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Next Wave Magazine - September 2026
A Publication of Life College Press and the International Circle of Faith



Focused on the prayer that Jesus prayed for His Church (Jn. 17:21) International Circle of Faith is a Christian World Network representing some 40,000 ministers with an estimated 25 million constituents. These lead tens of thousands of churches, ministries, colleges, universities, orphanages & feeding programs, humanitarian aid organizations, chaplaincies. other charities, Christ centered companies and business interests.

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Cover Story

With the year winding down, we begin to enter the final 3rd of this incredible year of change. Some say it's time to begin looking toward the horizon to what's ahead. Activities abound, but not all are visible, at least not at the moment. September is normally a pivotable month, and this year a lot is happening: getting started, picking up momentum, and opening up new paths for Christ's church across the globe.

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Next Wave Magazine September2026











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From the Chief Editor

DEAR BELOVED READERS,



September always arrives like a hinge. The summer's labor is not yet finished, but the harvest has already begun to show itself in the fields, and the Church, too, feels the turning. Scripture says, *"One generation shall commend Your works to another, and shall declare Your mighty acts"* (**Psalm 145:4**). This month, I find myself standing in exactly that verse — looking back with gratitude, and looking forward with expectation.

Not long ago, Dr. Daisy and I stood in Indianapolis at the historic Christ Temple, in the very spot where my grandfather, the late Bishop George A. Wade Jr., once stood in 1929 to take a photograph of that same structure. In his day, the esteemed Bishop G.T. Haywood was pastor there — a man whose life would go on to help birth hundreds of churches around the world, and whose name is now inseparable from the story of the Pentecostal movement itself. Ninety-seven years later, we stood where he stood and took the photograph again. Some things are worth returning to. A generation does not commend the works of God by forgetting them, but by standing in the same place and declaring, again, that He is faithful.

That same spirit of return carried us into July, when Dr. Daisy and I attended the 111th Annual Convention of the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World — our first national PAW gathering since 2005, and our first under new leadership. It was fitting that they named this convention **Steadfast**. Scripture tells us to *"be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain"* (**1 Corinthians 15:58**).

Thousands gathered from a multitude of nations. The worship was sincere. The fellowship, with dear friends like Drs. Gary and Deborah Garrett and our friend Tony Beck, was sweet. And the convention itself became a fitting tribute to eight faithful years of leadership, as the PAW closed one chapter and turned, with new International officers now in place, toward the next. Seasons end. Faithfulness does not have to.

And now, even as one chapter closes, another is already opening before us.

On September 5 and 6, we gather for LifeFest 2026 in LaGrange, Kentucky — not simply another meeting on the calendar, but a next chapter for Life Church and for the whole family connected through Life College and Seminary, the International Circle of Faith, and the Christian World Network.

When the people of God gather with expectation, something happens. Vision becomes clearer. The weary are refreshed. Faith begins to put its feet on the ground.

At the heart of that weekend, on September 5 at 1:00 PM, we will witness a sacred moment — the ordination of Bishop Nathaniel and Pastor Jennifer Stutzman as the new leaders of Life Church. Ordination is not a ceremony we perform; it is an assignment we recognize.

It is the laying on of hands upon those who have already said yes to the Lord's work, long before we ever said amen to it. We rejoice with them, and we invite the whole Life Church family to come stand as witnesses. A holy assignment deserves prayer. A church stepping forward deserves support.

Forthcoming as well, later this month, the Christian World Network will take its first steps toward the soft launch of the CWN Global Mall — a marketplace where believers can support one another's goods and services. It is a small beginning, but it carries a Kingdom principle worth remembering: the household of faith is strengthened not only in the pew, but in the marketplace, when believers choose to stand with one another there too.

So we close one season with thanksgiving, and we open the next with hope. "*Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight… and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us*" (**Hebrews 12:1**).

Our grandfathers stood faithfully in their moment. Now it is ours.

I look forward to seeing many of you in LaGrange.

In His Grace,

Bernie L Wade

Bishop Bernie L. Wade, PhD

President – International Circle of Faith

Life Fest

Next Chapter

Life Church



Bishop Nathaniel *and* Pastor Jennifer Stutzman

Ordination Service — September 5 at 1 PM

1901 Prestwick Drive LaGrange, KY 40031

Bishop Nathaniel and Pastor Jennifer Stutzman have officially joined Life Church. They will be ordained as our new Lead Pastors. We ask all our friends and ministers to take time to join us in this celebration.

Refreshments during the “Meet & Greet” after the service.



LIFE FEST 2026

Night of Worship



| Saturday
September 5th
| 6:00 PM

GUEST APPEARANCE:

Hyram the Temple Guard and more

Hosted by Life Church

1901 Prestwick Drive, LaGrange KY 40031

Life Worship

CHANGE

by Bishop Bernie L. Wade Ph.D.



Think about the things that you know about that have really changed. Your friend might say they have lost weight, but your observation is that they are not really much different from when they were on their last diet cycle. There is much ado about climate change. Yet, we still have the same 4 seasons that our ancient ancestors had, and the experts who track the weather point out that our weather is actually in a cycle of around 100 years, but substantial change is rare. **The reality is that Change is Rare.**

The more things change, the more they are the same.

In Alphonse Karr's famous quote, *"The more things change, the more they are the same,"* he encapsulates a profound truth about the nature of existence. At first glance, it may seem contradictory - how can things be both changing and staying the same?

However, upon closer examination, this paradoxical statement unveils a timeless wisdom that speaks to the cyclical nature of life and the underlying unity of all things.

At its core, this quote suggests that despite the ever-present flux and transformation happening around us, there are fundamental aspects of human nature, society, and the world that remain constant throughout time. It highlights the perennial recurrence of certain patterns, behaviors, and ideologies that persist despite the ever-changing external circumstances.

One could interpret this quote as a reflection on the human condition itself - no matter how much progress we make, or how advanced our technology becomes, certain aspects of human nature are enduring. Our desires, aspirations, fears, and motivations have remained remarkably consistent throughout history.

We may have evolved culturally and technologically, but the core of what it means to be human remains remarkably similar. Moreover, on a societal level, this quote suggests that while the superficial trappings of society might change, the underlying dynamics and power structures tend to persist.

Governments may rise and fall, but the struggle for power, inequality, and the pursuit of self-interest continue to shape human societies. Institutions, modes of governance, and social hierarchies may evolve, but their essence remains remarkably constant.

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Governments may rise and fall, but the struggle for power, inequality, and the pursuit of self-interest continue to shape human societies. Institutions, modes of governance, and social hierarchies may evolve, but their essence remains remarkably constant.

At its core, the aphorism reflects a paradoxical truth about life and human nature. Despite technological, cultural, or political changes, certain aspects of human behavior, societal structures, and recurring patterns persist over time.

For example:

- Human nature: Desires, fears, and motivations remain consistent across generations.
- Society and institutions: Governments, hierarchies, and power dynamics may evolve superficially, but the struggle for influence and self-interest continues.
- Cultural patterns: Trends and fashions may shift, yet fundamental social behaviors and values often endure.
- This idea emphasizes the cyclical nature of life and the continuity that underlies apparent change, suggesting that true transformation requires more than surface-level adjustments—it demands a deeper shift in understanding or values.
- Karr's aphorism captures a timeless observation: change is often only skin-deep, and the fundamental truths of life persist despite the passage of time.



"At its core, the aphorism reflects a paradoxical truth about life and human nature."



New Year's Resolution

"A New Year's resolution is a tradition, most common in the Western World but also found in the Eastern World, in which a person resolves to continue good practices, change an undesired trait or behavior, accomplish a personal goal, or otherwise improve their behavior at the beginning of a calendar year."[1]

Some years ago, I taught a series on Change at Life Church. I researched what really changes and how people respond. I was impressed that the consensus among psychologists, counselors, and others is that there is rarely change. People, even despite tragic circumstances, rarely change. Those experts that I studied conclude that change is indeed rare. This means it generally does not happen.

The family that loses a loved one to drugs or alcohol may profess to change their trajectory but within days or weeks return to the same habits. One of the things that I learned is that real change is measured quantitatively. You cannot really claim permanent change unless you have change that lasts for a couple of years or more. The smoker who quits every January as part of his New Year's Resolution does not qualify as change.

Transformation

Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James,
and John his brother, led them up on a high
mountain by themselves; [2] and He was
transfigured before them. His face shone
like the sun, and His clothes became as
white as the light. [3] And behold, Moses and
Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. [4]
Then Peter answered and said to Jesus,
"Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish,
let us make here three tabernacles: one for
You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."
-(Matthew Chapter 17:1-4)



