Thank you for your commitment to leadership development, and thanks for your great Christian hospitality and fellowship.

Thank you to the many students who have sacrificed time and resources to attend our schools. You have displayed a genuine hunger to learn and a love for the work of God.

I deeply appreciate our CBL team: First, our director, Dr. Hector Ortiz, whose vision and leadership were the impetus for the School of Practical and Advanced

Studies and the consortiums that have made such a positive impact in our church around the world. I thank God for my fellow faculty members Bishop Adrian Varlack, and Bishop Elias Rodriguez. They are wonderful brothers, teachers, and traveling companions. I am thankful for our office support staff: CBL secretary Jeanette Rollins, and Dr. Ortiz's personal secretary, Kathy Osborn. We can't get along without your faithful work. It continues to be a great thrill to serve a truly international church body. This is a great family of faith!

I give thanks to God for my wife Jenny, and my daughters, Emily and Heidi. I thrive on your love and support. Above all, thanks be to God for the unspeakable gift of salvation, His manifest presence in our schools, and the opportunity to labor in this church.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Menke

Report of the Director of the Center for Biblical Leadership 98th International Assembly June 1, 2012–May 31, 2014

CBL Motto: Come, Holy Spirit be our guide. I have been blessed to serve as director for CBL for the last six years with an outstanding faculty and staff consisting of Adrian L. Varlack, Mark Menke, and Bishop Elias Rodriguez, Jeanette Rollins, and Katherine Osborn. I have been blessed by my beloved wife, Dolly, who has been a volunteer servant in assisting me in many functions. The following gives the different activities in which I have taught and ministered in the last two years.

The School of Practical and Advanced Studies (SOPAS)

Locations: California (English and Spanish), Alabama, Turks & Caicos, Cuba, Chile, Honduras, El Salvador, Mid-Atlantic, New Jersey, England, South Africa, New Mexico, Bahamas, Costa Rica, Nigeria/Ghana, Nigeria, and Haiti. Approximate teaching hours—105

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary—Degree Program

In the last two years I have taught primarily Foundations of Leadership and the History of the Church of God of Prophecy in the degree program. Locations include: Africa (make-up class in Kentucky), IOU Region (Idaho), South America (Peru), Washington, IOU Region (Oregon), Texas, Asia (Malaysia), Bahamas, Europe (England), South America (Peru), and Mid-Atlantic Region (New Jersey). Approximate course hours—660

ACTS/COGOP Consortium—Degree Program

The ACTS Consortium is a new program to assist our pastors in learning Bible, Theology, ethics, pastoral leadership, as well as learning a skill in order to become self-sufficient. The ACTS program will be officially starting in 2015; however,

introduction to ACTS was conducted in South Africa, DRC, Nigeria, Kenya, Philippines, Myanmar, India, and Nepal. A special ACTS project is planned for Haiti. Contact and planning hours—50

GCTS/COGOP Global Pentecostalism, Doctor of Ministry Program

The Global Pentecostalism, Doctor of Ministry Program will begin in January 2015 at our campground facility in the Dominican Republic. The first cohort will have about 21 students since we have graduated 19 with the Master of Arts in Religion in 2013, and another six in 2014. We have developed the Patron's Fund to give grants to the Doctor of Ministry students.

Statistics for CBL and the Consortium

- SOPAS – since April 15, 2009, over 18,000 students
- GCTS/COGOP Consortium (Pastoral & Leader of Leaders) – 510 students registered in program
- ACTS/COGOP Consortium – Approximately 210 students in Asia and Africa

Related Activities as Director of CBL

In addition to teaching and program development, I have participated in the following activities:

- AETH Conference
- Two conferences of the International Council on Higher Education
- Willow Creek Leadership Conference
- California Ministers' Conference
- Three special conferences at South Hamilton (Gordon-Conwell)
- England National Convention
- Invited as preaching guest at Elim, Mario Vega's church
- Ministers' Conference in the United Kingdom
- Northeast Regional Convention
- Midwest Convention
- Second UK National Convention
- Bahamas – Installation of the Presiding Bishop
- South American Conference
- Miami #1 – Special meeting to register new students for the Gordon-Conwell/COGOP Consortium
- Speaker at Myanmar's school graduation
- Alabama State Convention
- Visited 5 Leader of Leader sites
- Ministered in these events 25 times

Translation Projects

- First Volume of A. J. Tomlinson's Diary has been translated into Spanish and printed.

- Second Volume of A. J. Tomlinson's Diary (Spanish) is in process to be printed by the end of 2014.
- First Volume of A. J. Tomlinson's Diary has been translated into French and should be printed by the end of 2014.

In conclusion, I am thankful to my Lord for health, strength, inspiration, and protection in the many miles travelled, and to my wife, Dolly, who has travelled extensively with me in these two years. I am thankful to have a wonderful staff and for the good hospitality of many host bishops in different countries. I am thankful to have had a blessed journey these past six years, and to our Lord belongs the glory! My prayer is, "Come, Holy Spirit, be our Guide!"

Respectfully submitted by a Field Hand,
Dr. Héctor Ortiz

Children's Ministry Report June 1, 2012–May 31, 2014

Children's Ministries at the International Offices of the Church of God of Prophecy exists to develop leaders who will impact kids.

Resources developed during the 2012-2014 ministry years:

IMPACT! Online Training. The remaining five modules of **IMPACT!** Training in Spanish were completed and both English and Spanish **IMPACT!** Modules are now available online for download or streaming.

Children's Ministry Trainers' Notebook. Training lessons used for international institutes have been compiled into a notebook that is being used to train potential children's ministry trainers.

Monthly contributions to the White Wing Messenger.

Helping Hands for Kids VBS Giving Project Guides and Promotional Materials:

2013—Bring Them Home. Funds were used to provide furnishings for orphanage dormitory in Rwanda

2014—Walk with Jesus. Funds are being given to provide discipleship curricula and teaching resources to every congregation in Central America

ICM training notebooks. **SHARPEN!**

One-day Training Intensives

Children's Ministries offers one-day training intensives that are designed to provide hands-on training to local children's ministry volunteers such as Sunday school teachers, children's worship directors, camp staff, and VBS volunteers. They are self

funding through registration fees. During the 2012-2014 ministry years the Children's Ministries office conducted training intensives in the following locations:

Murfreesboro, TN	Regional	September 2012
Dallas, Texas	Regional	January 2013
Washougal, Washington	Regional	February 2013
Los Angeles, California	Regional	April 2013
Northeast Region	Regional	May 2013
Troutville, VA	Regional	March 2014

Children's Ministries also provides International Institutes of Children's Ministries. The Institutes are usually 3 to 5 days in length and focus on leadership development and ministry training. During the 2012-2014 ministry years approximately 575 children's ministers have attended an Institute in one of the following nations:

Argentina
 Dominican Republic
 Malaysia
 India, Jharkand State
 India, Varanasi
 Nicaragua

Our major training initiative in North America is the Institute of Children's Ministry. SHARPEN! The 2013 Institute was held at a conference site in Ridgecrest, North Carolina, and was attended by approximately 150 overseers, children's ministers, and pastors from throughout North America and the Caribbean.

Strategic development of children's ministry has led to the development of continental Children's Ministry Leadership Conferences. These conferences bring national Children's Ministry leadership together for training, sharing of resources, and the formation of continental ministry and leadership development strategies. In 2013 these conferences were held in Central America and Southern Africa.

TEAM UP! A conference developed in cooperation with the International Youth and Children's Ministry offices as well as the residing presbyter of a nation or continent was held in the following locations:

New Haven, Connecticut	September 2012
Kansas City, Kansas	October 2012
United Kingdom	March 2013

Other training events:

CM Workshops, International Assembly 2012 (Two workshops)	July 2012
Central America Pastors' Leadership Conference	El Salvador August 2013

School of David	North Carolina	Jan 2014
Central America Overseers' Meeting	Dominican Republic	Jan 2014
South America Overseers' Meeting	Peru	March 2014
Central America Pastors' Summit	El Salvador	Sept 2013
Trainers' Training	Honduras	Sept 2013
		March 2014
Pastors' Conference	Honduras	May 2014

Ministry events:

Children's Ministry staff and volunteers model excellent, anointed ministry to children during *The Amazing Race*, the 2012 Assembly for Children. As the coordinator of Children's Ministries, I also provided training and/or ministry to children and/or adults at the following events:

Washington State Convention	August 2013
Heartland Region Convention	July 2013
Local Church, Dallas, Texas	January 2013

Total number of events:

Approximate number of adult participants in ministry: 1040

Approximate number of adult participants in training events: 2900

Approximate number of children participating in ministry events: 350

Submitted by Kathy Creasy
Children's Ministries

Youth Ministries Department Report to the International Assembly June 1, 2012–May 31, 2014

The International Youth Ministries (Operation Omega) exists to equip the Church and the emerging youth leadership to Reach (evangelize), Raise (disciple), and Release (deploy) youth and young adults for Christian service in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The goals and strategies employed to fulfill our mission include:

Goals

1. Develop Leaders
2. Cultivate Mission
3. Establish the profession of Youth Ministries

Strategy

Reach—ensure that our local and regional youth leaders are intentionally and regularly reaching out to community youth and reaching-in to church youth.

Raise—strengthen the discipleship, personal development, and ministry skill of youth leaders and youth. Release – deploy the youth reached and raised in our ministries on every level of the field (local, regional and international) for credentialed and church supported ministry.

Youth Leadership Development

Since transitioning to a development-based ministry, Youth Ministries has been able to develop trainings that are area-focused in partnership with General Presbyters and National Overseers. The positive impact of YHTs and three Team Up conferences (in partnership with the North American General Presbyter and Children's Ministries) has helped to prioritize leadership development among national/regional/state directors, youth pastors, youth ministers, and emerging leaders.

A. Youth Harvest Training (YHT) is the official training arm for youth and camping ministry. Training events are provided at the request of national/regional/state offices. The Youth Ministries Co-Directors and a team of trained youth directors conduct YHTs, usually over two to three days. During the 2012—2014 ministry years, approximately 2,200 participants attended YHTs and/or other leadership training events.

Youth Harvest Trainings

Puerto Rico June 2012
 Trinidad & Tobago October 2012
 Mexico October 2012
 Bolivia December 2012
 Tortola, BWI October 2013
 Eastern Canada November 2013
 Guatemala December 2013

Other Leadership Training Events

Mid-Atlantic Region November 2012
 Hawaii Leaders Training January 2013
 Samoa & US Samoa January 2013
 Quebec Winter Retreat January 2013
 Caribbean Leadership Conference February 2013
 Toronto New Covenant Cathedral April 2013
 Sierra Leone April 2013
 NC School of David May 2013
 Central America Leadership Summit August 2013
 Hackleburg, Alabama September 2013
 ABC Islands District February 2014
 Sierra Leone April 2014
 Rock Hill, SC April 2014

B. Team Up North America

Two Team Up conferences, in collaboration with the North American Presbyter's office and International Children's Ministries were held in Fall 2012. Approximately 400 pastors, youth ministers, and children's ministers teamed up to discover how they could better evangelize the youth and children of their communities, fully integrate them into a healthy church, develop them as emerging leaders, and strengthen their families. Team Up offered a unique format that included large group presentation, process sessions and a variety of workshops, allowing for practical application.