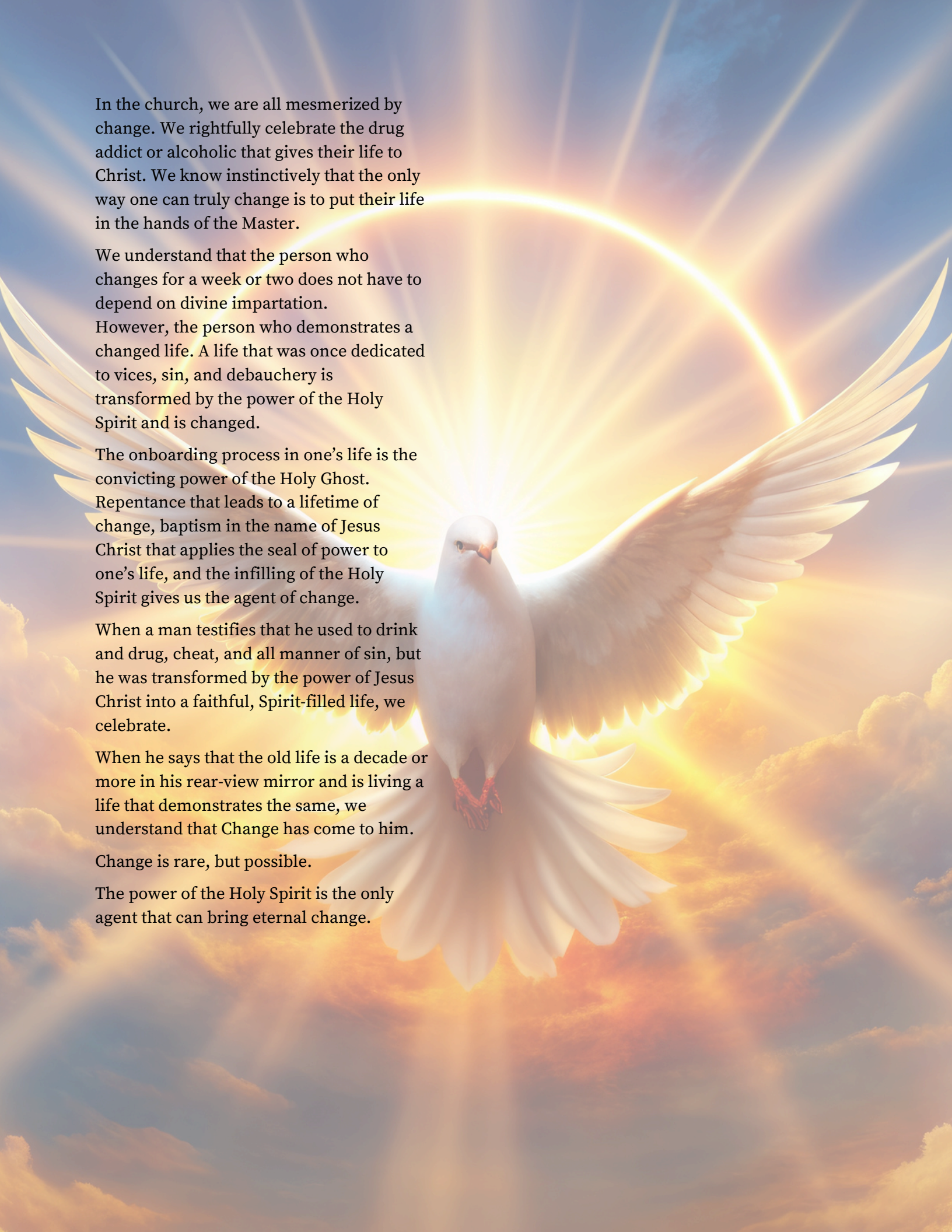
Jesus demonstrated His capacity to bring change to His disciples on what we call the Mount of Transfiguration. Notably, the verse says after 6 days. I interpret this to point to 6, which is the number of man. After man has had a try at making things change, he will, expectedly, understand that the only agent of eternal change is Jesus Christ!

Romans 12:2

Change is not enough. Transformation is the goal. The person who says, "I need to lose 50 pounds" is not expecting mere change. They are expecting to transform their body.

"Be not conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind..."
--(Romans 12:2)

[1] New Year's resolution - Wikipedia



In the church, we are all mesmerized by change. We rightfully celebrate the drug addict or alcoholic that gives their life to Christ. We know instinctively that the only way one can truly change is to put their life in the hands of the Master.

We understand that the person who changes for a week or two does not have to depend on divine impartation. However, the person who demonstrates a changed life. A life that was once dedicated to vices, sin, and debauchery is transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit and is changed.

The onboarding process in one's life is the convicting power of the Holy Ghost. Repentance that leads to a lifetime of change, baptism in the name of Jesus Christ that applies the seal of power to one's life, and the infilling of the Holy Spirit gives us the agent of change.

When a man testifies that he used to drink and drug, cheat, and all manner of sin, but he was transformed by the power of Jesus Christ into a faithful, Spirit-filled life, we celebrate.

When he says that the old life is a decade or more in his rear-view mirror and is living a life that demonstrates the same, we understand that Change has come to him.

Change is rare, but possible.

The power of the Holy Spirit is the only agent that can bring eternal change.



INTERNATIONAL CIRCLE OF FAITH PRESBYTERY

Meeting via Zoom

First Monday at 8 PM EST

https://experience.v-unite.com/#/christianworldnetwork/christianworldnetwork//room/berniewadeoffice

Words from the Managing Publisher

Dear Subscribers & Guests,



Welcome to that gentle bend in the road toward the New Year — the place where the path curves, and for a moment we can see both where we've walked and where we're being led. I felt that curve arrive rather suddenly this year, the way grace often does.

It may feel a little early to speak of 2027 when so much of 2026 still lingers in memory. But turning to look back, even briefly, reveals how faithfully we've been carried.

This year brought me into a new season as managing editor and publisher of Life College Press, and with it, the gift of walking alongside remarkable servants of the Kingdom across the globe. I've spent rich hours in fellowship with clergy leadership from Nigeria, Uganda, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, and beyond — true Soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ, laboring faithfully in His harvest fields. In the issues ahead, we'll be lifting up one such leader each month.

This issue, we honor Dr. Otobong Michael, Leader of ICOF Nigeria and the School of Ministry, whose life continues to bear witness to God's work in that region.

There is joy to share as well. Life Church has recently welcomed new shepherds to its leadership, and on September 5th, Bishop Nathaniel and Pastor Jennifer Stutzman will be ordained at Life Church in Kentucky at 1 p.m. If the Lord makes a way, come and stand witness to this holy commissioning — it is no small thing to see servants set apart for His work.

But this September also carries a heavier remembrance. It will be one year since we lost Charlie Kirk — a loss that reverberated through the hearts of Believers everywhere, a reminder of how fragile and precious this life truly is. Last year, in another publication, I wrote a brief reflection on his passing. I share it again here, on page 58, in his memory.

As we walk toward the close of this year and prepare our hearts for the one to come, may we hold fast to what has carried us all along: Faith, Family, and Mission. Our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ remains the anchor of a life well lived — keeping Him at the center is not one priority among many, but the foundation beneath them all.

That faith takes root and grows as we live it out within our families, teaching and modeling a Christ-like example that then overflows into our workplaces, our friendships, and the wider world around us.

And finally, our mission — the unique calling God has placed on each of our lives. He has entrusted every one of us with distinct gifts to steward for His glory. Pursuing excellence in that calling honors Him, but never at the cost of the faith and family that give it meaning.

May this next stretch of the road be walked in His peace, and may we arrive at 2027 having loved well, served faithfully, and kept our eyes fixed on Him.

IN HIS SERVICE,
David

Revelation 12:



The Weight of Yahweh's Glory and the Final War in the Heavens

by Doctor Jorge Parrott



We are living in sobering, prophetic days. The Church must wake up, grow up, and rise. Revelation 12 tells us that a war breaks out in heaven, and Michael and his angels fight against the dragon and his angels. The dragon does not prevail, and no place is found for him in heaven any longer. The great dragon—that serpent of old, called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world—is cast down to the earth, and his angels are cast down with him.

"And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer."

— Revelation 12:7–8

This is not a small passage. This is not religious poetry. This is a revelation of cosmic conflict. Satan is losing ground. The devil is not winning.

"And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer."

— Revelation 12:7–8



He is being pushed out. He is being cast down. And when he is cast down, Scripture says the earth enters a time of intense spiritual conflict.

"Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time."

— Revelation 12:12

That phrase matters: **he knows that he has a short time.** The increase of rage, deception, confusion, darkness, sorcery, violence, lawlessness, and spiritual warfare in the earth is not proof that Satan is winning. It is proof that he is desperate.

The soon-coming of Yeshua is putting pressure on the demonic realm. The weight of Yahweh's glory is pressing upon principalities and powers. The Hebrew idea of glory—***kabod***—carries the sense of weight, splendor, and substance. His glory is not light, thin, or symbolic. His glory has weight. His coming has weight. His Kingdom has weight.

"The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty." **— Psalm 29:4**

"For thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Once more…I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; and I will shake all nations.'" **— Haggai 2:6–7**

When Jesus returns, He is not coming as a helpless Lamb to be crucified again. He is coming as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, King of kings and Lord of lords.

"Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed." **— Revelation 5:5**

"And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." **— Revelation 19:16**

That means the atmosphere is changing. The heavens are shaking. Principalities that have operated from hidden places are being exposed. Ancient powers that once preferred secrecy are becoming more open, more aggressive, and more visible because their realm of operation is being restricted.

This is why the Church must discern the times. We must not be naïve about the increase of demonic manifestations, occult fascination, *"non-human intelligence"* narratives, UFO obsession, alien deception, witchcraft, technological sorcery, and spiritual counterfeits.

We do not fear these things, and we do not become obsessed with them, but we must discern them.

"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God." **— 1 John 4:1**

"And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light." **— 2 Corinthians 11:14**



"The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders."

— 2 Thessalonians 2:9

The Bible warns us that the last days will be marked by deception. Jesus did not first say, *"Look for earthquakes."* He did not first say, *"Look for wars."* His first warning was this: *"Take heed that no one deceives you."*

— Matthew 24:4



Again He said:
"For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect." **— Matthew 24:24**

That means the end-time deception will not be weak. It will be persuasive. It will be supernatural. It will be technological. It will be spiritual. It will be cultural. It will come dressed in language the world can accept. It may come as *"advanced beings," "higher consciousness," "ancient visitors," "interdimensional intelligence," "new revelation,"* or *"salvation from beyond the stars."*

But the Church of Jesus Christ must not be moved by every sign in the sky, every strange manifestation, every government disclosure, every supernatural experience, or every spiritual encounter. We are anchored in the Word of God and filled with the Holy Spirit. *"To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."* **— Isaiah 8:20**

Jesus also warned that the days before His coming would resemble the days of Noah.

"But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be." **— Matthew 24:37**

What marked the days of Noah? Violence filled the earth. Corruption spread through mankind. There was also forbidden interaction between heavenly beings and humanity.

"The sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves of all whom they chose." **— Genesis 6:2**

"There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward." **— Genesis 6:4**

Peter and Jude both warn of angels who sinned and left their proper domain.

“God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness.” — 2 Peter 2:4

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“And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness.” — Jude 6

This is why discernment is not optional. The last days will include a collision between the visible and invisible realms. Fallen spiritual powers will seek to influence nations, governments, systems, cultures, technologies, media, education, religion, economics, and families. This is not fantasy.

This is why discernment is not optional. The last days will include a collision between the visible and invisible realms. Fallen spiritual powers will seek to influence nations, governments, systems, cultures, technologies, media, education, religion, economics, and families. This is not fantasy.



Paul told us plainly:
“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.” — **Ephesians 6:12**

Daniel saw this kind of warfare. When he prayed, the answer was released, but a demonic prince resisted the messenger for twenty-one days until Michael came to help.

“But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me.” **— Daniel 10:13**

So yes, there are powers behind powers. There are spirits behind systems. There are invisible rulers behind visible movements. But the answer is not fear. The answer is not paranoia.

The answer is mature spiritual authority in Christ.

The Church cannot fight tomorrow’s battles with yesterday’s immaturity. We cannot face

ancient spiritual powers with shallow emotional Christianity. We cannot cast down strongholds while living in offense, bitterness, compromise, prayerlessness, and spiritual laziness. The days demand holiness. The days demand authority.

The days demand the full armor of God.

"Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day." — **Ephesians 6:13**

The weapons of our warfare are not natural weapons. They are not political rage. They are not carnal arguments. They are not fear-driven conspiracies. They are mighty in God.

"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds." — **2 Corinthians 10:4**

The saints overcome the dragon by three divine weapons: the blood of the Lamb, the word of their testimony, and a surrendered life unto death.

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death." — **Revelation 12:11**

That is heaven's technology. That is Kingdom weaponry. The blood of Jesus destroys accusation. The testimony of Jesus releases prophetic power. The surrendered life removes Satan's leverage.

So when we see darkness increasing, we must remember Isaiah's prophecy:

"For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the Lord will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you." — **Isaiah 60:2**

Darkness will increase, but glory will increase more. Deception will rise, but discernment will rise in the remnant. Demonic activity will intensify, but so will apostolic authority, prophetic clarity, and angelic assistance, deliverance, healing, signs, wonders, and the harvest of souls.

The devil is coming down in wrath, but Jesus is coming soon in glory.

The dragon is being displaced, but the King is taking His place.

The nations may shake, but the Kingdom cannot be shaken.



"Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace." — **Hebrews 12:28**

This is not the hour to be entertained by darkness. This is the hour to be filled with oil. This is not the hour to chase UFOs, aliens, conspiracies, or sensational mysteries. This is the hour to discern spirits, preach Christ, cast out devils, heal the sick, disciple nations, and prepare the Bride.

"And the Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!'" — **Revelation 22:17**

Yeshua is coming soon. Let the Church arise in holiness, authority, discernment, and fire.

"Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" — Revelation 22:20

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Dr. Jorge E. Parrott is a Kingdom strategist, global missions leader, real estate investor, entrepreneur, educator, author, and prophetic voice with four decades of experience building success in both the marketplace and ministry.

HOW BELIEVERS CAN GROW IN GRACE

A Biblical Lesson on Christian Spiritual Growth

Based on a recent teaching delivered by Bishop Dr. Christopher Campbell





Bishop Dr. Christopher Campbell opened his recent teaching on the New Testament with a reminder that sounds almost too simple to need saying: the Christian life does not end at the altar. It begins there. In a message titled "The New Testament: How Believers Can Grow in Christ," Campbell traced a single thread through the Gospels and epistles: that salvation is not a finish line but the first step of a lifelong journey toward Christlikeness, one the apostle Peter summed up in a single verse. "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," Peter wrote. It is a short verse, but Campbell built an entire theology of the Christian life on top of it.

That logic is worth sitting with. Grace, in Campbell's reading, is not simply a gift received once at conversion. It is also a place believers are meant to keep growing in: deeper trust, deeper understanding, deeper transformation. "A growing Christian is not perfect, but is continually being changed by God," Campbell's teaching notes state plainly.

The distinction matters. This is not a standard of flawlessness but a direction of travel, a life-bending, however unevenly, toward the character of Jesus.

Every journey needs a starting point, and Campbell located his in the new birth. Drawing on Jesus's conversation with Nicodemus in John 3, he reminded listeners that no one grows spiritually who has not first been spiritually born, and that a believer begins the Christian life as a kind of spiritual infant, with maturity still ahead.

From there, growth is not automatic. It happens through a set of ordinary, repeatable practices: reading Scripture, praying, yielding to the Holy Spirit, and belonging to a church.

Central to Campbell's teaching was Jesus's image of the vine and the branches from John 15, the idea that believers cannot produce spiritual fruit on their own strength but only in constant connection to Christ. Spiritual life, strength, and fruitfulness, Campbell taught, come from remaining connected to Jesus, not from willpower alone.

It is a reframing of growth away from self-improvement and toward abiding, a posture of staying close rather than striving alone. Out of that connection flow the disciplines Campbell walked through one by one:
Scripture as spiritual nourishment that teaches, corrects, and trains; prayer as fellowship with God rather than mere request-making; and the ongoing, internal work of the Holy Spirit, who teaches, guides, empowers, and helps believers grow.

That work of the Spirit, Campbell was careful to note, is not passive. Believers face a daily choice between what the New Testament calls the flesh and the Spirit, and growth requires surrender: a conscious, repeated yielding rather than a one-time decision made and forgotten.

The evidence of that surrender is what Paul, in Galatians, called the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. It is a strikingly relational list, less about spiritual achievement than about the kind of person someone becomes in their ordinary dealings with others.

"A growing Christian is not perfect but is continually being changed by God."

— Bishop Dr. Christopher Campbell

Campbell was equally direct about the cost of growth. Spiritual knowledge, he insisted, must lead to action, echoing James's warning against believers who hear the Word but do not do it. Growth also means putting off old patterns of



thought and behavior and, in their place, putting on what Campbell called Christlike character: compassion, kindness, humility, patience, forgiveness, and love.

And it means enduring difficulty rather than avoiding it. Trials, far from being obstacles to spiritual life, can become the very means of it, developing patience, endurance, and a faith that continues trusting God even when the outcome is uncertain.

Perhaps the most countercultural note in Campbell's message was his insistence that spiritual growth was never meant to happen in isolation. Faith, in his telling, is inescapably communal. He pointed to the early church's devotion to fellowship in Acts 2, and to the New Testament's picture of the church as a single body, each member gifted for the good of the whole.

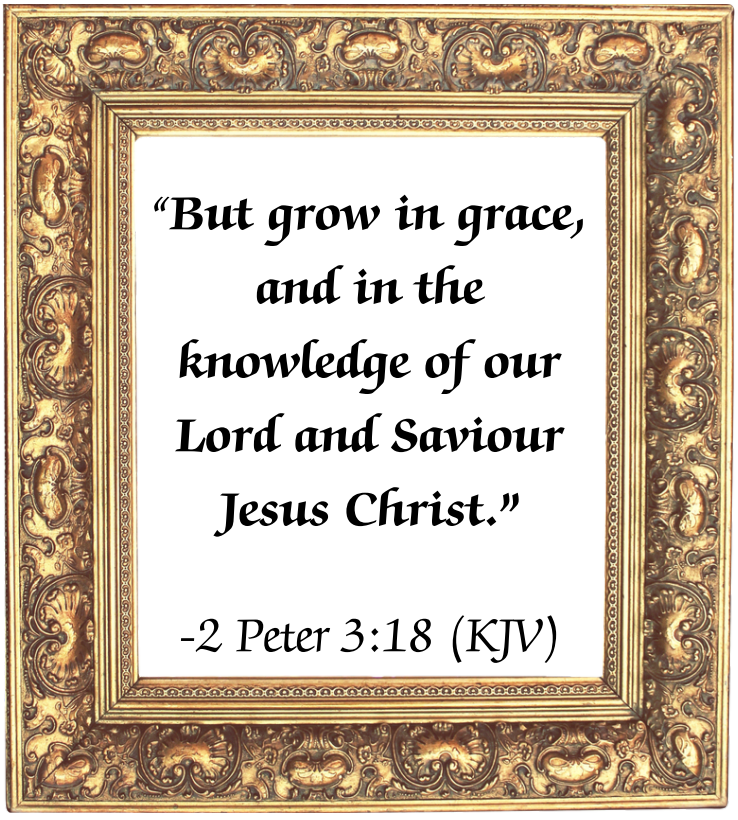
Growth, in this framework, includes serving others, discipling those coming up behind you, and submitting to the encouragement and accountability only a community can provide. A Christian who tries to mature entirely alone, Campbell suggested, is working against the design.

Threaded through the entire message was a single destination: Christlikeness. Not health, not wealth, not influence, but conformity,

patient, gradual, and unglamorous, to the image of Jesus. Campbell closed by returning to where he began, 2 Peter 3:18, and to a ten-point charge for believers who want to keep growing: abide in Christ, study the Word, pray continually, walk in the Spirit, obey God, fellowship with other believers, serve others, endure trials, pursue holiness, and become more like Jesus.

Fittingly, Campbell did not leave the lesson as inspiration alone. The teaching came paired with a study guide, meant to send believers back into the text itself rather than simply into the afterglow of a good message, a small but telling detail for a pastor who insists that growth happens through the discipline of the Word and not through a single Sunday's emotion.

None of it, Campbell was careful to note, happens instantly. But that, in the end, was his real point. The Christian life was never sold as an arrival. It was sold as a road, one believers are meant to walk, imperfectly and together, for as long as they have breath to walk it.







7 Reasons Why We Embrace the AAC and Reject the NAR

by Bishop Joseph Materra



For decades, our life's work has centered on recovering the way of Jesus and His apostles—what many scholars call ***primitivism:*** the restoration of the original first-century missional church model, ethos, and practice.

This is why we have distanced ourselves from what is commonly called the ***New Apostolic Reformation*** (NAR) and instead embrace what we now propose to call ***"the Ancient Apostolic Continuum"*** (AAC).

By AAC, I mean the recognition that apostolic and prophetic ministry never disappeared from the church. These gifts were not *"restored"* in the twentieth century because they were never lost to begin with! Hence, the present global apostolic movement is not a restoration, but the continuation of an ancient reality.