United Kingdom (England) In March 2013, the Youth and Children's Ministry leaders of the International Office teamed up with the UK National Leadership, pastors, and youth and children's ministers. This TEAM UP conference represented a shared value, vision, and commitment to invest in our youth and children's ministers. The 95 participants included leaders from two congregations in France, a Hispanic congregation, and 20 English-speaking congregations.

Cultivating Mission

Youth Ministries has been consistently waving the banner of missions in youth ministry through Youth Missions in Action (YMIA). YMIA engages youth and young adults in world evangelism and acts of grace that communicate the love of Jesus to unbelievers, unreached communities and bodies of believers in need of assistance. YMIA has been the ministry component that has been more easily "caught," thereby contributing to the value system (i.e. harvest, compassion, stewardship) of student leaders. This has encouraged consistent financial contributions to missions' efforts globally via general offerings received at events as well as from local youth groups and individual contributors. Through YMIA, International Youth Ministries is now connecting students at a younger age to the international body and developing a relationship that can be built upon through their adult years.

A. FutureNow Sierra Leone

The International Youth Ministries launched FutureNow Sierra Leone in 2012 as a missions opportunity to connect students and young adults to a developing work in an emerging nation. Skilled, professional young adults would be able to bring their skills to the field, and students would join with past COGOP generations to support missions work globally by building schools, partnering with the overseer to support church plants, and developing sports and music ministries to students in local churches in Sierra Leone. We set a four-year (2012-2016) goal of \$75,000 toward FutureNow. To date, more than \$87,500.00 has been contributed toward this project. These funds have been used to renovate and build local schools, build churches, assist church plants, initiate a taxi company, provide scholarships for students and pastors, and develop the Sierra Leone School of Ministry. Three annual mission trips, commencing each April, have been completed to date.

B. Paraguay Missions Initiative

With the approval of the South American presbyter, and in collaboration with COGOP missionaries, Dan and Gwen Miller, and Liberty University, International Youth Ministries piloted a missions' initiative that would provide another arm of student leadership development. Through a three, six or nine month internship, collegiate students and/or young adults will have an opportunity to gain ministry experience and new skill sets for their ministry in a cross-cultural context, as well as learn a new language.

Youth Assembly

Teens, young adults, and adult staff participated in Youth Assembly activities at the 2012 International Assembly in Louisville, KY. Activities included learning sessions to equip student leaders called to leadership, missions and fine arts ministries (music, dance, drama, etc.); College and Career Ministries Networking (CCMN); YMIA: Operation Recover, an outreach team to support storm recovery and rebuilding in Henryville, IN; and a youth evangelistic service. There were approximately 300 participants in the daily learning sessions and CCMN; 85 attended YMIA: Operation Recover; and 779 attended the Friday night evangelistic service.

Other Ministry Activities

Participation in these meetings ranged from preaching and/or teaching:

- District Convention, Bahamas
- Northeast Spanish Region Youth Camp
- Alabama Youth Camp
- Delray Beach COGOP Youth Weekend
- Dominican Republic District Youth Congress (La Romana)
- Mid-Atlantic Region Youth Rally (NJ & Washington, D.C.)
- Caribbean Leadership Conference—St. Maarten
- South America Leadership Conference—Bolivia
- Quebec Winter Retreat
- Georgia State Youth Retreat
- South Carolina State Youth Retreat
- Riverside COGOP—California 4
- Virginia State Youth Retreat
- Northeast English Regional Convention
- Kentucky State Convention
- North Carolina State Convention
- Sunnyside COGOP—Houston, TX
- Chile National Youth Camp
- Caribbean Youth Conference, Jamaica
- Florida State Youth Convention
- Quebec Winter Retreat
- Memphis COGOP

- Sunrise COGOP–Sunrise, FL
- Poughkeepsie COGOP–Poughkeepsie, NY

Summary

Number of Nations Visited: 18 Number of Regions/States Visited: 12
 Number of Sermons: 110 Estimated number ministered to: 13,000

Thanksgiving

We give all glory to God for the service that He has enabled us to provide to the global leadership, students and congregations in the Church of God of Prophecy over the past six (6) years. We would also like to express our thanks to past and present staff, Valerie Moreno Batista and Melisa Thompson, and a wonderful network of youth ministers, pastors, leaders, prayer supporters and financial contributors who have partnered with us throughout the years in service to the youth of this movement. “The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad” (Psalm 126:3).

Respectfully submitted,
 Trevor and Aileen Reid
 International Co-Directors

Tomlinson Center Advisory Board Report to the 98th International Assembly

Introduction

The 2012-14 period was marked by a number of transitions in personnel and structural relationships of the Tomlinson Center. In response to the expressed desire of former General Overseer Bishop Randall Howard, and the General Presbyters to see greater synergy among the departments providing leadership development programs, the Tomlinson Center, International Youth Ministries Department, International Children’s Ministries Department and the Center for Biblical Leadership (CBL) began collaborating more closely through the formation of a Leadership Development Advisory Group. The Tomlinson Center Director, Bishop David Bryan, and the reconstituted Tomlinson Center Advisory Board (TC Board), began a process of review and discernment in October 2012, assisted by Dr. H. E. Cardin, former director of Tomlinson Center.

Review

We would be remiss if we did not express our profound gratitude for the generous and candid reflections of Dr. Tim Harper, former chairman of the TC Board, and many of the other members as we entered the period of review.

The review process underscored the many and varied challenges encountered since the inception of the Tomlinson Center, significant among which were the

lack of funding for major capital investment and difficulty attracting Church of God of Prophecy pastors/leaders to the online classes offered in partnership with Lee University beginning in 2006 and the CIMS (Certificate in Ministry Studies) video-based courses. Despite the high quality of both programs and the consistent marketing efforts of the former director and the Board, approximately 200 Church of God of Prophecy students took online courses between 2006 and 2012 through the online partnership with Lee University. Note that completion of this program would lead to a fully accredited bachelor's degree in Bible/Christian Ministry. One hundred and forty students participated in the CIMS program, completing cumulatively 328 courses over a span of about three years.

Tomlinson Center Global Schools for Biblical and Ministerial Studies Initiative

The Advisory Board which is comprised of a wonderfully diverse group of leaders, was challenged by its research into contemporary trends in Christian higher education, discussions with key leaders including General Presbyters, Overseers, and Pastors, feedback from ministry leaders involved in academic training programs, and consultations with a variety of well-known theological educators including Drs. Daniel Aleshire, president of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), Eldin Villafane, founding director of Gordon-Conwell's Center for Urban Ministerial Education, and Juan Martinez, associate provost of Fuller Theological Seminary. Research revealed a variety of campus types in the world of Christian higher education: residential campuses, regional satellite campuses, regional study group sites, classroom only campuses, local church campuses and virtual campuses offering everything from ministerial training (degreed and non-degreed), liberal arts/multidisciplinary academic education, ministry skill development in areas such as media, performing arts, and evangelism/missions to Christian discipleship or spiritual formation programs. A number of critical success factors for program design in light of our prioritized needs and current situation were identified:

- Knowledge of rapidly evolving technology that facilitates non-traditional approaches;
- Low overall cost for students, leading to a high affordability index;
- Awareness of recent shifts in the accreditation regulatory environment by accrediting bodies, particularly the Association of Theological Schools (ATS);
- Financial feasibility for states/regions/nations and the International Office;
- Accessibility for interested students throughout North America, as well as other nations and cultures;
- A highly formational approach that equips leaders in a Wesleyan-Pentecostal framework for ministry in the Church of God of Prophecy;
- Flexibility of delivery and relevance for present and future ministers, along with "full-time" and bi-vocational "tent-making" ministers; and
- Appeal to younger pastors/leaders and potential ministers (18-30 years of age).

After consideration of various approaches, one model emerged that met the criteria for educational credibility, affordability, accessibility, sustainability and flexibility. This modular approach was recommended to, and approved by, the General Presbyters. It is a field-originated strategy that began in California in 2001 as a local church-based Bible Institute, pioneered by Bishop Lionel Ochoa, and then followed by Dr. Rufino Merlo, one of our pastors, who was attending Fuller Theological Seminary at the time. With strong support from Overseer Jose Garcia, this modular approach currently has 1,100 students and has expanded to 45 Bible Institute sites and 10 Bible College sites meeting throughout California, as well as Oregon, Washington, Louisiana, Mexico, and Bolivia. The model entails classroom-based campuses in church-owned buildings with between 20-100 students, being taught by qualified adjunct faculty. This program is now the foundation of the Tomlinson Center Global Schools for Biblical and Ministerial Studies. The TC Global Schools is currently going through the AETH (i.e. Association of Hispanic Theological Educators) certification process. In light of the recent joint agreement between ATS (i.e. Association of Theological Schools in United States and Canada) and AETH, the certification from AETH will allow the graduates of TC Global Schools to receive automatic eligibility to enter any graduate programs (i.e. Masters) of ATS member schools, including Fuller Seminary or the Pentecostal Theological Seminary (PTS), for example.

Students attend classes with flexible schedules, in church-owned facilities and must complete 22 courses for 66 credits for the diploma (Bible Institute level) and an additional 20 courses for 60 credits for the baccalaureate degree level. Tuition for a three-credit course at the Bible Institute level is \$65 (may be lower in some countries in the two-thirds world). Cost for a three-credit course at the Bible college level is \$150 (may be lower in some countries in the two-thirds world). The programs include classroom components with a focus on effective ministry functioning.

A number of factors have been providential in the emergence of this approach to advancing the vision for bachelor's level training for ministers in the church: a) the certification agreement between ATS and AETH which was only finalized within the last two years; b) the existence of a widening pool of qualified instructors as a rapidly increasing number of pastors and overseers are training formally and graduating from excellent seminaries like Gordon-Conwell, PTS, and Fuller; c) the high degree of cost effectiveness for students and administrative offices; d) the time-tested nature of the California model which has operated successfully for more than a dozen years; and e) the opportunity it provides for many more leaders to access high quality ministry training and advance to Master's level training at Gordon-Conwell, PTS, or other seminaries.

The Tomlinson Center Director will be working closely with General Presbyters and national/state/regional overseers to identify appropriate locations for establishing TC Global Schools sites throughout the world.

Tomlinson College Property

A Cleveland-based site is envisioned that could utilize a portion of the former Tomlinson College property, if deemed most cost effective, and develop incrementally as this model grows. This would allow for exploration of potential uses of other portions for development, community ministry and revenue generation.

Current Partnerships

The partnership with Lee University's Department of Adult Learning allows Church of God of Prophecy students to pursue fully accredited Bachelor's degrees online in Bible/ministry studies at a significant savings of 50 percent off the regular tuition. This continues to be a viable option for qualified persons.

The CIMS Program (Certificate in Ministry Studies) has provided a vehicle for some of our ministers to receive training through individual or small group study. The program consists of non-accredited video-based courses, many of which are available in a number of languages in which quality training materials are at a premium.

Appreciation

As we have engaged in this challenging work, we have been struck by our ongoing need for a keener sense of dependence on God and awareness of the limits of our best efforts. We are not so arrogant as to insinuate that our work is complete. We accomplish in our entire life times only a miniscule fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work. In this matter of seeking a way forward in enhancing our leadership development efforts, we recognize we are taking steps which may be variously assessed as small and insignificant. However, we are grateful for the opportunity and we continue to pray for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest as He charts a future that we can only glimpse. We thank all those who have invested the vision of equipping leaders for the church with their prayers and passion and pray that God will continue to show us the way.

With humble joy and anticipation,
Tomlinson Center Advisory Board

David Bryan, Chairman and Director of Tomlinson Center

Morais Cassell

Jose Garcia

Don Knoblich

Carswell Leonard

Wade Patterson

Wayne Pense

Steve Spears

Abigail Spears-Velázquez

Section 7

Important Information and General Statistics

Deeds for Church Property

(Quoted from *Minutes of the 89th General Assembly*, 1996, pp. 161, 162.)

The following resolution was adopted by the 58th Annual Assembly of the Church of God of Prophecy, held in Cleveland, Tennessee, September 10–16, 1963:

WHEREAS it has been advised by competent attorneys that specific mention of proper authorities be stated in an effort to ease the complications arising in our endeavors to be recognized by the courts, and to facilitate the handling of deeds to our church properties,

BE IT RESOLVED that trustees to hold title to local church property for the Church of God of Prophecy with International Offices at Cleveland, Tennessee, be selected by the local church either in a regular or called business meeting, said trustees to be vested with authority to bargain, buy, sell, convey, or encumber such property by mortgage or otherwise only when authorized to do so by the local church in regular or called business meeting, and with the consent of the General Trustees.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said consent of the General Trustees be evidenced by a separate writing or by the signature of the Chief Clerk of the said General Trustees, such documents to be notarized.

BE IT RESOLVED that state church trustees appointed by the State Overseer to hold title to property for the Church of God of Prophecy with International Offices at Cleveland, Tennessee, be vested with authority to bargain, buy, sell, convey, or encumber such property by mortgage with the consent of the General Trustees. This applies to property being held by state trustees where churches have been disbanded or are too weak to function and to property which has been given to the state. All other property with title in the state trustees or a state Holding Association may be disposed of or mortgaged only by the consent of the state convention in session (modified in 1981).

Note: The following Warranty Deed form has been prepared by the General Trustees and should be used where it is possible to do so. Blank forms may be secured from the General Trustees.

WARRANTY DEED

FOR AND IN CONSIDERATION OF the sum of _____

Dollars (_____) cash in hand paid and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, We, _____

have this day bargained and sold and by these presents do hereby bargain, sell, transfer, and convey unto _____

local Trustees for the Church of God of Prophecy, at _____

_____ ,
for the use and benefit of the Church of God of Prophecy, with International Offices at 3720 Keith Street NW, Cleveland, Tennessee, U.S.A., and their successors and assigns, the following described real estate, to wit: (Add description of real estate here.)

TO HAVE AND TO HOLD said real estate unto the said _____ local Trustees,

for the use and benefit of the Church of God of Prophecy, with International Offices at 3720 Keith Street NW, Cleveland, Tennessee, U.S.A., and their successors and assigns forever, provided, however, that neither they nor their successors in office as such local Trustees may sell, convey, or encumber the said real estate without the written consent of the General Trustees of the said Church at Cleveland, Tennessee, which consent may be evidenced by a separate writing or by the Chief Clerk of the said General Trustees joining in the execution of a deed of the above named Trustees or their successors in office for the purpose of certifying the consent of the General Trustees to the execution of such conveyance.

WE COVENANT that we are lawfully seized and possessed of said real estate; that we have a good and lawful right thus to sell and convey the same; that the title thereto is clear, free, and unencumbered, and that we will forever warrant and defend said title against the lawful claims of all persons.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, witness our hands and names, this _____ day of _____, 20 _____.

**AMENDED AND RESTATED CHARTER
OF THE
CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY**

Pursuant to the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act, Church of God of Prophecy amends and restates its Charter as follows.

1. The name of the Corporation is Church of God of Prophecy.
2. The street address of both the registered office and the principal office of the Corporation is:

3720 Keith St., N.W.
Cleveland, TN 37312
County of Bradley
3. The name of the registered agent at the registered office of the Corporation is Randall E. Howard.
4. The Corporation is a public benefit corporation and is organized exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or the corresponding provision of any future Internal Revenue Code.
5. The Corporation is a religious corporation.
6. The Corporation has members.
7. The Vision Statement of the Corporation is as follows:

The Church of God of Prophecy will be a Christ-exalting, Holiness, Spirit-filled, all-nations, disciple-making, church-planing movement with a passion for Christian union.
8. The Mission Statement of the Corporation is as follows:

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, through prayer, we will plant churches and equip leaders to make genuine disciples of all the peoples of the world, to the glory of Christ our Lord, Head of the Church.
9. The Corporation is formed for any lawful purpose or purposes not expressly prohibited under the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Corporation's purposes also include the limited participation of the Corporation in any other activities,

including taxable activities, but only to the extent the activities would be permitted by a tax-exempt corporation. More particularly, without limitation the purposes of the Corporation are:

- (a) To bear witness for Christ and His truth and to spread the gospel of the Kingdom in all its fullness and power, so that the rule of God is brought about in the hearts of human kind;
- (b) To promote the Christian religion by any appropriate form of expression, within any available medium, and in any location, through the Corporation's combined or separate formation, of a church, ministry, charity, school, or eleemosynary institution, without limitation;
- (c) To ordain, employ, and discharge ordained ministers of the Gospel, and others, to conduct and carry on divine services at the place of worship of the Corporation, and elsewhere;
- (d) To handle affairs pertaining to property and other temporal matters as required by the civil authorities;
- (e) To collect and disburse any and all necessary funds for the maintenance of the Corporation and the accomplishment of its purpose within the State of Tennessee and elsewhere; and
- (f) To make distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as amended.

This Corporation is also organized to promote, encourage, and foster any similar religious, charitable, and educational activities; to accept, hold, invest, reinvest and administer any gifts, legacies, bequests, devices, funds, and property of any sort or nature, and to use, expend, or donate the income or principal thereof for, and to devote the same to, the foregoing purposes of the Corporation; and to do any and all lawful acts and things which may be necessary, useful, suitable, or proper for the furtherance of accomplishment of the purposes of this Corporation.

10. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Charter, the Corporation will not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by an organization exempt from federal income tax except under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Code.
11. If the Corporation is ever determined to be a private foundation as defined in Section 509(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as amended, it will comply with the requirements of T.C.A. 48-51-501.

12. Upon dissolution of the Corporation and after payment of all liabilities, the assets of the Corporation will be distributed to one or more organizations designated by the Board of Directors that are exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, and that are of like faith and order of the Corporation.
13. The directors of the Corporation will have no personal liability to the Corporation for monetary damages for breach of their fiduciary duties as directors. However, this provision does not eliminate the liability of any director (i) for any breach of the director's duty of loyalty to the Corporation, (ii) for acts or omissions not in good faith or that involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law, or (iii) under Section 48-58-304 of the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act. If the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act is later amended to authorize the further elimination or limitation of the liability of Directors, then the liability of a Director of the Corporation will be limited to the fullest extent permitted by the amended Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act.
14. The Corporation has the power to indemnify its directors to the fullest extent permitted by the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act.

Dated March 22, 2012



Randall E. Howard, President

CERTIFICATE REQUIRED BY T.C.A. 48-20-107(d)

Randall E. Howard, President of Church of God of Prophecy, certifies to the Secretary of State that:

1. the Amended and Restated Charter does not contain any amendment requiring approval of the members; and
2. the Amended and Restated Charter was duly adopted by the Board of Directors of Church of God of Prophecy on March 20, 2012.

This March 22, 2012.

CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY

By: 

Randal E. Howard, President

**AMENDED BYLAWS
OF THE
CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY**

**ARTICLE I
NAME AND PRINCIPAL OFFICE**

Section 1. The name of this Corporation is Church of God of Prophecy (the “Church”).

Section 2. The principal office of the Corporation is located at 3720 Keith Street, NW, Cleveland, Tennessee 37312.

**ARTICLE II
DIRECTORS**

Section 1. The corporate powers of the Church are vested in a Board of Directors (the “Board”) of at least three Board members. The Board members are the General Overseer selected by the International Presbytery and confirmed by the International Assembly, the General Presbyters selected by the International Presbytery and affirmed by the International Assembly, the two Executive Ministry Directors and up to four other persons selected by the General Overseer. For internal and other purposes, the Board is also referred to as the Administrative Committee.

Section 2. The term for a Board member is from International Assembly to International Assembly.

Section 3. If the position of General Overseer becomes vacant, it may remain so until the selection and confirmation of a new General Overseer at the next International Assembly.

If a vacancy occurs in the Board because a General Presbyter ceases to serve in that position for any reason, the Board may select another Board member to fill the remainder of that term (as Board member and not as a General Presbyter).

If a vacancy occurs in the Board for a Board member selected by the General Overseer, the General Overseer will select another person for that position. If the General Overseer position is vacant, a majority of the General Presbyters will select the person for the vacant position.

A successor Board member will serve the balance of the predecessor’s term.

Section 4. Any Board member may call a special meeting of the Board.

Section 5. The Board may elect, appoint, remove or discharge officers, agents, or employees of the Church, prescribe their duties (in addition to those set out in the Bylaws); fix their compensation; and require from them security for money or property in their control. However, the Board cannot take any actions contrary to the other provision of these Bylaws.

Section 6. The Board will conduct the affairs of the Church, decide its policies consistent with the Minutes of the International Assembly, and may enact rules and regulations for the conduct of the affairs of the Church that are consistent with the laws of the State of Tennessee, the Charter of the Church, and these Bylaws.

Section 7. The Board may contract, and incur indebtedness, for the Church. The Board may authorize the president or treasurer to execute a note, contract, or other obligation of the Church necessary to effect a loan or secure credit for the Church.

Section 8. A Board member will not be compensated for serving as a Board member. However, the Church may reimburse a Board member for expenses incurred in attending a meeting of the Board or attending to the business of the Church.

Section 9. The Board will designate the depositories for the funds of the Church.

Section 10. The Board will meet immediately following each International Assembly of the Church at the office of the Church, or any other place that the majority of the Board members agrees upon, and may adjourn the meeting to a later date. The Board may meet at other times also. The Board may meet outside the State of Tennessee if a majority of the Board members agrees to do so and if the notice of the meeting specifically designates the meeting place.

Section 11. Any actions required or permitted by the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act to be taken at a meeting of the Board may be taken without a meeting if all Board members consent to taking such action without a meeting. The affirmative vote of the number of Board members that would be necessary to authorize or take such action at a meeting is the act of the Board. The action must be evidenced by one or more written consents describing the action taken, signed by each Board member, and included in the minutes filed with the corporate records reflecting the action taken. Written consents and votes taken by consent action may be in electronic form pursuant to the Tennessee Uniform Electronic Transactions Act.

Section 12. The Board shall present to each International Assembly of the Church a general statement of the affairs of the Church at the end of the immediately

preceding fiscal year. On non-Assembly years an audited statement will be available at the corporate office upon request.