One of the central flaws of the NAR is its implicit assumption that apostles and prophets ceased after the first century and were only rediscovered in modern times. This is why many call it a *"restoration movement."*

"We believe, through the presence of the Holy Spirit, the Church is always and in every given century:

- *Catholic (universal) and ancient*
- *Apostolic*
- *Evangelical, as the Spirit created the accounts of the Gospels, endorses it in people's hearts, and inspired the Scriptures, God's manual.*
- *Charismatic. (The gifts of the Spirit have been evident throughout Church history)"*

(Thomas Schirrmacher)

7 Reasons to Embrace the AAC

1. **Ephesians 4:11** Ministry Never Ceased

If the church has not yet reached full maturity, then the ministry gifts Christ gave at His ascension have not ceased (**Ephesians 4:11-13**). The ministry functions of Apostles and prophets are not optional appendages to the church—they are part of Christ's ongoing plan for equipping His body.



The burden of proof is not on continuationists. It is on the cessationists who claim two of the **Ephesians 4:11** ministry gifts disappeared.

2. **Apostolic Function Continued Throughout Church History**

Though the title “apostle” became less common after the first century, the function remained through the evolution of the office of bishop, The second-century bishops such as Ignatius of Antioch, Clement of Rome, Polycarp, and Papias of Hierapolis carried apostolic governmental oversight through doctrine, discipline, and mission.

Function often remains when terminology changes.

This continued in later centuries through leaders like bishops Cyprian, Augustine of Hippo, and Gregory the Great.

The apostolic stream never dried up. In his work On the Unity of the Church, Bishop Cyprian of Carthage argued that the visible unity of the church was preserved through the bishops as successors to the apostles.

3. **Church History Is Filled with Apostolic Reformers**

History reveals that God continually raises apostolic leaders to reform and rebuild His church.

When trinitarian orthodoxy was threatened, He raised bishops Athanasius of Alexandria and Basil of Caesarea.

When Europe descended into darkness, He raised Saint Patrick and Boniface to evangelize and disciple the barbarian Germanic tribes.

When the catholic church drifted into corruption, He raised John Wycliffe and Jan Hus.
When the Protestant Reformation began and restored the primacy of justification by faith and the authority of the Scriptures, He raised Martin Luther, John Calvin, and John Knox.
When revival was needed, he raised John Wesley and George Whitefield.
Hudson Taylor was the iconic 19th-century apostolic missionary to China; William Carey was the parallel figure for India.

These were not merely pastors. They were movemental builders.

4. **There has always been an apostolic stream. Historic Continuity Gives Legitimacy**

Jude tells us to contend for "*the faith once for all delivered to the saints"*(**Jude 3**).
That means truth is transmitted—not reinvented.

A movement disconnected from history (I.E., the NAR) becomes vulnerable to novelty, instability, and doctrinal drift.

The early church confronted Gnosticism through Irenaeus because Gnostics claimed secret revelation beyond apostolic teaching.
Tertullian said of the Gnostics, *"Let them produce the original records of their churches; let them unfold the roll of their bishops, running down in due succession from the beginning"*
(Prescription Against Heretics), chapter 32.)
The fourth century confronted Arianism through Bishop Athanasius because their doctrinal innovation threatened Christology.
(The early church did not see apostolic ministry as disappearing after the Twelve. It saw apostolic authority continuing through ordained leaders safeguarding doctrine and governing the churches.)

The Protestant Reformers appealed backward to the ancient apostolic gospel—not forward to new revelation.

True apostolicity is not merely about ministry. It is about continuity.

If what we teach cannot be recognized by the great cloud of witnesses, we should question whether it is truly apostolic (**Hebrews 12:1, Jeremiah 6:16**).

5. **Church History Helps Us Discern God's Ways**

Psalm 78 commands one generation to tell the next the mighty works of God so they will not forget Him. This is not mere historical memory —it is ancient covenant continuity.

Church history also teaches us God's patterns. When God needs a pioneer to establish the church, He raises up apostolic leaders (**1 Corinthians 12:28**).

When doctrine is threatened, God raises up teachers.

When the church becomes compromised, God raises prophetic reformers.

When dead orthodoxy settles in, God raises evangelistic revivalists.

History reveals the cycle:
God establishes, man institutionalizes, decline sets in, God raises reformers, and renewal follows.

A church without historical memory loses discernment.

The contemporary global apostolic expansion of the gospel in every continent is merely a continuation of the ancient movement Jesus started.

6. **Jesus Initiated the New Apostolic Reformation in the New Covenant**

In the Old Testament, prophets often led reform movements. Samuel anointed kings. Nathan rebuked kings. Elijah confronted kings.



But in the New Covenant, apostolic function took the missional lead.

This did not eliminate the prophetic—it modified it.

Paul writes in **1 Corinthians 12:28**: *"God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets…"*

Hence, the apostolic continues to lay foundations, safeguard doctrine, plant churches, and provide trans-local oversight. Prophetic ministry still functions, but in alignment with apostolic foundations.

In **Acts 15**, prophets were present—but apostles led the doctrinal decision.

However, the original Twelve Apostles of the Lamb were a unique, unrepeatable governmental foundation of the church (**Mark 3:14**).

That office cannot be replicated. Yet, the apostolic dimension of ministry did not cease with them; it continues as a function of Christ's ongoing work through gifted servants who equip, govern, and extend His church.

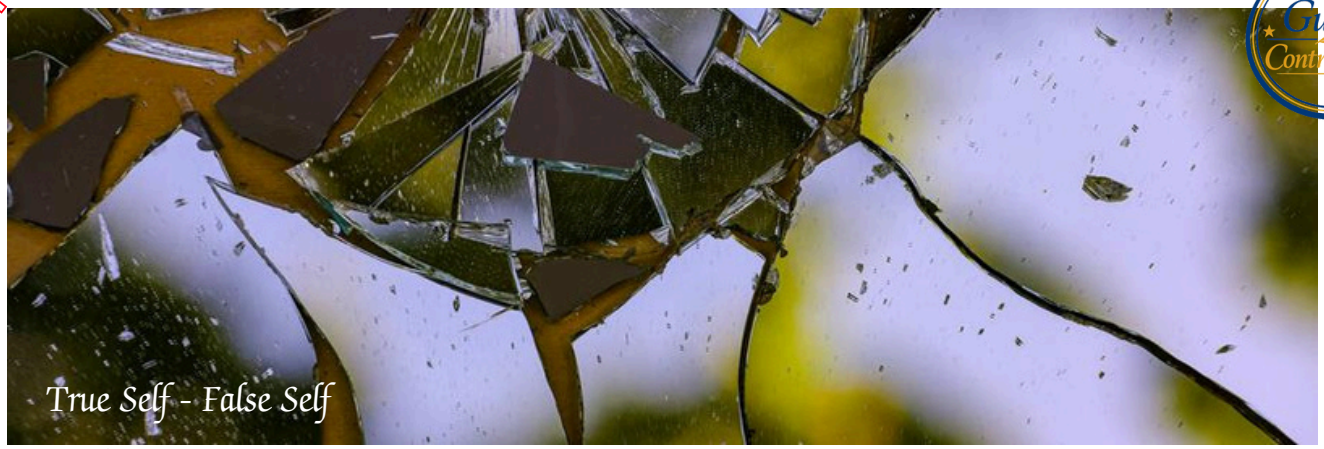
7. ***"New"* Language Can Breed Historical Amnesia**

When some emphasize *"new"* (NAR), they imply that God is doing something unprecedented—as if the church was deficient for 1,800 years until we arrived.

This breeds historical amnesia and can alienate other expressions of the ancient church.
To conclude, when we speak of the Ancient Apostolic Continuum (AAC), we place ourselves within the historic stream of the one true Church and acknowledge our continuity with the broader body of Christ.

By contrast, when some use language like ***"New Apostolic Reformation,"*** it can unintentionally alienate the rest of the body of Christ by implying they are an elite group claiming a recovered revelation no one else has. But the truth is, the apostolic was never lost. It has always been present in the faithful witness, governance, mission, and ministry of the Church throughout history.

By Joseph Mattera with former WEA General Secretary Archbishop Thomas Schirrmacher



Guest Contributor



Discovering God Within

Father Richard Rohr encourages us to look within to discover our true self, the presence of God within us:

We are all looking for something utterly reliable, something loyal and true, something we can always depend on. In John's very short second letter in the New Testament, the writer offers us an invitation to discover what we are looking for when he writes of "the truth that lives within us that will be with us forever" **(2 John 2)**. Most of us know little about this truth, so we end up as St. Augustine admits in his Confessions: *"Late have I loved you, Beauty so very ancient and so ever new. Late have I loved you! You were within, but I was without."* [1]

We are right to go inside; otherwise, we become lost in an outer and revolving hall of mirrors, as Augustine confesses above. But the question is, *"Which inside?"* I use the language of the true and false selves, which many have found quite helpful when discussing this concept. [2] It is good and necessary to pull back into our true self, but it is quite a disaster if we pull back into our egoic or false self for too long (or, worse, never leave it). The confusion arises because both the true self and the false self feel like our *"self."* One might be called truly *"centering,"* while the other is the more common *"ego centering."* This reveals the core of the problem. Jesus and most other great spiritual teachers make it very clear that there is a self that has to be found and one that has to be let go of or even *"renounced"* (**Mark 8:35; Matthew 10:39, 16:25; Luke 9:24; John 12:25**).

We might call the true self our soul, and we might call the false self our ego, our small or separate self. In finding our true self, we will have found an absolute reference point that is both utterly within us and utterly beyond us at the very same time. This grounds the soul in big and reliable truth. *"My deepest me is God!"* St. Catherine of Genoa shouted as she ran through the streets of town, just as Colossians had already shouted to both Jews and pagans, *"The mystery is Christ within you—your hope of Glory!"* (1:27).
Once discovered, the healthy inner authority of the true self can be balanced with the outer authority of Scripture and Tradition. Our experience can be validated by others' experience. That's what assures us that we are grounded in reality, not a fantasy. That God is both utterly beyond us and yet totally within us at the same time is the exquisite balance that most religion seldom achieves, in my opinion.

[1] Augustine, Confessions, X, 38 (or 27 in some translations).
[2] The terms "true self" and "false self" were widely popularized by the pediatrician and child psychiatrist D.W. Winnicott (1896–1971). Father Richard recalls first encountering the term "true self" in the writings of Thomas Merton.
Adapted from Richard Rohr, Immortal Diamond: The Search for Our True Self (Jossey-Bass, 2013), 1–2, 3, 4–5.
Image Credit and inspiration: Mick Haupt, untitled (detail), 2022, photograph. Unsplash. Click here to enlarge image. A shattered mirror reveals the light within each broken piece. Letting go of the false self is not a loss, but a breaking through that allows more light in.

HONOR THE OFFICE



Why Ministerial Titles Recognize Sacred Responsibility—not the Person Who Holds Them

by Pastor Shane Vaughn



There was a trend in the church today to make everything so casual.

"No more Pastor. No more Bishop. No more Apostle. Just call me by my first name."
And I began to ponder that.

If President Trump looked at me and said, "Shane, just call me Donald," I would respectfully decline the invitation.

I would say:
"Sir, you represent something bigger than yourself. You occupy the highest office in the greatest nation on earth. I will honor that office. You are PRESIDENT Trump to me."

Why?
Because I see beyond the man.
I SEE THE INSTITUTION.

The moment a man is inaugurated President of the United States, he is no longer representing merely himself. He has been entrusted with an OFFICE. And whether I know him personally or not, whether we are friends or not, the office deserves recognition.

But I know of an institution even HIGHER than the presidency.
THE HOLY CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD.

The Church is not a good-buddy club.
It is not a social organization where everybody gets together once a week and operates on a first-name basis.

The Church is an INSTITUTION OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD ON EARTH.
It represents a government HIGHER than Washington.

A Kingdom GREATER than America.
A King HIGHER than every president, prime minister, monarch, and ruler who has ever lived.

And when a man or woman is solemnly ordained and set apart to represent that Kingdom as a minister of the Gospel, the title attached to that office is not supposed to glorify the PERSON.
IT IS SUPPOSED TO HONOR THE OFFICE.



When I say Pastor, I am acknowledging a shepherd entrusted with God's people.
When I say Elder, I am recognizing spiritual government.

When I say Bishop, I am recognizing oversight.
When I say Apostle, I am recognizing an office established by Christ Himself.

Somewhere along the way, we confused HUMILITY WITH CASUALNESS.

A minister should absolutely be humble.
But humility does not require us to make sacred things common.

The President can be humble and still be called Mr. President.

A judge can be humble and still be called Your Honor.

And a minister can wash feet, serve the poor, clean the church toilets, and consider himself the servant of all — while the people still recognize the OFFICE God entrusted to him.
THE TITLE DOES NOT MAKE THE MAN GREAT.
THE OFFICE MAKES THE RESPONSIBILITY GREAT.

There is a tremendous difference.
Perhaps one reason we have lost so much respect for spiritual authority is that somewhere along the way we decided that making everything casual would somehow make everything humble.

It didn't.
It simply made sacred things common.
I don't honor a ministerial title because I worship the man wearing it.
I honor it because I reverence the GOD WHO ESTABLISHED THE OFFICE.
There are some things bigger than us.
There are some offices older than us.

Some institutions will still be standing when our names have been forgotten.

And the HOLY CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD is one of them.

So, to this minister whom I greatly respect:
I RESPECTFULLY DECLINE YOUR INVITATION.

I will not reduce the sacred office you have been entrusted with to the familiarity of your first name simply because you have invited me to do so.

And I pray that everyone who calls ME their shepherd will respectfully decline that invitation from me as well, should I ever give it.

I pray I have trained them better than that.
I pray I have taught them to see beyond SHANE VAUGHN, THE MAN, and recognize the sacred office that I have been called to occupy.
Because someday this man will be gone.

But the office will remain.
The Church will remain.
The Kingdom will remain.
And the King will remain.

HONOR IS NOT IDOLATRY.
RESPECT IS NOT MAN-WORSHIP.

AND HUMILITY DOES NOT REQUIRE US TO DISHONOR WHAT GOD HAS ORDAINED.

So no, my brother.
With love, with respect, and without one ounce of arrogance:
I WILL NOT CALL YOU BY YOUR FIRST NAME.

I honor something greater than either one of us.
I HONOR THE OFFICE.

Besides all of that, if my grandmother's sister Lois Gatlin had ever heard me use the first name for a minister, it would be soap in my mouth.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Pastor Shane Vaughn is founder and president of First Harvest Ministries in Waveland, Mississippi. Called to preach at twelve, he directs the ministry and serves as chancellor of Biblical Foundations Institute. An author, broadcaster, teacher, and musician, he hosts Zion's Call and ministers in worship alongside his wife, Karen Vaughn.

Pastor Vaughn likes to address himself as Karen's Very Best Friend, and Professor Toto, of The Conservativee College. You can find out more at: https://www.facebook.com/shanevaughn38/





Hunger in Karamoja

Drought, Poverty, and Water Scarcity Deepen Uganda's Continuing Food-Security Crisis

Reported by John Losh II

In Uganda's northeastern Karamoja subregion, hundreds of thousands of people continue to face serious food shortages. Irregular rainfall, poor harvests, livestock losses, high food prices, limited access to clean water, and widespread poverty are driving the crisis.

Karamoja has a population of 1,496,117 people, according to Uganda's 2024 census. It comprises nine districts: Abim, Amudat, Kaabong, Karenga, Kotido, Moroto, Nabilatuk, Nakapiripirit, and Napak. Uganda Bureau of Statistics

Between April and July 2026, approximately 473,000 people—32 percent of Karamoja's population—faced acute food insecurity classified as IPC Phase 3, or Crisis, and above. This included approximately 41,000 people in Phase 4, or Emergency.

Conditions were most severe in Kaabong, Kotido, Karenga, Moroto, and Nabilatuk, where as much as 45 percent of the population faced Crisis-level hunger or worse.

The situation was projected to improve seasonally between August 2026 and February 2027, reducing the number of people in Crisis or worse to approximately 352,000.

Nevertheless, food insecurity is expected to remain a persistent problem, particularly in the most vulnerable districts. IPC Karamoja Food-Security Assessment



Although the conditions are severe, the latest assessment did not classify Karamoja as experiencing famine. No population was placed in IPC Phase 5, or Catastrophe. The more accurate description is a widespread food-security crisis with tens of thousands of people facing Emergency conditions.

Children and Mothers Face Serious Malnutrition

The hunger crisis is placing children, pregnant women, and breastfeeding mothers at particular risk.

Between March 2026 and February 2027, approximately 122,100 children between six months and five years of age were expected to suffer from acute malnutrition. This included an estimated 30,600 cases of severe acute malnutrition. Approximately 8,000 pregnant and breastfeeding women were also expected to require nutrition treatment.

Kaabong and Kotido were classified as having Critical levels of acute malnutrition. Poor dietary diversity, childhood illnesses, inadequate water and sanitation, and reduced access to nutrition services are contributing to the problem. IPC Karamoja Malnutrition Assessment

A Local Appeal for Assistance

Vincent Rulanga, a Ugandan ministry leader serving with Hopeline Africa Mission, brought the crisis to attention through an account provided for this report.

Rulanga described prolonged dry conditions, inadequate rainfall, and resulting food shortages. While acknowledging that the Ugandan government has provided some relief, he characterized the assistance reaching affected communities as ***"a drop in the ocean"*** compared with the need.

Through its proposed Fight Hunger Project, Hopeline Africa Mission is appealing for humanitarian partners to support both emergency assistance and longer-term agricultural development. Rulanga also emphasized the urgent need for reliable supplies of clean water.

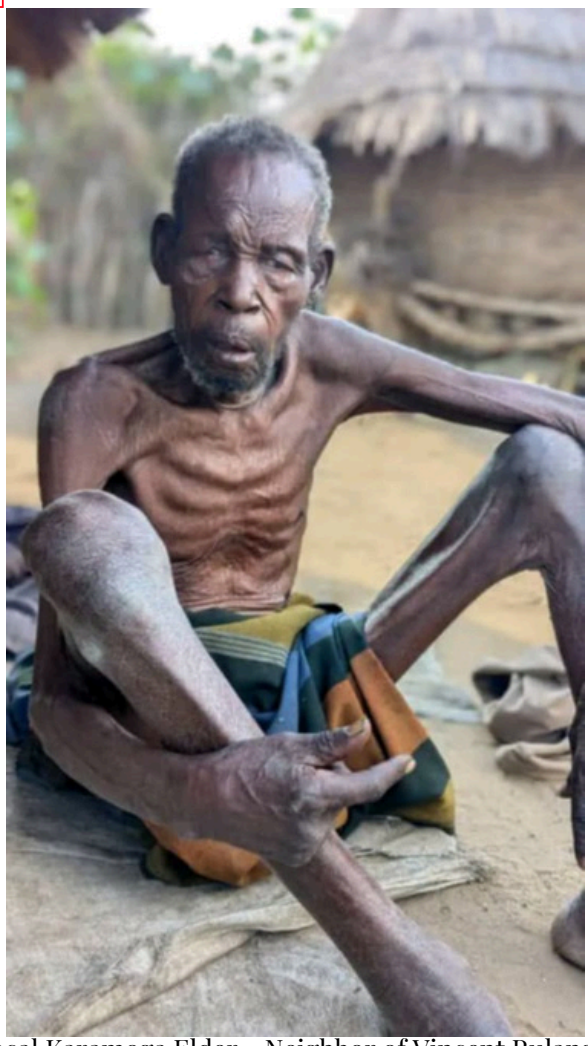
Uganda has substantial agricultural potential, but realizing that potential requires more than acquiring inexpensive land. Responsible investment should protect customary land rights, include local communities, support smallholder farmers and pastoralists, strengthen water access, and create lasting economic benefits for the people of Karamoja.

A Wider Regional Crisis

Karamoja's struggle is part of a broader pattern of hunger across East and Central Africa.
In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, approximately 26.6 million people were projected to face Crisis-level hunger or worse between January and June 2026. Conflict, displacement, flooding, high prices, and reduced humanitarian assistance have contributed to the emergency. IPC Democratic Republic of the Congo Assessment

In the Central African Republic, more than two million people—nearly one-third of the analyzed population—experienced Crisis-level food insecurity or worse between April and August 2026. Approximately 262,000 were classified in Emergency. IPC Central African Republic Assessment

These crises have different local causes, but they share several drivers: climatic shocks, chronic poverty, conflict, displacement, disrupted agriculture, rising prices, and inadequate humanitarian resources.