Section 13. As long as due notice is given, a simple majority of the Board members constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business, but a smaller number may adjourn to a later date.

Section 14. A Board member acting individually, and not as the Board, has no power or authority to bind the Church.

Section 15. A Board member may be indemnified by the Church as authorized by the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act.

Section 16. The president shall preside at all meetings of the Board. The Board may elect a vice president to serve in the absence of the President.

ARTICLE III MEMBERS

Section 1. The members of the Church are those persons who have taken the covenant of the Church.

Section 2. Each International Assembly of the Church shall constitute a meeting of the members of the Church.

Section 3. The president, secretary, or other officer of the Church shall give notice of the International Assembly consistent with the past practice of the Church.

Section 4. A quorum consists of a simple majority of those present at the officially designated business session of the International Assembly.

Section 5. A member may act in person or by proxy according to the procedure established by the Church.

Section 6. The Board may call a special meeting of the International Assembly.

Section 7. At a special meeting of the International Assembly only the business specified in the notice of the meeting may be transacted.

ARTICLE IV OFFICERS

Section 1. The General Overseer, who is selected by the International Presbytery and confirmed by the International Assembly, shall serve as the president. The Board

shall appoint the secretary and may appoint one or more General Presbyters to perform the duties of the president in the absence, disability, or death of the General Overseer. The Executive Director of Finance and Administration shall serve as treasurer, unless the Board appoints a different individual. The Board may appoint a vice-president and other assistant officers.

Section 2. Officers, other than the president, shall serve until the Board appoints their successors. However, the Board may remove an appointed officer before the expiration of the term. The appointment to an office is not an employment contract to serve until the term of office expires.

Section 3. The same person may hold two offices, except that the president cannot also serve as secretary.

Section 4. The General Overseer in conjunction with the General Presbyters has general oversight and management of the affairs of the Church.

Section 5. The secretary shall keep appropriate permanent records of the proceedings of the minutes of the Board.

The secretary, or the president, may issue all notices of the meetings of the Board.

The secretary will perform the duties of the treasurer in the event of the treasurer's absence or disability.

The secretary has charge of and shall preserve the books, records, files, and documents of the Church unless the Board designates this duty to be performed by another person. The secretary shall hold these books and records at all times subject to the inspection of the Board members.

Section 6. The treasurer (or some other person designated by the Board) shall keep a strict account of the financial affairs of the Church and be able to account for the assets and liabilities of the Church. The treasurer is the custodian of the funds and accounts and obligations of the Church, but is subject to the direction of the Board in selecting depositories for Church funds.

In the absence or disability of the secretary, the treasurer will perform the secretary's duties.

Section 7. Each assistant officer has the same power to perform the duties of the office if the officer is unable or unavailable to perform the duty.

Section 8. An officer may be indemnified by the Church as authorized by the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act.

ARTICLE V CORPORATE SEAL

Section 1. The Corporation has a seal.

ARTICLE VI DISSOLUTION

Section 1. Upon dissolution the Board shall transfer the net assets of the Church as authorized by the Charter and the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act, and the transferee shall be an organization that is qualified under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

ARTICLE VII AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

Section 1. The Board may amend these Bylaws at the meeting following the International Assembly or at an interim meeting if notice for the interim meeting announces the amendment that will be considered.

Adopted June 18, 2013.



Randall E. Howard, President

World Must Be Evangelized

It will take good organization and systematic methods to accomplish this task. God's power is demonstrated in proportion to the unity and oneness of His people.

The members of the early church were all of one accord, steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and the multitude that believed were of one heart and one soul, and great grace was upon them all, and mighty results followed as a consequence of their perfect unity and careful organization.

We must banish from our minds the thoughts of individual or local independence and haphazard spasmodic efforts.

Pull together, pull at once, pull steadily all the time is the road to success.

All members should be ready to center their minds and prayers on the one thing, as a unit, when calls for special prayer are made. Each should feel his or her part of the responsibility, remembering that when one member fails, it hinders the body until the matter pending may fail.

Local Church Officers and Leaders

1. **Pastor:** It is the duty of the national/regional/state overseer to supply every church under his jurisdiction with a pastor. Pastors are to be appointed at the national/regional/state convention every two years, and vacancies will be filled as

they occur. The duties of the pastor expire at midnight the last Sunday in the pastoral term at the church he/she is leaving and automatically begin at the same time at the church to which he/she is moving.

2. Clerk: The local church clerk is to be appointed by the pastor at the same time as the other leaders and officers are appointed during the first two months of his/her pastoral year.

The pastor is to see that a careful record is made by the church clerk of this action. The date of the appointments, along with names of each leader, should be recorded in the following conference as a matter of good business.

3. Treasurer: The treasurer is appointed in the same manner as the clerk. The treasurer will receive and disburse all funds of the local church including tithes, auxiliary funds, and special funds and will maintain an accurate record of all receipts and disbursements.

4. Ministry Leaders: Leaders for the local church ministries are appointed by the pastor during the first two months of his/her pastoral assignment. Each pastor should, with the assistance of the deacons/deaconesses (if deacons/deaconesses are members of this congregation), divide the local church membership into small groups and appoint group leaders. The leaders should keep in touch with each member of the group. Should a group member move away from the area where the local church is located, communications should be maintained by correspondence. This is for the spiritual benefit of the members. The pastor should meet regularly with the appointed group leaders.

5. Local Trustees: Trustees to hold title to local church property are selected by the local church in a regular or called business meeting and are authorized to bargain, buy, sell, convey, or encumber the local property only when authorized to do so by the local church in a regular or called business meeting, with the written consent of the General Trustees.

6. Other Officers and Leaders: The Assembly has authorized the pastor to appoint a church literature representative, public relations director, Center for Biblical Leadership booster, and any other leaders during the first two months of his/her pastoral year.

Business Meetings

Each local church should hold a regular business conference quarterly. It is suggested the first Monday night in March, June, September, and December be reserved for the conference. A meeting may be called anytime by the pastor or national/regional/state overseer.

The pastor should moderate all business meetings. If there is no pastor, the national/regional/state overseer has the authority to act or to appoint a licensed minister to preside. Where one pastor has the care of several churches, he/she may arrange the business meetings for his/her convenience.

Every member should attend every business session if possible. Matters should be discussed with love, humility, and meekness. All church matters should be confirmed by the overwhelming consensus process. If a matter cannot be settled

satisfactorily by the local church, they should call for the assistance of the national/regional/state/district overseer.

Suggested Arrangement and Order of Business

The conference may be opened with an appropriate scripture reading and a prayer for divine guidance.

The clerk should read the minutes of the last regular meeting and called meetings.

There should be correction of the minutes, if needed, or acceptance of the minutes as read.

The treasurer should give a report of all finances, which would include an itemized statement of receipts and disbursements and the balance in the church's treasury.

All local church ministries should give a report of the work and progress of their particular ministries. Requests for transfer of membership to or from the local church should be presented for conference action. Unfinished and new business should be presented, discussed, and acted upon. The meeting may then be adjourned with prayer.

Duties of National/Regional/State Overseers

Each overseer is to have the oversight of his nation, region, or state, and together with the General Overseer, will form the Presbytery in his respective area. In addition to his general responsibility for the work under his jurisdiction, he will be responsible for specific duties:

- To conduct or order a general evangelistic campaign during the year. If there are only a few churches in the nation/region/state assigned to him, he will serve primarily as the evangelist, evangelizing in new fields and endeavoring to establish new churches. If his area has a large number of churches and ministers, he will be responsible to organize and direct the evangelistic efforts of his workers in new fields.

- To see that every church is supplied with a pastor.

- To divide his nation/region/state into districts and place over each district an overseer. This is not a rule, but it is considered best when there are sufficient churches to make it practical. He should conduct district meetings at intervals during the year where special instructions concerning the work can be given.

- To hold at least one biennial general convention in the area most convenient for members from all the churches to attend.

- To secure the name and address of every bishop, deacon, and evangelist under his jurisdiction and keep a record of these so he can report to the General Overseer, if necessary. He will also issue lay ministers' certificates and keep the necessary records concerning them.

- Keep an accurate record of the location of every church and the number of members in his territory, keeping a record of the increase so this information can be reported each year. This can be done by keeping in touch with the clerks of the churches. Every minister and clerk should take an interest in imparting this information to the overseer.

- To visit every district and church, if possible, and look after the interests in every way, as a pastor over a large circuit. (See *Overseer's Manual*, General Overseer's Office.)

Duties of District Overseers

The district overseers are to be appointed by the state overseer.

To moderate business conferences for persons serving as pastors who are not licensed.

To do evangelistic work in his district. If he has a district with no church, it is his duty to evangelize and organize churches.

To conduct district conventions according to the instructions of the state overseer.

To assist the state overseer, when called upon, in all things relating to church work, and to be subject to the state overseer.

Obligation for Membership in the Church of God of Prophecy

Will you sincerely promise in the presence of God and these witnesses that you will accept this Bible as the Word of God—believe and practice its teachings rightly divided—the New Testament as your rule of faith and practice, government and discipline, and walk in the light to the best of your knowledge and ability?

Biblical Principles, Beliefs, and Practices of the Church of God of Prophecy

Preface

Since the beliefs of the Church of God of Prophecy are based on biblical principles, we realize that we are on a spiritual journey striving to “walk in the light” when it comes to our understanding of timeless truth. The following doctrinal insights reflect our current findings through our International Assemblies. We must always be acutely aware that as human instruments, we are subject to limited comprehension. As such, we desire to continually seek greater light which better aligns us to Scripture and brings correction to our finite knowledge. Henceforth, following each Assembly, the Biblical Doctrine and Polity Committee would be expected to make any further adjustments that would be required in light of this mandate to reflect Assembly decisions.

From its beginnings, the Church of God of Prophecy has based its beliefs on “the whole Bible rightly divided.” We accept the Bible as God’s Holy Word, inspired, inerrant, and infallible. We believe the Bible to be God’s written revelation of Himself to mankind and our guide in all matters of faith; therefore, we look to the Bible as our highest authority for doctrine, practice, organization, and discipline.

The Church of God of Prophecy is firm in its commitment to orthodox Christian belief. We affirm that there is one God eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We believe in the deity of Christ, His virgin birth, His sinless life, the physical miracles He performed, His atoning death upon the Cross, His bodily resurrection, His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and His personal return in power and glory at His second coming. We profess that regeneration by the Holy Spirit is essential for the salvation of sinful mankind. We believe the sinner is brought to an awareness of the need for salvation through the convicting work of the Holy Spirit. We believe that in sanctification by the blood of Christ, one is made holy. We affirm the present, active ministry of the Holy Spirit who guides the Church and by whose indwelling and empowerment we are able to live godly lives and render effective service to God and others. We believe in the oneness and ultimate unity of believers for which our Lord prayed, and that this should be visibly displayed “that the world may know, see, and believe” God’s glory, the coming of His Son, and the great love He has for His people (John 17:20–23). We are committed to the sanctity of the marriage bond and the importance of strong, loving Christian families.