Local Karamoga Elder - Neighbor of Vincent Rulanga



Maluntrition in Karamoga Crosses All Age Grouops

Relief Must Be Combined With Long-Term Development

Karamoja needs immediate assistance, including food, nutrition treatment, clean water, school meals, healthcare, and special support for children, mothers, older people, and persons with disabilities.

Long-term food security will also require:

- Climate-resilient farming and drought-tolerant crops;
- Livestock vaccination and veterinary services;
- Water harvesting and dependable community water systems;
- Better food storage and post-harvest management;
- Agricultural training and equipment;
- Support for smallholder and women-led farming groups; and
- Stronger access to markets and responsible financing.

The World Food Programme, UNICEF, and the Food and Agriculture Organization are among the agencies with documented food, nutrition, water, school-meal, and agricultural-resilience programs in Karamoja.

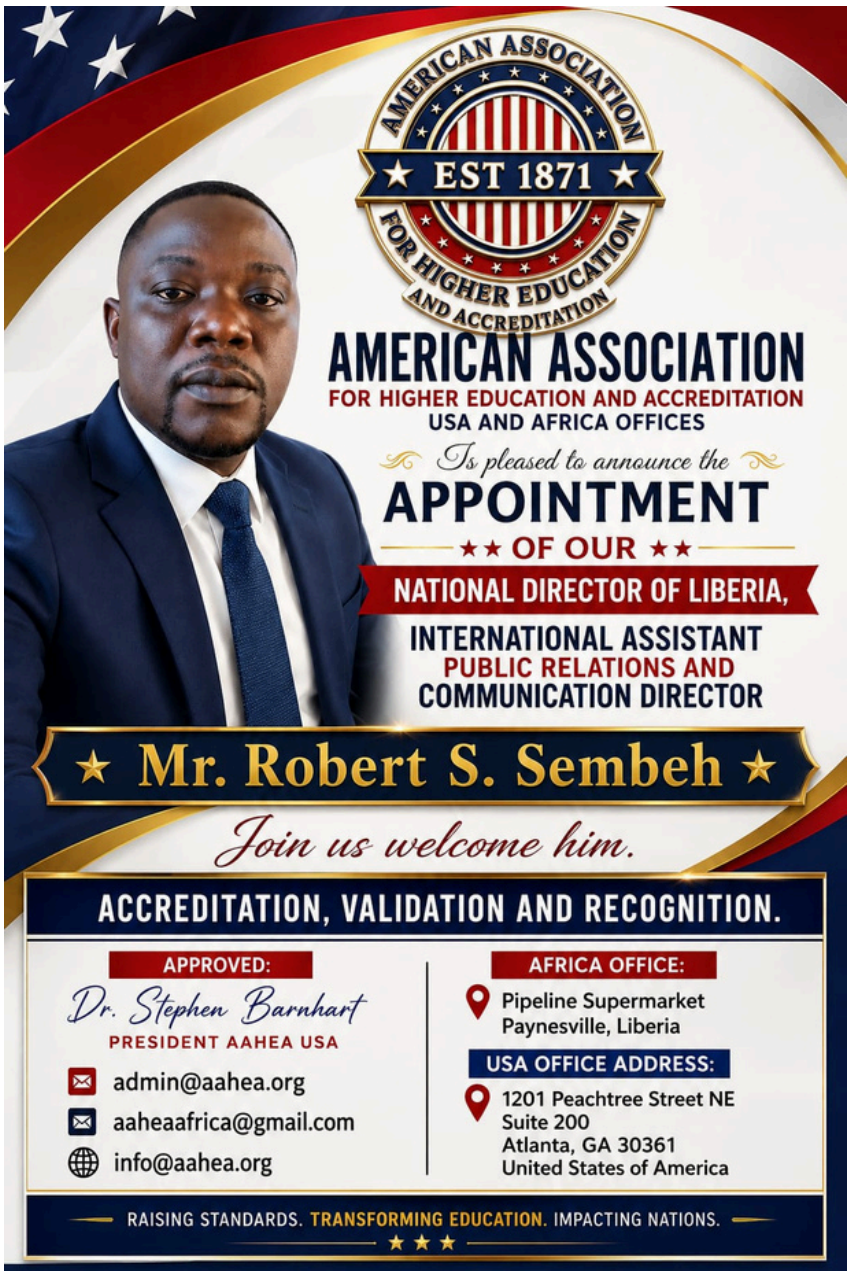
Individuals and organizations wishing to help may respond through prayer, humanitarian giving, agricultural partnership, and support for clean-water and nutrition programs. Before contributing, donors should verify that an organization is registered, financially accountable, currently active in the intended community, and able to document how funds will be used.

The immediate responsibility is to help vulnerable families survive the present crisis. The longer-term objective must be to help communities withstand future droughts and food shortages without repeatedly being pushed into humanitarian emergency.

AAHEA proudly welcomes Mr. Robert S. Sembeh to its international leadership team.

Mr. Sembeh has been appointed National Director of Liberia and International Assistant Director for Public Relations & Communication. His experience and leadership will support AAHEA's continuing commitment to accreditation, validation, recognition, and educational advancement across Africa and beyond.

Please join us in congratulating Mr. Sembeh and welcoming him to these important leadership roles.



ADVERTIORIAL

Your Message Deserves to Become a Book

Life College Press Helps Authors Move from Inspiration to Publication

by David James Dunworth, Publisher

Somewhere within you is a message worth sharing.

It may be a lesson learned through years of leadership, a testimony formed through hardship, a ministry message that has transformed lives, or a practical solution that could help others overcome a challenge. Perhaps you have already written a few chapters. Maybe you have pages of notes, recorded sermons, workshop materials, journals, or an unfinished manuscript waiting for direction.

You know the message matters. The challenge is turning it into a book.

That is where Life College Press can help. Your message deserves more than a place in your imagination. Let Life College Press help you develop it into a book that can inform, inspire, and endure.

Your Idea Is Only the Beginning

Every book begins with an idea, but an idea needs structure before it can become a manuscript readers will understand and remember.

Many aspiring authors never complete their books—not because they lack wisdom, experience, or passion, but because they do not know how to organize everything they want to say. They may struggle to identify the right audience, define the book's central purpose, arrange the chapters, maintain a consistent voice, or determine what belongs in the book and what should be removed.

You do not have to solve every publishing problem alone.

Life College Press provides guided publishing support designed to help you move forward with greater clarity and confidence. Whether you are beginning with a single concept, revising an existing manuscript, or preparing a completed work for publication, you can receive assistance appropriate to your stage of development.

The goal is not simply to place words on pages. The goal is to help you communicate your message effectively.

Develop a Book With Purpose

A strong book should answer several important questions:

- Who is the book intended to serve?
- What problem, need, or opportunity does it address?
- What should readers understand, believe, or do after reading it?
- What makes the author's perspective valuable?
- How should the content be organized to create a meaningful reading experience?

Life College Press helps authors think through these questions before production decisions overshadow the message itself.

This matters because attractive formatting and a compelling cover cannot rescue a book that lacks direction. A clear purpose guides the title, structure, tone, chapter progression, editing, design, and promotion.

When the purpose is clear, the book becomes more than a collection of thoughts. It becomes an intentional experience for the reader.

Preserve Your Voice While Strengthening Your Message

Your book should sound like you.

Editorial guidance should not erase your personality, flatten your convictions, or replace your voice with someone else's. It should help you express your ideas more clearly, persuasively, and professionally.

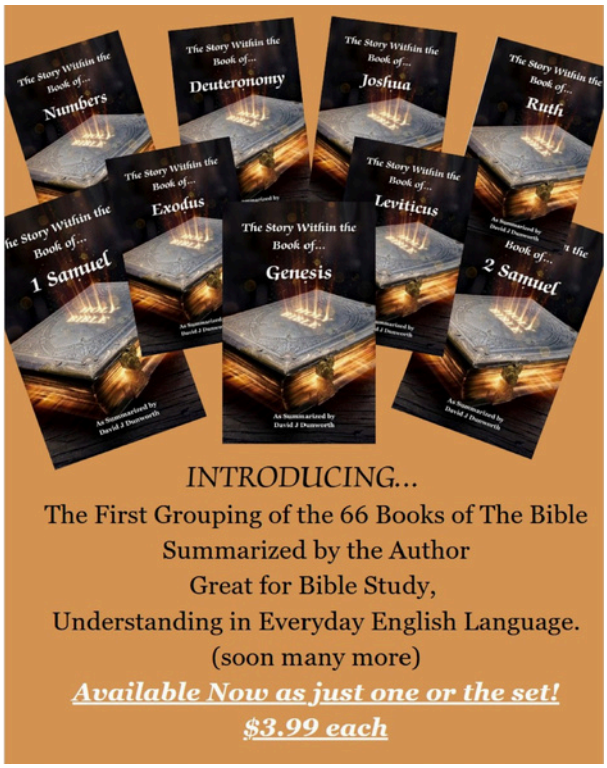
Life College Press works with authors to strengthen organization, improve readability, address repetition, clarify difficult passages, and maintain consistency throughout the manuscript. The level of assistance can be matched to the manuscript's needs, from developmental guidance and author coaching to editing and publication preparation.

This collaborative approach allows the author's voice to remain central while the manuscript receives the careful attention necessary to become a stronger book.

Turn Experience Into Something That Can Endure

You may possess knowledge that others need but cannot receive unless it is captured and shared.

A pastor's sermons can become a book that continues teaching beyond Sunday morning. A leader's experience can become a practical guide for the next generation. A teacher's lessons can become curriculum. A survivor's testimony can encourage someone facing a similar struggle. A professional's methods can become a trusted resource for clients, colleagues, or emerging leaders.



A published book can extend the reach of a message beyond a room, an event, a congregation, a classroom, or a single generation.

This is one reason your manuscript deserves thoughtful development. You are not merely producing a product. You are creating a resource that may continue informing, inspiring, and serving people you may never personally meet.

More Than Printing and Publishing

Publishing a book involves more than uploading a file and ordering copies. Authors must make decisions about manuscript development, editing, formatting, cover design, positioning, distribution, promotion, and reader

engagement. Without guidance, the process can quickly become confusing.

Life College Press offers a more personal pathway.