The Church embraces all biblical doctrines as taught in the New Testament and have listed some that may be helpful to believers seeking to mature in Christ Jesus:

REPENTANCE

The presence and work of the Holy Spirit in the world and upon the human heart through the Gospel of Jesus Christ (John 16:8–11) brings CONVICTION, an awareness and acknowledgement of sin against God and the need to confess that guilt with Godly sorrow (2 Corinthians 7:10). In short, repentance means not only being sorry for sin, but a turning from and forsaking the old life (sin habits)

for a new walk by faith in God through the Holy Spirit and in company with the people of God (Acts 2:42). The result of repentance is salvation, a work that is both instantaneous (new birth—John 3:3–8) and life-inclusive, beginning with the giving of new life by the Holy Spirit to the believer and climaxing with a glorified body (Hebrews 9:28; Mark 1:15; Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19). Repentance results in Justification, Regeneration, or what is called the “Born Again” experience as explained below.

JUSTIFICATION

“Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Romans 5:1, 2). Justification is both a state and an act: On the part of the repentant one, it is the state of being without offense toward God. On God’s part, it is His act in forgiving the actual sins for which one has repented and declaring the individual accepted in a new relationship. The individual is said to be justified by faith in Jesus Christ; that is, one’s sins are covered (atoned for), and God no longer holds that person accountable for those sins. New spiritual life has begun (2 Corinthians 5:17), a beginning sometimes referred to as “Regeneration.”

REGENERATION/BORN AGAIN

Regeneration describes the work of God in providing new spiritual life in the believer. Human beings without Christ are “dead in trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1) and must be made alive or regenerated through the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5). This giving of new spiritual life through Jesus Christ enables right relationships with God, the ability to worship Him in spirit and in truth (John 4:24), and is simultaneous with Justification (previous paragraph). It is God’s gracious act to rekindle the spiritual life lost in Adam (1 Corinthians 15:22) so one may now walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh (Romans 8:1–11). Accordingly, the individual is said to be “Born Again” or born of God (1 John 5:1). In responding to the double question of Nicodemus, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” Jesus answered, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (John 3:4, 5). To be born again, then, is to become a new creation in Christ, a child of God, justified and regenerated as a result of true repentance and faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ. There is no other way to enter the kingdom. This entrance into a new life of discipleship to Christ (Acts 2:42) engages the believer in actively seeking more of God, fellowshiping and worshipping with God’s people, and intentionally obeying God’s Word as the believer learns how to “possess his vessel (whole body) in sanctification and honour” (1 Thessalonians 4:4).

SANCTIFICATION

Sanctification, like salvation, ultimately spans the entire life of the believer. Initially, it is a work of grace subsequent to being justified, regenerated, or born again. It is an instantaneous work, which both sets one apart for God (1 Corinthians 1:2) and crucifies and cleanses the old nature, enabling the believer to be free from the dominant rule of sin: “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For, he that is dead is freed from sin” (Romans 6:6, 7). “And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Corinthians 6:11). This dethroning of the old nature, this cleansing, this setting apart, places upon the believer the scriptural demand to “mortify the deeds of the body” through the Spirit (Romans 8:12, 13) and to “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication (sexual immorality), uncleanness, inordinate (abnormal) affection, evil concupiscence (desire for earthly things), and covetousness, which is idolatry” (Colossians 3:5). Second Peter 3:17, 18 further encourages growth in God’s grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ: “Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.” There is then in sanctification, a responsibility on the part of the believer to “put off” some habits and practices, and to “put on” others, which means there must be intentionality to holiness (Ephesians 4:22–32). Sanctification empowers us against sin’s control; the believer responds with a renewed mind to be transformed into the image of Christ (Romans 12:1, 2) and to be holy in life and conduct (2 Corinthians 7:1).

HOLINESS

Holiness is a command of our Lord: “Be ye holy; for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:14–16), the state of being free from sin (sin’s dominance) made possible by God’s sanctifying and cleansing work (Romans 6:11–14; 1 Corinthians 6:11), and further sustained by active, whole-hearted pursuit of a life of Christ-likeness on the part of the maturing believer. “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:11, 12). “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14). “For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness” (1 Thessalonians 4:7). “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (2 Corinthians 7:1). Holiness must also be the Church’s collective goal as the body of Christ to demonstrate the praises (virtues) of Him “who hath called (us) out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9, 10).

BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy (Spirit). For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call” (Acts 2:38, 39). The baptism with the Holy Spirit as it occurred at Pentecost and in subsequent places in the Book of Acts (8:14–17; 10:44–46; 19:2–7) is a definite experience that is subsequent to the salvation and sanctification experiences or may accompany them in a somewhat simultaneous way. Jesus said to His disciples, “. . . for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” (John 14:17). This indwelling is a definite, instantaneous experience described in the Scriptures by the word “baptism” and is accompanied by the evidence of speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance. The baptism is also the Holy Spirit’s enduement of the believer for service in the kingdom, as the Church was empowered at Pentecost to go forth with the message of the Gospel: “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy (Spirit) is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8). This experience should not be confused with water baptism, regeneration, or sanctification.

The Holy Spirit “is come” (has been sent by Christ—Acts 2:33) to “reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment,” to serve as the church’s guide and director, and to reveal the things of Christ (John 16:7–15). As such, it is important for believers to seek both the baptism (Acts 2:38, 39) and His fullness (Ephesians 5:18) in order that they may become familiar with His leadership and guidance and cooperatively participate in His work, both for personal Christian maturity and for service in Christ’s mission to the world.

SPEAKING IN OTHER TONGUES

Speaking in (with) other tongues—languages (magnifying God through uttering His wonderful works in languages normally unknown to the speaker—Acts 2:4–8; 11; 10:44–46) is common in the Book of Acts to describe the coming of the Holy Spirit upon believers as clearly stated in the foregoing scriptural texts. Acts 19:6 also shows the same result (speaking in tongues and prophesying) when the apostle Paul laid hands on 12 believers in the city of Ephesus for them to receive the Holy Spirit. In regulating the order and use of spiritual gifts to the Corinthian saints (1 Corinthians 12–14), Paul also allows for the private use of tongues in prayer to God and indicates that this edifies the individual believer’s spirit (14:2–4). The gifts of tongues and interpretation of tongues for public use in the assembled congregation are, of course, to be distinguished from the baptism with the Spirit as applied in the individual’s experience. Paul makes this clear by referring to his own experience (cf. Acts 9:17–19) when he says, “I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all” (1 Corinthians 14:18). While closing his admonition by prioritizing the gift most useful for the public edification of all (prophecy), he was careful to add, “and forbid not to speak with tongues” (v. 39).

Following the biblical pattern in Acts, the Church of God of Prophecy and other classical Holiness/Pentecostal churches teach that speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance is the initial evidence (observable by others) of the baptism with the Holy Spirit. However, it is not to be regarded or sought as an “end-all” experience. Daily walking and living in the Spirit (Romans 8:1–14) will continue to build Christian character (the fruit of the Spirit) and should be the desire and practice of every believer.

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

As mentioned above, daily walking and living in the Spirit will cause the fruit of the Spirit to be regularly manifested in the life of the believer: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law” (Galatians 5:22, 23). Such fruit cannot be produced by the flesh or by human nature. Indeed, the opposing nature and starkly contrary deeds of the flesh are partly enumerated in the same text with the concluding remark, “. . . they which do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God” (v. 21). “This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh” (v. 16). “For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth)” (Ephesians 5:8, 9). The Spirit’s work is crucial to the life of the believer and to the church.

FULL RESTORATION OF THE GIFTS TO THE CHURCH

In accordance with the Spirit’s work, various spiritual gifts are given to and in the church and are manifested through individuals sometimes in an apparently resident manner (repeatedly) and, at other times, spontaneously, as by direct unction of the Spirit in a given setting (1 Corinthians 12:4–11; Romans 12:4–8; Ephesians 4:7–16). Although there are historical periods during which spiritual gifts were not as prevalent as other times, there is no scriptural warrant to support the idea that these gifts ceased. Based on the foregoing scriptural texts and others, the Church of God of Prophecy teaches that spiritual gifts exist in the body of Christ and are owned, distributed, controlled, and operated by the Spirit as it pleases Him. The Church does not advocate personal claims to the gifts, but encourages individuals to humbly know and fulfill their callings to Christian service in response to the Spirit’s leading and with the abilities He gives. As the church is restored to New Testament power, the gifts of the Spirit are expected to serve to edify the body of Christ in these last days just as those same gifts did in earlier times.

SIGNS FOLLOWING BELIEVERS

Because of spiritual gifts and the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit, miraculous signs and wonders may accompany the works and ministries of true believers. Mark 16:17–20 records, “And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up

serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. . . . And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.” While Jesus identified for His apostles what may follow in the lives of those who believe, the import of this text, when balanced against other salvation scriptures such as Romans 10:8–13, does not allow for these to occur (whether simultaneously or one by one) in every instance of salvation. However, the Church sees no Scriptural warrant for the ceasing of these signs, but believe they have occurred and are still occurring today. “For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy (Spirit), according to his own will” (Hebrews 2:2–4)?

DIVINE HEALING

God’s sovereign grace and mercy, through the atonement of Jesus Christ for all our sins and ultimately for all the consequences of sin, provides for the healing/salvation of our souls as well as our bodies in His work on Calvary. In the tradition of Jesus and His apostles as recorded in the Gospels and Acts (Mark 3:1–5; 9–12; 14, 15; Matthew 10:8; Acts 5:12), the Church believes that divine healing is accomplished by the power of God without the aid of medicine or surgical skills (Matthew 8:14–17). While it is clear that God does not always heal instantaneously in response to all prayers for healing (whether of the individual or of someone else praying on behalf of an individual—see 2 Timothy 4:20), it is also a clear biblical duty of the elders and ministers of the Church to pray for the sick and to visit the sick (James 5:13–18 with Matthew 25:34–40). “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases” (Psalm 103:2, 3). This text specifically addresses the soul, but the whole person (spirit/soul and body) can be divinely healed by the power of God. The healing of persons in response to faith and prayer (Acts 3:11–16) and by God’s special mercy (to spare certain of His servants more sorrow, cf. Philippians 2:25–27) is definitely confirmed in Scripture. We have a duty to continue to pray fervently for the sick, humbly leaving it in God’s hands to work His sovereign will.

WATER BAPTISM

Water baptism is the act of being immersed in water according to the commandment and instructions of Christ (Matthew 28:19). This ordinance has no power to wash away sins, but is the answer of a good conscience toward God (1 Peter 3:21) and represents for the believer an identity with the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord (Romans 6:3–5). Mark 16:16 further reinforces the necessity of this step of obedience: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved but he that believeth not shall be damned.” On the day of Pentecost, the apostle Peter told those under

conviction what they should do: “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38). Obviously, the apostles literally followed the Lord’s instructions, and we can do no less. Baptism, then, is outward evidence of our submission to Christ in salvation and our public declaration that we are His followers. It identifies us with His people in His kingdom. “Then they that gladly received His word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls” (2:41; see also 10:47, 48 and 16:30–33).

THE LORD’S SUPPER

The Lord’s Supper is a sacred ordinance that our Lord Himself instituted on the night He was betrayed as He ate the Passover with His disciples (Luke 22:14–22). He instructed that this be done in remembrance of Him. It is representative of our communion and fellowship with Him. The apostle Paul reiterated the Lord’s instructions to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 11:23–25), adding some helpful details: “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, (in an unworthy manner), shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, so that we are not condemned with the world. Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another” (vv. 26–33).