Through guided publishing, authors can better understand the process, make informed decisions, and remain meaningfully involved in the development of their work. Instead of being treated as simply another manuscript in a production queue, the author and the message receive individual attention.

Life College Press can assist with books, devotionals, ministry resources, educational materials, workbooks, courses, and curriculum. This allows authors, educators, pastors, nonprofit leaders, professionals, and subject-matter experts to consider not only what they want to publish, but how their knowledge can be developed into resources that serve others.

Your Book Can Open New Doors

A well-developed book can support many purposes.
It may help establish your authority in a particular field, strengthen a speaking or teaching ministry, support a business or nonprofit mission, create opportunities for workshops and courses, preserve an important personal or organizational story, or introduce your ideas to a wider audience.

The value of a book is not measured only by sales. Its value may also be found in the conversations it begins, the people it equips, the opportunities it creates, and the legacy it preserves.

Your book may become the introduction to your larger body of work. It may help readers discover your ministry, organization, services, educational program, or mission. Most importantly, it can place something useful into the hands of people who need what you have learned.

Begin Before Everything Feels Perfect

You do not need to have every chapter written before seeking guidance. You can begin with an idea, an outline, a collection of notes, a teaching series, or an unfinished manuscript. The important step is deciding that your message should no longer remain indefinitely postponed.

There will always be another reason to wait. You may believe you need more time, more confidence, more writing experience, or a perfectly organized manuscript. But books are developed through a process. You do not have to arrive with everything completed; you need a message, a willingness to work, and the right guidance for the journey.

Life College Press exists to help you take that next step.

Your experience has value. Your knowledge can serve someone. Your story may give another person hope. Your teaching can continue reaching people long after the original words were spoken.

Do not allow an important message to remain trapped in your imagination.

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Your message matters. Let us help you publish it with purpose.

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The Christian Life Was Never Meant to Stand Still



By Bishop Dr. Christopher Campbell

Adapted from his presentation,
"A Biblical Lesson on Christian Spiritual Growth"

What if the greatest danger to your spiritual life is not open rebellion against God, but becoming satisfied with where you are? You may attend church, know Scripture, pray regularly, and sincerely believe in Jesus Christ. Yet an important question remains: Are you growing?

The Christian life does not end at salvation. Salvation is the beginning of a lifelong journey of spiritual growth. God does not call believers merely to make a profession of faith and then remain unchanged. He calls us to grow in grace, knowledge, faith, obedience, love, holiness, service, and Christlike character. **2 Peter 3:18** gives us the governing instruction:
"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Spiritual growth means becoming increasingly like Jesus Christ in our thoughts, attitudes, character, conduct, and relationships. This transformation is accomplished through the work of the Holy Spirit and through the believer's faithful response to God's Word.

A growing Christian is not perfect. A growing Christian is continually being changed by God.
"Salvation is not the end of the Christian life. It is the beginning."

New Life Must Be Allowed to Grow

Before anyone can grow spiritually, that person must first be born again.

Jesus told Nicodemus that a person must be born of the Spirit. Salvation produces new life in Christ. Paul expresses this truth in **2 Corinthians 5:17** by declaring that anyone who is in Christ is a new creation.

The new birth, however, is a beginning—not a declaration that spiritual maturity has already been reached.

A new believer begins much like a spiritual infant, needing nourishment, instruction, protection, encouragement, and time to mature. The believer must learn to recognize truth, resist temptation, pray, forgive, obey God, walk by faith, and live in fellowship with other Christians.

Spiritual birth takes place at salvation. Spiritual maturity develops throughout the Christian life. This distinction should keep us both humble and hopeful. We should remain humble because none of us has finished growing. We can remain hopeful because our weaknesses do not place us beyond God's transforming work.

Scriptures: **John 3:3–7; 2 Corinthians 5:17**

Remain Connected to Christ

Jesus described Himself as the true vine and His followers as the branches. A branch cannot produce fruit when separated from the vine. In the same way, believers cannot produce genuine spiritual fruit apart from Christ.

Our spiritual life, strength, and fruitfulness come from remaining connected to Jesus. Abiding in Christ means living in continuing faith, dependence, fellowship, and obedience. It means recognizing that Christian maturity cannot be manufactured through willpower or religious activity alone.

Bible study, prayer, worship, fellowship, and service are essential, but they are not substitutes for Christ. They help us remain attentive and responsive to Him.

The purpose is not to perform enough Christian activities to impress God or others. The purpose is to live in such close fellowship with Christ that His character becomes increasingly visible in us.

Scripture: **John 15:1–5**

Nourish the Life God Has Given You

Just as physical growth requires nourishment, spiritual growth requires consistent attention to what strengthens the inner life.

God's Word is spiritual nourishment for the believer. Scripture teaches, corrects, instructs, and trains Christians in righteousness. It helps us recognize truth, reject error, make wise decisions, and live in ways that honor God. Reading the Bible must become more than gathering religious information. The Word must be believed, obeyed, and permitted to reshape our thinking and conduct.

Prayer is equally important. Through prayer, believers worship, confess, give thanks, seek wisdom, express their needs, intercede for others, and surrender themselves to God's will. Prayer is not merely asking God to give us what we want. It is communication and fellowship with Him. As our prayer lives mature, our attention gradually moves beyond personal desires toward God's purposes and the needs of others.

The Holy Spirit also works within believers to teach, guide, convict, empower, and produce spiritual transformation. Christian growth is not merely the result of becoming more disciplined. It is the result of surrendering ourselves to the Spirit's work.

Every day presents a choice: Will we follow the desires of the flesh or the leadership of the Holy Spirit?

Scriptures: **John 14:26; John 16:13; 2 Timothy 3:16–17; Philippians 4:6–7; Galatians 5:16–25**
"Spiritual growth requires more than hearing the Word. Truth must become obedience."

Let God Transform You From the Inside Out

Romans 12 teaches that transformation begins with the renewing of the mind. Our thoughts influence our attitudes, decisions, relationships, and actions. When the mind is shaped by pride, bitterness, fear, selfishness, lust, or unbelief, the life eventually reflects those influences. Christians must reject patterns of thinking that oppose God's truth and allow Scripture to reshape the mind.

This transformation involves putting off the old life and putting on the new. Believers are called to reject sinful habits and attitudes while embracing compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, forgiveness, and love.

The Holy Spirit produces Christlike character in those who remain surrendered to Him. Galatians identifies this fruit as love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.
Spiritual fruit cannot be attached to life as a religious decoration. Fruit grows from within as believers remain connected to Christ.

Love is among the clearest signs of this growth. Biblical love is more than emotion. It serves, sacrifices, forgives, remains patient, and seeks the good of others.

Christian maturity cannot be measured solely by knowledge, spiritual gifts, public ministry, leadership positions, or years of church attendance. A person may be informed without being loving and gifted without being mature. Jesus taught that love would distinguish His disciples.

Scriptures: **John 13:34–35; Romans 12:1–2; Galatians 5:22–23; Colossians 3:12–14**

Allow Trials to Strengthen Your Faith

Faith trusts God even when circumstances are painful, confusing, or beyond human control. Trials reveal where our trust has been placed. It is relatively easy to speak confidently when life is comfortable. Hardship exposes where faith is strong, where it is fragile, and where it needs to grow.

The New Testament teaches that trials can develop patience, endurance, tested faith, and spiritual maturity. This does not mean suffering is easy or that pain should be dismissed. It means hardship does not have to be spiritually wasted.

God can use difficult seasons to deepen prayer, correct priorities, expose false securities, develop compassion, and teach us to depend upon Him.

Mature faith does not pretend everything is pleasant. It continues to trust God when answers are incomplete, and the outcome remains uncertain.

Spiritual growth therefore requires perseverance. The Christian life is not a brief burst of enthusiasm. It is a continuing walk of faith through changing seasons.

Scriptures: **Romans 5:3–5; James 1:2–4; Hebrews 11:1; Hebrews 12:1–2**

Do Not Attempt to Grow Alone

God did not design Christians to mature in isolation.





Christian fellowship provides encouragement, instruction, accountability, correction, and support. Other believers help us recognize weaknesses we may overlook, encourage us when we become discouraged, and pray with us during difficult seasons.

The local church is the body of Christ, and every believer has a place and purpose within it. Spiritual gifts are given so Christians can strengthen and serve one another.

Jesus demonstrated that greatness in God's kingdom is expressed through service. Serving others develops humility, redirects attention away from self, and allows believers to use their gifts for God's glory.

Mature Christians should also help others grow. Discipleship involves teaching, training, encouragement, correction, and example. Jesus commanded His followers to make disciples. Paul instructed Timothy to teach faithful people who would be able to teach others.

Healthy spiritual growth eventually becomes reproductive. What God develops within us should become a source of instruction and encouragement for someone else.

Scriptures: **Matthew 28:19–20; Mark 10:43–45; Acts 2:42–47; Hebrews 10:24–25; 2 Timothy 2:2**

The Goal Is Christlikeness

The ultimate goal of spiritual growth is not to become more religious, impressive, knowledgeable, or influential. The goal is to become more like Jesus.

Believers should increasingly learn to think like Christ, love like Christ, serve like Christ, forgive like Christ, walk in humility, live by faith, and obey God even when obedience is costly.

Christlikeness is not achieved by copying only the outward actions of Jesus. It develops as the Holy Spirit transforms our motives, desires, attitudes, priorities, and loyalties.

There is always more grace to receive, more truth to understand, more love to express, more sin to surrender, and more of Christ's character to embrace.

"Spiritual maturity is revealed when the character of Christ becomes increasingly visible in the life of the believer."

Your Response: **Choose to Grow**
Do not finish this article by merely agreeing with it. Respond to it.

Ask yourself:

- ***Where has my spiritual growth become stagnant?***
- ***Which Christlike quality is least visible in my life?***
- ***Is God's Word changing how I live, or am I only collecting information?***
- ***Am I walking in the Spirit or repeatedly surrendering to the flesh?***
- ***Is there a habit, attitude, or relationship I need to bring under Christ's authority?***
- ***Am I connected to a local church and accountable to other believers?***
- ***Whom am I serving?***
- ***Whom am I helping to grow?***

Choose one area that requires immediate attention. Write it down. Pray over it. Find the Scripture that addresses it. Share it with a trusted Christian who can encourage you and hold you accountable.