It is therefore the Church’s position that this be observed with all gravity and in an orderly manner. No one should approach the Lord’s Table with unforgiven sin in one’s heart, and all should consecrate themselves in prayer before and upon every occasion of this observance. The Lord’s Supper consists of “the fruit of the vine” (unfermented grape juice, as is our practice), representing the blood of Christ, and unleavened bread, representing His broken body on the cross. The Church encourages the Lord’s Supper to be observed at least once a quarter, but to do so more often is certainly compatible with scriptural teaching: “They worshipped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity—all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved” (Acts 2:46, 47 NLT).

WASHING THE SAINTS’ FEET

Feet Washing was instituted by Jesus on the night of the Last Supper and is considered by the Church a New Testament ordinance that we are enjoined to observe. As the Lord’s Supper represents our communion with Christ, Feet Washing represents our common unity (community) with each other as followers of Christ and partakers

together with Him. Jesus sent two of His disciples to the home of a special friend in Jerusalem to prepare for the Passover meal (Mark 14:12–17). These preparations would have included a basin, water pitcher, and a towel for the customary washing of feet. According to verse 17 above, the 12 came with Jesus, but there is no mention of the washing of feet. Luke tells us there was anguish among the disciples as Jesus announced that one of them would betray Him and also that there was a quarrel between them as to who should be the greatest (Luke 22:21–24). Jesus taught them servant-hood as their right relationship (vv. 25–27) and demonstrated His posture as a Servant among them by washing their feet (John 13:3–5). In establishing this spirit of servant-hood among them, Jesus said, “. . . Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. . . . If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them” (vv. 12–15, 17). The Church encourages that Feet Washing be observed in the same service as the Lord’s Supper whenever possible and in a decent and orderly manner.

TITHING AND GIVING

Tithing means to bring one-tenth of our increase into the treasury of the Church (Proverbs 3:9, 10). The first biblical record of tithing to God’s work began with Abraham, who paid tithes to Melchisedec (priest of the Most High God) of the spoils from his battle with the kings (Genesis 14:18–20), continued under the law, and received the approval of our Lord (Matthew 10:5–10; 23:23). Other New Testament writers reference God’s provisions that they who preach the Gospel should live (be supported) of the Gospel hearers (1 Corinthians 9:6–14; Luke 10:7). See also Hebrews 7:4–10, which gives tithing a certain generational transcendence. The Church considers that the Scriptural obligation to tithe is not fulfilled by just giving directly to the poor or to individuals or good causes. While the Church espouses and participates in all such support, her understanding of the biblical practice of tithing is that tithes are paid—brought into the treasury of the Church for the Lord’s work, especially for the benefit of those who minister in the Word (Hebrews 7:8). God’s blessings and favor will follow in all the productive areas of life (Malachi 3:7–12).

Giving of offerings differs from tithing and is done in addition to tithing. Both are part of God’s plan to finance His work on earth (1 Corinthians 16:1–4; Philippians 4:10–19). A spirit of generosity has always permeated the Church from very early times (Acts 4:32–35), and the apostle Paul quoted our Lord to the Ephesian elders in his farewell address advising them “. . . to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’” (20:35). Once received into the Church’s treasury, tithes and offerings are regulated through appropriate Church decisions and are administered by authorized Church policies and personnel.

RESTITUTION WHERE POSSIBLE

Restitution is the act of restoring something wrongfully taken or the satisfying of one who has been wronged. Making things right as far as is humanly possible is

a natural result of salvation by God's grace as seen in the way Zacchaeus responded to our Lord's saving visit to his house: "And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; 'Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.' And Jesus said unto him, 'This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham'" (Luke 19:8, 9). Where it is impossible to make contact with the person or institution involved, the believer should still exhibit a desire to return what was taken, to restore a relationship, or to seek forgiveness. When necessary, those who make restitution should bear patiently any consequences that may result such as legal sanctions, financial costs, or even rejection by the persons approached. "And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men" (Acts 24:16).

PRE-MILLENNIAL SECOND COMING OF JESUS

Our Lord Jesus Christ is coming back to earth again (Acts 1:11), and the Church understands this coming in two phases: First, in mid-air to resurrect the dead saints and to catch away the living saints to meet Him so that all who are in Christ can attend the marriage supper of the Lamb: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17; see also 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52). "And he saith unto me, 'Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.' And he saith unto me, 'These are the true sayings of God'" (Revelation 19:9). Second, Jesus will return with the saints to reign on earth for a thousand years: ". . . And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection" (20:4, 5; see also Zechariah 14:4-9; Revelation 5:10; 20:6).

RESURRECTION

God's plan for the world includes a time of accountability of all people (living and dead) before His judgment seat. For this reason, all the dead, both righteous and wicked, will be resurrected. As part of the assurance of this judgment, God raised Jesus from the dead and appointed Him judge (Acts 24:15; Daniel 12:2; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Acts 17:30, 31). However, the resurrection of the wicked dead and their time of judgment will not occur until after the thousand-year reign of Christ on earth with His saints (Revelation 20:4-6). Paul expressed the Christian's hope in the resurrection this way: "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Philippians 3:10). We look for the Savior from heaven. Paul says, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (v. 21).

ETERNAL LIFE FOR THE RIGHTEOUS

In Jesus' high priestly prayer, He defined eternal life as follows: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3). The New Testament everywhere teaches that eternal life is promised to those who believe in Jesus: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Those who die in the Lord and those who are serving Him when He returns will receive the reward of eternal life: "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:22, 23).

ETERNAL PUNISHMENT FOR THE WICKED

How we live our lives in this present world determines our destiny in the next, our eternal reward (Daniel 12:2; Romans 2:4–9). The unconverted and the wicked are doomed to eternal punishment from which there is no escape—no liberation, no annihilation: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matthew 25:46). "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8). "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (2 Thessalonians 1:7–9).

ABSTINENCE FROM ALL LIQUOR OR STRONG DRINKS

Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Proverbs 20:1). "But they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment" (Isaiah 28:7). "Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh: for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags" (Proverbs 23:20, 21). Because of these and other biblical texts, the Church of God of Prophecy teaches abstinence from the use of intoxicating beverages. Scriptural teaching is, "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18). We are also advised "That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour" (1 Thessalonians 4:4). (See also 1 Corinthians 5:11; 6:10; 10:31; Galatians 5:21).

CONCERNING TOBACCO, OPIUM, MORPHINE, ETC.

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Corinthians

7:1). “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy [Spirit] which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20). The use of tobacco in any form is forbidden as well as the habitual use of narcotics or other habit-forming drugs. Addictions and enslavements to drugs or other substances are incompatible with the surrender of our bodies to the Lord as holy vessels of honor for His use (Romans 12:1, 2; 1 Thessalonians 4:4). “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31).

CONCERNING FOOD OR DRINKS

The New Testament makes no rigid rule concerning what foods a Christian shall eat or drink with the exception of strong drink and addictive and enslaving substances. “Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days; Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ” (Colossians 2:16, 17). Thus, we have no right to judge what our brother or sister eats or drinks. The legal restrictions of the Mosaic Law concerning these were not extended into the Grace Dispensation: “For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy [Spirit]” (Romans 14:17). See also 1 Corinthians 8:8 and 1 Timothy 4:1–5.

ON THE SABBATH

The Book of Genesis tells us that on the seventh day, God ended His work and blessed that day and sanctified it (Genesis 2:2, 3). This was no doubt His preparatory plan to set Israel apart as a special people, for to them, He gave the Law, which included the observance of the Sabbath.

Jesus’ corrective to the Pharisees’ strict observance of the Sabbath (Mark 2:27, 28) placed people above enslavement to the day and asserted His Lordship over the day. As such, the Church of God of Prophecy teaches that observance of that day per se was not carried over into the Grace Dispensation. Sunday is not the Sabbath but merely a day set aside to give special attention to the worship of God. In the Early Church, they referred to Sunday as “the first day of the week” and later as “the Lord’s Day” or “Resurrection Day.” Therefore, worship on Sunday is also very appropriate. Christians are required to keep every day holy rather than just one particular day. The Jewish Sabbath was also a type of Jesus Christ who is presented in Scripture as our rest (Hebrews 4:1–11). “Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days; Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ” (Colossians 2:16, 17). See also Romans 14:5, 6.

ADORNMENT

Scripture does not prohibit the use of a cultural wedding symbol due to marital, social, and cultural conditions; nor does it establish its necessity. In certain instances, the marriage symbol or emblem may strengthen the marriage arrangement and

order, and thus its use is not for ornamentation. Therefore, the cultural wedding symbol or emblem, though not necessitated, may be worn due to marital, social, and cultural situations in order to preserve the headship principle and the integrity of marriage (Genesis 3:16; 1 Corinthians 11:8; Ephesians 5:22, 23). Scripture neither prohibits (absolutely) nor necessitates the use of ornamental adornment. It does give strong precautionary principles for its use such as modesty, shamefacedness, and sobriety and calls attention to the ornament of the inner man, that of “a meek and quiet spirit” (1 Timothy 2:9, 10; 1 Peter 3:3, 4). Ornamentation must not be used in any way that lends itself to idolatrous, occult, or lustful practices (Isaiah 3:18–22; Acts 8:9; 19:19; 1 Corinthians 5:10; 6:9; Galatians 5:19–21; Revelation 2:20–23). It is also important to remember that adornment includes more than jewelry alone. To apply the prudent principles of Scripture (both for those who wear and those who do not), an overriding principle is found in Romans 14:13: “Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother’s [sister’s] way.”

MEMBERSHIP IN LODGES/SECRET SOCIETIES

The Bible is opposed to the people of God being unequally yoked together with unbelievers (2 Corinthians 6:14–18); it is opposed to deeds done in secret, and it demands the complete and undivided loyalty of God’s children: “Jesus answered him, ‘I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing’” (John 18:20; see also Luke 16:13). Many secret societies/organizations require the taking of an oath of secrecy, and oath-taking is expressly forbidden (see the following paragraph)—as we shall see shortly (Ephesians 5:12, 13).

WHOLESONE SPEECH OF THE BELIEVER

The taking of an oath is a vain thing and condemned in the Scriptures. An affirmation to the truth of anything is sufficient and usually accepted even in courts of law: “But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God’s throne: nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil” (Matthew 5:34–37; see also James 5:12). The term “swearing” is also used of profanity, which the Bible teaches against: “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers” (Ephesians 4:29; see also 5:4).

MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, AND REMARRIAGE

Genesis 1:26, 27; 2:18–25; Deuteronomy 6:7; Matthew 5:32; 14:3, 4; 19:3–12; Mark 10:12; Luke 16:18; Romans 7:2, 3; 1 Corinthians 5:1–5; 6:9–18; 7:2, 11; Colossians 3:18–21.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

The Church of God of Prophecy affirms the biblical teaching that marriage is sacred and should not be entered into lightly without proper preparation. Marriage was originally instituted by God as a properly recognized covenant relationship between one man and one woman for life. The Church affirms the biblical family as a father and mother in wedlock who may procreate children. The Church further asserts that the home, including the extended family, is to be guided by love, discipline, and other nurturing aspects as taught in God's Word. Because the Church is committed to the sanctity of marriage and human life, we diligently stand against abortion, incest, abuse, euthanasia, adultery, divorce, homosexuality, and lesbianism, which we believe are contrary to God's original design as expressed in His Word. All biblically unlawful unions such as same-sex, incestuous, or polygamous marriages are renounced by the Church even if they are recognized as legal by civil governments.

DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

Concerning "divorce" in the above context, the Church means the breaking of a legitimate, lawful, biblical marriage and holds firmly to the principle that such divorces are not God's will, especially between Christians. Forgiveness, reconciliation, and healing should be sought as a first priority in order to preserve marriages and prevent divorce. The Church also recognizes that despite biblical teaching and honest human effort, divorces do occur sometimes against the will of one or the other party. Therefore, the Church recognizes (in a pastoral sense) those causes, in addition to death, that would be recognized as ending a previously valid biblical marriage. In such cases, delineated on the following page, marriage partners would not be classed as adulterers even though remarried:

1. If persons were divorced and remarried for any reason prior to their personal salvation and have demonstrated a willingness to seek restitution (forgiveness from the offended spouse) and restoration where possible.
2. If a divorce occurred because of a spouse's habitual adulterous behavior and efforts to bring reconciliation are no longer possible.
3. If divorce occurred because of spousal or child abuse, such as incestuous behavior that seriously endangers the life and health of the spouse or family and violates the sanctity of holy matrimony.

Under no circumstances should Christians or Church members initiate or seek divorce without completely exhausting all biblical and counseling avenues to restore, rebuild, and sustain their marriages. Marriages that clearly violate biblical standards (such as incestuous marriages) may be appealed to the Presbytery for specific consideration. All divorce and remarriage cases not falling within the categories described above should be referred for counsel and resolution to the Pastor and local church leadership, the State/Regional/National Presbytery, or the

General Ministerial Presbytery (which includes the General Overseer and General Presbyters) as may be appropriate.*

*See “The Biblical Institution of Marriage” Final Document, Church of God of Prophecy, *94th International Assembly Minutes*, 2006, pages 152–177. See also “The Family Manifesto” originally written and owned by “FamilyLife,” and specially adapted (with permission) by Family Ministries for inter-church use by the Church of God of Prophecy, International Offices.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

The Church of God of Prophecy holds the biblical principle of genuine repentance toward God (an individual’s experience of salvation) as its qualification for Church membership in accordance with the early church’s practice and God’s own activity in adding to the church daily those who were being saved (Acts 2:41, 47; 1 Corinthians 12:13). By genuine repentance is meant Godly sorrow for sin, confessing, turning from, denouncing and forsaking sin, and exercising faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ “who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification” (Romans 4:25). “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Romans 10:9, 10). Salvation is both instantaneous (new birth, regeneration) and the all-inclusive work of redemption, beginning with regeneration and culminating with the glorified body (Hebrews 9:28). In terms of “being added to the church,” the instantaneous aspect of salvation is evident, and a public commitment (“I will/I do”) to the Church covenant as administered by an authorized Church of God of Prophecy minister, in an appropriate church setting, is necessary. The covenant reads:

Will you sincerely promise in the presence of God and these witnesses that you will accept this Bible as the Word of God, believe and practice its teachings rightly divided—the New Testament as your rule of faith, practice, government, and discipline, and walk in the light to the best of your knowledge and ability?

Membership in the Church denotes acceptance, which is the basic need of every new believer. Ministry leadership and the Church must endeavor to give members this sense of belonging. The Church also advocates that new members be immediately placed in an effective, ongoing, discipleship process by the pastor and local church (Acts 2:42), a process that includes nurturing and discipline, to help them become mature (2 Peter 3:18), discover the spiritual gift or gifts, which will be exercised through them for the edification of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians, chapters 12, 13, 14), and to learn to make disciples of others (Matthew 28:19, 20). As we continue in the harvest, a program of extensive discipleship requiring great wisdom and loving care by leadership and people will help all our members mature in Christ.

**The Following Statistical Report by Areas as of 2014
(Statistics compiled by the Global Outreach Department)**

Country/Region (Entry Date)	Membership	Churches	Missions	Licensed Ministers
Africa	330,348	1,868	774	968
Asia/Oceania	74,554	623	296	323
Caribbean/Atlantic Ocean Islands	131,962	797	29	1,010
Central America/Mexico/ Sp Caribbean	133,012	2,435	660	1,713
Europe/CIS/Middle East	157,543	1,353	115	294
North America	97,268	1,850	118	3,857
South America	57,518	1,098	372	456
Totals	982,205	10,024	2,364	8,621

NOTE: Total number of Nations: 132

**Church of God of Prophecy International Offices
Committees, Trustees, Corporation, Boards**

Administrative Committee

Sam Clements, General Overseer, *Chairman*; General Presbyters (Clayton Endecott; David Browder; Stephen Masilela; Clayton Martin; Benjamin Feliz; Gabriel Vidal; Tim Coalter); Paul Holt; David Bryan; Jeff Davis; Llewellyn Graham; Kathy Creasy; Brian Sutton.

Biblical Doctrine and Polity Committee

Philip Pruitt, *Chairman*; Delroy Hall; Elías Rodríguez; Nelson Torres; James Kolawole; Carswell Leonard; Tim McCaleb.

Finance and Stewardship Committee

Wayne Pense, *Chairman*; Nathaniel Beneby; Clint Knowles; Angie Zamora; Rupert Neblett; George McLaughlin; Paulette Wilbanks.

Global Outreach Committee

Paul Holt, *Chairman*; General Presbyter (Rotating); Cathy Payne; Annette Taylor; Ken Dyer; Nonito Que; Tapio Satila; William Lamb; Mark Menke; Paulette Wilbanks.

Church of God of Prophecy Corporate Board

General Presbyters; Administrative Committee Members.

General Trustees

General Overseer, Sam Clements; David Bryan; Paul Holt; Ben Feliz.

Assembly Task Force

Paul Holt, *Chairman*; Eddie Hartman; Mike Luithe; Joshua Lynn; Dewayne Hamby; Michael Hernandez; John Payne; Gene Browning; G.O. Liaison Advisor: Host Overseer of Assembly Site.

Chief Clerk

Dewayne Hamby

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Turks, Caicos Islands—Clarence N. Williams, CA; Church of God of Prophecy; P.O. Box 685; Providenciales, Turks & Caicos Islands, B.W.I.; Phone: 649-941-5152; E-Mail: bishopwilliams@hotmail.com

Virgin Islands (U.S. & British), ABC Islands (Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao)—Whitbourne Hutchinson, P.O. Box 7434, St. Thomas, VI. 00801-7434; Phone: 340-715-0478; E-Mail: cogopabcbusvi@yahoo.com

Windward Islands (Barbados, St. Lucia, Grenada, St. Vincent, the Grenadines)—Edward Payne; P.O. Box 1234 G.P.O.; Bridgetown, Barbados, Windward Islands; Phone: 246-428-7664; E-Mail: cogopwi@caribsurf.com

Bermuda—Northeast Regional Overseer, Leroy Greenaway; P.O. Box 11652; Albany, NY 12211-0652; Phone: 518-489-0753; E-Mail: leroxygenaway@verizon.net

****Note:** *Bermuda is under North America appointment*

EUROPE AND MIDDLE EAST (*Clayton Endecott, General Presbyter*)

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Belarus—Henadzi (“Gena”) Kernazhytski*

Belgium, The Netherlands—Tedroy Powell; Church of God of Prophecy; House of Bread; 39 Kitto Road; New Cross London SE 14 5TW England; Phone: 011-44-207-732-4970; E-Mail: Tedpulpit@aol.com

Bosnia Herzegovina, Italy, Malta—Ximo Gregorio, C/Falciot 9, Can Suria Est, 08818 Olivella, Barcelona Spain; E-Mail: ximojudy@misionmediterranea.org

Bulgaria—Peter Georgiev; KV “Rodina” 2, Bl. Balgarka, ent D, Floor 2, 7006 - Rousse, Bulgaria; Phone: 011-359-89-788-0100; E-Mail: Georgievpeter@abv.bg

Cyprus—Clayton Endecott, Jr.; Antonios Pastos, Chairperson (for legal matters); Postfach 1209; 63202 Langen, Germany; Phone: 011-49-6-103-78594; E-Mail: gpce@cogop.de

Egypt—Samir Shehata Rizk*

Finland—Tapio Sättilä; Linkkiseurakunta; PL 808; 13501 HÄMEENLINNA, Finland; Phone: 011-358-50-564-6498; E-Mail: tapio.satila@linkkiseurakunta.fi

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Greece—National Plurality Team; (under the care of GP’s Shared Leadership Team); E-Mail: gpce@cogop.de

Israel, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Romania, Uzbekistan—Clayton Endecott, Jr.; GP’s Shared Leadership Team and National Workers; E-Mail: gpce@cogop.de

Russia—

Spain, Portugal—José Antonio Gomez Sanchez; Partida el Bosch 174, 03330 Crevillente (Alicante), Spain; Phone: 011-34-966-681-458; E-Mail: josegomez@cogospain.org

Ukraine—Vitaliy Voznyuk*

United Kingdom of Great Britain, France—Wilton Powell; 6 Beacon Court, Birmingham Road, Great Barr, Birmingham B43 6NN England; Phone: 011-44-121-358-2231; E-Mail: wiltonpowell@cogop.org.uk

**Due to precautionary measures needed in this particular area, we feel it unwise to print these addresses.*

MEXICO, CENTRAL AMERICA, AND SPANISH-SPEAKING CARIBBEAN

(Benjamin Feliz, General Presbyter)

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Great Lakes Region (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin)—Timothy A. Harper; P.O. Box 398; Charleston, IN 47111; Phone: (812) 748-9125; Fax: (812) 748-9175; E-Mail: timllpc@aol.com; Web: http://michianacogop.com

Heartland Territory (Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma)—Wayne Pense; P.O. Box 356; Broken Arrow, OK 74013; Phone: (918) 251-9667; Fax: (888) 285-1732; E-Mail: office@heartlandcogop.org; Web: http://www.heartlandcogop.org

Idaho, Oregon, Utah—Wallace R. Pratt; P.O. Box 3065; Salem, OR 97302-0065; Phone: (503) 364-7852; Fax: (503) 364-7865; E-Mail: wrp72250@aol.com; Web: http://iou.myimage7.com

Kentucky—J. Scott Gillum; P.O. Box 220; Elizabethtown, KY 42701; Phone: (270) 900-1956; Fax: (270) 900-1535; E-Mail: kycogop@comcast.net; Web: http://www.kycogop.org

Louisiana/Mississippi—H. Wayne Hall; P.O. Box 721190; Byram, MS 39272; Phone: (601) 372-9721; Fax: (601) 372-1899; E-Mail: LAMScogopoverseer@aol.com; Web: www.lamscogop.org

Mid-Atlantic Region (Delaware, D.C., Maryland, New Jersey, Delmarva Peninsula)—Levi Clarke; P.O. Box 1310; Bear, DE 19701; Phone: (302) 368-0004; E-Mail: levi.clarke@verizon.net; Web: <http://midatlanticcogop.org>

Midwest/Rocky Mountain Region (Colorado, Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska)—Jesse Yanez; 4216 Mary Lynn Drive; Urbandale, IA 50322; Phone: Not available; E-Mail: bishopyanez@gmail.com; Web: www.midwestregioncogop.org

North Carolina—Jeffrey Davis; P.O. Box 699; Jamestown, NC 27282; Phone: (336) 454-4118; Fax: (336) 454-1677; E-Mail: jadavis@nccogop.org; Web: www.nccogop.org

Northeast Region (English) (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, Bermuda)—Leroy Greenaway; P.O. Box 11652; Albany, NY 12211-0652; Phone: (518) 489-0753; E-Mail: leroygreenaway@verizon.net; Web: www.nercogop.org

Northeast Region (Spanish) (Connecticut, D.C., Delaware, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia)—Rahadames Matos; P.O. Box 295; Cranford, NJ 07016; Phone: (908) 272-4566; Fax: (908) 643-5407; E-Mail: nesrcogop@msn.com; Web: www.servencedor.org

Northwest Territory (Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming)—Rick Lee; 160 Erickson Ct. West, Billings, MT 59107; Phone: (406) 256-7440; Fax: (406) 252-5016; E-Mail: nwtcogop@msn.com; Web: (blogsite): nwtconnection.blogspot.com

Ohio, West Virginia—Fred A. Lawson; P.O. Box 1010; Reynoldsburg, OH 43068; Phone: (614) 759-6072; Fax: (614) 759-7861; E-Mail: falawson@aol.com; Web: www.geocities.com/ohwvcogop/

Pennsylvania—C. Jay Croyle; P.O. Box 404; Parker, PA 16049; Phone: (724) 818-5049; E-Mail: cjcroyle@pacogop.comcastbiz.net; Web: www.pacogop.org

South Carolina—George McLaughlin; P.O. Box 820; Rock Hill, SC 29730; Phone: (803) 328-2030; Fax: (803) 328-2499; E-Mail: gmcloughlin@comporium.net; Web: www.sccogop.org

Southeast Spanish Region (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee)—Ebi De La Rosa; P.O. Box 452757; Kissimmee, FL 34745; Phone: (407) 201-3906; E-Mail: ebli@bellsouth.net; Web: <http://www.regionsur.com>

Tennessee—E. C. McKinley; P.O. Box 2319; Hendersonville, TN 37077-2319; Phone: (615) 824-3563; Fax: (615) 827-0102; E-Mail: ecmckinley@mac.com; Web: www.tncogop.org

Texas—Tim McCaleb; 17275 Northcrest Circle; New Caney, TX 77357; Phone: (281) 689-3436; Fax: (281) 689-3410; E-Mail: tmcc1200@aol.com

Virginia—Jerry Schall; P.O. Box 158; Troutville, VA 24175-0158; Phone: (540) 992-3696; Fax: (540) 992-2861; E-Mail: jschallcogop@sbcglobal.net; Web: www.vacogop.org

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E-Mail: gvidal@cogop.org

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Uruguay—Sergio E. Garcia A., Iglesia de Dios de la Profecía, Estanislao Lopez 4815, Malvin-Montevideo, Uruguay; Phone: 011-598-2-614-2846; E-Mail: cogop-uruguay@hotmail.com

Venezuela—Luis Gomez , Apdo. 4552, codigo 2101-A, Maracay, Edo. Aragua, Venezuela, S.A.; Phone: 011-58-243-263-2263; E-Mail: luigi19718@hotmail.com

Harvest Continental Coordinator—Rafael Alvino Vargas; L18-0146, Miraflores; Lima, Perú, S.A.; Phone : 011-51-1-451-0374; Fax: 011-51-1-451-7462; E-Mail: leafarav24@hotmail.com

Recongnition of Missionaries

Dan & Gwen Miller

Fredy Guillen

Teri Santos

**Ministers Retiring/Rotating From General Appointment and Receiving
Appreciation Certificates at the 98th International Assembly**

International Offices

Trevor Reid
Aileen Reid
Wallace Pratt
Wade Patterson

North America

Jose Garcia (California)
Cervin McKinnon (Northeast Region)
Harold Parker (Louisiana/Mississippi)
Josue Serpas (Southeastern Spanish)

National Overseers

Confessor Batista (Puerto Rico)
George Asante-Boateng (Ghana)
Antonios Charalambou (Cyprus/Greece/
Israel/Hungary/Romania)
Michael Charalambous (Cyprus/Israel)
Munawar S. Khan (Pakistan)
Santos Francisco Ochoa (Honduras)
Robert Judah Paul (Malaysia)

South America

Victor Parraga (Ecuador)

**BISHOPS ORDAINED AT THE 98th INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY
Saturday, August 2, 2014**

NATIONS

CUBA

Moices Hernandez

HONDURAS

Francisco Hernandez

INDIA

Jaison K.P.
Joshua Wijonamai

MALAYSIA

Barhinathan Anthonisamy

PAKISTAN

Asher M Khan

A. SAMOA

Nonito Que

ST. KITTS

Ron E. Dublin-Collins
Stephen Liburd

VIRGIN ISLANDS

Antonal Vertus

NORTH AMERICA

ARIZONA

Fernando Jiminez, Jr

CALIFORNIA

Carlos Calderon
Jason Sample

FLORIDA

Samuel Gamble
Troy Vernon
Franklin Woodham
Theodore Walker

GEORGIA

Matthew McEachern

MIDWEST

Tel Saucerman
Cecil Stanton
Jose Javier Romero

NORTH CAROLINA

William Tatum
Leslie Herod
Jesse Matthews

NORTHEAST REGION

Neville Copeland
Earl Robinson

Roger Ball
Donald Pflugh
Federico Hodge
Jason Miltz
Oliver McDowald
Soloman Andrade

OKLAHOMA

Ed. L Rutherford, Jr.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Larry Blanton
Joel Altman
Edward Fleming
Mack Willis
Barry Looper
James Smith, Jr

TENNESSEE

Sammy Rye
Larry Meadors
Michael Burton
Ricky D. Lyles
J. Michael Jennette

DECEASED MINISTERS

August 2013–June 2014

BAHAMAS

Beneby, Rosetta M.
Boothe, Cynthia T.
Cox, Philip J.
Ferguson, Arthur
Ferguson, Elkin A.
Johnson, Uhijah
McKinney, Florence
Moss, Samuel Buster
Petiras, Fearlease R.

Seymour, Mayrona
Simmons, Lorna Joy
Stubbs, Felix A.
Stubbs, Vivian J.

BOLIVIA

Bautista, Segundina Torrejon
Mamani, Teofilo Chiri
Poma, Francisco Quispe

CAMEROON

Nya, Philippe

CANADA

Cole, Newton

Laillet, Bernard Albert

ISRAEL

Babisha, Albert Josef

JAMAICA

Cole, Newton

Gilbert, Icilda

Hutchinson, Rebecca C.

Jackson, Percival O.

Lennon, Lucilda

Richards, Pearl M.

PUERTO RICO

Alken, Virgil

Anderson, Bernice

Barton, Gladys

TURKS & CAICOS ISLANDS

Williams, Isabella I.

UK

Johnson, Laureston B.

ZIMBABWE/MOZAMBIQUE

Nyamhuka, Kenneth C.

UNITED STATES

Adkins, Mary Nell

Alderete, Sue K.

Davis, John R.

Eloff, David

Haney, Ionee L.

Hawkins, Henry Lavell

Jacobs, Eddie Wallace

Sims, Gary D.

Snow, Bobby R.

Wallace, Raymond David

Wesley, Jovis E.

Turner, William E.

Wilson, Floyd D.

Foster, Clarence F.

Dugger, June P.

Beckwith, J. B.

Cunningham, William A.

Hawkins, Carl R.

Huntsman, Donald E.

Knowles, Sr. George H.

Lopez, Maisy Lee

Miles, Paul E.

Owen, John L.

Sharpe, John Hamilton

Williford, Clarence B.

Wilson, Sr. Arthur Linville

Woods, Bernard Benjamin

Brown, Horace

Bryant, Jerry E.

Coker, Emmett L.

Curenton-Faircloth, Thelma Joyce

Glaze, George

Mixon, Roy D.

Nobles, James W.

Thomas, Renita C.

Griffin, James Daniel

McGuire, Margaret Ann

Dudding, Jr. Paul L.

Pentecost, Helen L.

Skiver, Glen E.

Durham, Odus

Gardner, Rosa Mae

Harper, Arnold F.

Montgomery, Avery Gerald

Yates, Kenneth

McTaggart, Lottie C.

Robertson, Melvin

Tasker, Vernard

Blaniar, Charles

Aiken, John Myron
 Brooks, Everett E.
 Traficanto, Frank J.
 Younger, Arthur E.
 Ables, Florene
 Allred, Winton
 Brownin,g Douglas
 Green, James H.
 Whitten, Frank Ray
 Bailey, Billy O.
 Blackmon, John David
 Brady, Ruby Mariece
 Brown, James T.
 Bunce, Lawrence O.
 Dickey, Boyd E.
 Faircloth, James M.
 Laws, Sr Arnold R.
 Lofton, Shelley S.
 Melvin, Cloe L.
 Parton, Bettye J.
 Parton, Louie L.
 Prince, Josephine R.
 Serrant, Ismay
 Siler, Marie
 Cabler, Lessie R.
 Kell, Hershel Lee
 McDougle, Reginald
 Guthrie, Rubie D.
 James, Natilee D.
 Reid, Faye Elaine
 Varlack, Rena Doloris
 Henderson, Kenneth Guy
 Stock, Ruby E.
 Allred, Janice M.
 Wynn, Oral T.
 Gaylor, Ora L.

Rodas, M. Byron
 Ayers, Claude K.
 Collins, Jr. Elmer N.
 Gaites, Norwood A.
 Griffin, Curtis T.
 Johnson, Fred M.
 Thomas, Maybelle
 Allen, Doyle R.
 Coalter, A. J.
 Curry, Mollie D.
 Denton, Caroline J.
 Gonia, Arthur Winston
 Hebert, Henry J.
 Holman, Anthony W.
 Manus, James E.
 McDonald, Avis
 Patrick, George L.
 Queener, Willard M.
 Waggett, Betty Jane
 Ellis, Ralph
 Johnson, Sarah E.
 Morris, Sr. Dallas D.
 Rangel, Guillermo C.
 Greene, Arthur
 Burdine, Archie M.
 Hilderbrand, Rudy W.
 Jones, John Roy.
 Lowman, John Dudley
 Steele, Carl Edward
 Rymer, Ramona E.
 Johns, Edman W.
 Bowser, Betty J.
 Fannin, Albert Andrue
 Mitchell, Clyde Wilburn
 Williams, Janice Irene
 Nunnery, William R.

98th INTERNATIONAL ASSEMBLY OFFERINGS

Wednesday, July 30	\$ 20,551.55
Thursday, July 31	\$ 43,785.63
Friday, August 1	\$ 26,353.87
Saturday, August 2	\$ 27,966.28
TOTAL OFFERING:	\$ 118,657.33