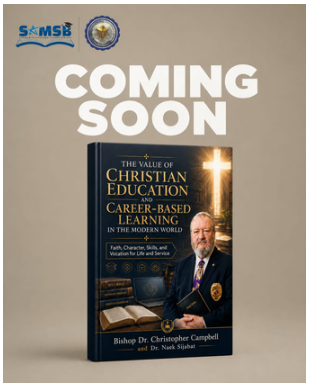
Then take one concrete step of obedience.
Do not wait until you feel completely prepared.
Growth begins when truth becomes action.
Keep abiding. Keep praying. Keep studying.
Keep serving. Keep trusting. Keep obeying.
Keep allowing the Holy Spirit to transform you.

Above all, keep growing toward Jesus Christ—the source, pattern, and ultimate goal of the Christian life.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR





Bishop Dr. Christopher Campbell, the Vice President of Accreditation and Evaluation (PVSA) and International Programs Director of the American Association for Higher Education, Bishop / Chaplain of Global Word Fellowship / GEAC, AAHEA LIFETIME Founder.

Bishop Dr. Christopher Campbell is the presenter of the presentation - "

SPECIAL FEATURE



Bishop Dr. Otobong Michael Ambassador ICOF Nigeria

Dr. Otobong Michael, the head of ICOF International Nigeria, is a blessing to all of us, especially those who live under faith, fear, worry, and concerns of violence in this most populous country on the Continent of Africa.

Nigeria is home to roughly 230 million people and one of the continent's largest and most dynamic economies, built on oil, agriculture, and a fast-growing tech and entertainment sector centered in Lagos.

It is also one of the most religiously significant nations on earth, roughly split between a Muslim-majority north and a Christian-majority south, with the middle belt a volatile zone where the two populations meet. Christianity in Nigeria is not a minority presence tucked into a corner of the country; it is a massive, diverse, and deeply organized movement.

ICOF School of Ministry functions largely as an educational and ministerial credentialing body — training pastors, offering theological degrees, and knitting Nigerian church leaders into ICOF's broader global fellowship rather than running individual congregations itself.

As reported by the Staff Reporters **Bishop Dr David Ekaene and Pastor Cyril Akpabio**, the International Circle of Faith (ICOF) Nigeria recorded another significant milestone in its commitment to strengthening Christian leadership with the successful hosting of the Minister's Symposium 2026, held on Saturday, August 1, 2026.



The one-day leadership conference brought together pastors, bishops, evangelists, missionaries, theological educators, church workers, and Christian leaders from different denominations across Nigeria. The symposium served as a platform for biblical teaching, leadership development,

ministerial fellowship and renewed commitment to advancing the Great Commission.

Centered on the theme, ***"Equipping Kingdom Leaders for Global Impact"*** **(Ephesians 4:11–13)**, the symposium emphasized God's desire to raise spiritually mature, biblically grounded, and mission-driven leaders who will effectively disciple nations, strengthen local churches, and influence society with the values of the Kingdom of God.

Delivering the welcome address, Dr. Otobong Michael, Ambassador of ICOF Nigeria, expressed gratitude to God for the opportunity to gather ministers from different Christian backgrounds under one vision of unity and Kingdom advancement.

He reminded participants that the Church of Jesus Christ is living in a critical period where leadership must be intentional, visionary, and rooted in biblical truth.

"The future of the Church depends greatly on how well today's leaders are equipped. Kingdom leadership is not merely about occupying positions but about serving faithfully, mentoring others, and advancing God's redemptive purpose across generations."

Dr. Michael further reaffirmed ICOF Nigeria's commitment to providing quality leadership training, theological education, ministerial networking, and mentorship opportunities that will strengthen the Body of Christ throughout Nigeria and beyond.

Many attendees described the symposium as timely, insightful, and spiritually refreshing. Several ministers testified that the teachings renewed their passion for ministry and gave them practical strategies for leading healthier churches and developing future leaders.

Participants also appreciated the opportunity to interact with fellow ministers, exchange ideas, build lasting relationships, and strengthen partnerships for Kingdom advancement.

A Call to Kingdom Excellence

Throughout the symposium, speakers empha ized several important themes, including:

- The necessity of servant leadership.
- Spiritual integrity and personal holiness.
- Sound biblical teaching.
- Leadership succession and mentoring.
- Unity among Christian leaders.
- Commitment to global missions and evangelism.
- Raising future generations of Kingdom leaders.
- Building churches that transform communities.



What Nigeria's Christian Community Faces

Nigeria's difficulties, however, are severe, and they touch the church directly. The country is dealing with several overlapping security crises: banditry and mass kidnapping-for-ransom in the northwest, a middle-belt conflict between herders and farmers that has taken on ethnic and religious overtones, a decades-long Boko Haram and ISWAP insurgency in the northeast, and separatist unrest in the southeast.

Recent 2026 reporting describes a security outlook that is deteriorating rather than improving, with rural communities displaced, farmland abandoned out of fear of attack, and a resulting threat to food security that groups like Nigeria's farmers' unions have warned could tip into a broader food crisis.

Christian communities have been hit especially hard by this violence. Human rights monitors, including the Nigeria-based group Intersociety, reported that in just the first 180 days of 2026, over 2,500 Christians were killed, roughly 2,800 people were abducted, some 300 churches were destroyed, and hundreds were subjected to forced conversion.

Mass church abductions have made international headlines, including one incident in which more than 160 worshippers were seized from two churches in a single attack.

Nigeria's top tracker of Christian persecution, Emeka Umeagbalasi, finds that while the international community's gaze remains fixed on Boko Haram, the primary engine of religious violence in Nigeria is actually a highly coordinated network of Fulani militias.

Closing Charge

The symposium concluded with a powerful session of corporate prayers, during which ministers prayed for Nigeria, the Church, Christian leaders, families, and global missions. Special prayers were also offered for wisdom, unity, revival, and the empowerment of ministers to faithfully fulfill God's calling.

In his closing remarks, Dr. Otobong Michael thanked all the speakers, participants, volunteers, and partnering ministries for contributing to the success of the symposium. He encouraged attendees not to allow the lessons learned to end in the conference hall but to apply them in their ministries and communities.

He reaffirmed ICOF Nigeria's vision of building a network of well-equipped Christian leaders who will serve with excellence, uphold biblical truth, and influence society for Christ.

Looking Ahead

Following the success of the Minister's Symposium, ICOF Nigeria announced its intention to continue expanding leadership development initiatives through ministerial conferences, theological training, mentorship programs, chaplaincy development, and collaborative Kingdom projects.

As the event came to a close, participants departed with renewed vision, strengthened faith, and a deeper commitment to fulfilling Christ's mandate of making disciples of all nations.

The 2026 ICOF Nigeria Ministers' Symposium will be remembered as a significant gathering that inspired ministers. Many expressed the hope that ICOF Nigeria would continue organizing similar leadership conferences across different regions of the country.

...Continued on page 50

AN URGENT APPEAL

Stand With Persecuted and Displaced Christians in Nigeria

"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

-2nd Corinthians 9:7

Your support can help provide immediate relief to displaced and vulnerable Christian families while supporting the restoration of homes, churches, livelihoods, and the emotional and spiritual well-being of survivors.

Every contribution, regardless of size, can become a practical expression of love and solidarity with Christians who are facing unimaginable hardship.

For families who have lost almost everything, rebuilding is not simply about replacing buildings—it is about restoring dignity, hope, stability, faith, and community.

STEP IN AND HELP SUFFERING BELIEVERS

YOUR GIFT CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

- **$178 — Emergency Family Relief**

Can help provide food and other essential supplies to a family that has lost its home and livelihood.

- **$254 — Trauma Care and Pastoral Support**

Can help support trauma-informed care, pastoral ministry, counseling, and discipleship for survivors experiencing emotional and spiritual distress.

- **$4,796 — Rebuilding Support**

Can contribute toward the reconstruction or restoration of a destroyed home or church, helping Christian communities regain places of shelter, worship, fellowship, and service.

DONATE TODAY

Stand with vulnerable Christians in Plateau State.

Give. Pray. Share. Help rebuild.

"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

— Galatians 6:2

EASE THE SUFFERING

continued from pae 48

Distinguished Guests

The symposium also featured the presence and contributions of respected Christian leaders, including:

Dr. Otobong Michael – Ambassador, ICOF Nigeria

Bishop Dr. D. Ekanem – Director of Information, ICOF Nigeria

Pastor Enyichukwu Offia – Director, ICOF School of Ministry (ISOM), Nigeria

Okike Offia – Guest Speaker

Dr. Ibrahim Dikko – Guest Speaker

Their collective experience and biblical insights provided participants with practical tools for effective ministry and leadership in today's rapidly changing world.

All in all, the one-day conference was a huge success.

Many expressed the hope that ICOF Nigeria would continue organizing similar leadership conferences across different regions of the country.

TESTIMONIAL

Dr. Obolong Michael is a welcome leader in our ICOF international family. I personally find him to be an uplifting soul to all he encounters. Our weekly education meetings fall at a time of day that is 3 am in his country, but he is always present to share updates on his ministry, advising others, learning what is on the agenda for further growth, and a pleasure to be around him.

-David James Dunworth

TESTIMONIAL

Prophet Otobong Michael is my spiritual son. We began working together more than 20 years ago. He has matured in life and ministry and emerged as a true spiritual leader. He has remained committed and consistent to the cause of Jesus Christ. In his role as International Circle of Faith (ICOF) Ambassador to Nigeria, he faithfully serves his nation and well represents the vision and mission of ICOF as recorded by Jesus Christ that we would all be one.

- Bishop Bernie Wade Ph.D.

TESTIMONIAL

Since joining our global effort, Dr. Otobong has been an ardent supporter of the faith and a tireless advocate for the spiritual growth of others. Most recently, Dr. Obolong has brought more than 200 new student clergy to spread the gospel to their citizenry across Nigeria. When one considers the challenges Christians in Nigeria face of late, it is a remarkable achievement and a testimony of this true soldier of God.

-Bishop Dr. Christopher Campbell

Gratitude in Unfinished Seasons

Scripture Focus: Romans 8:23-25; Psalm 27:13-14; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Many believers do not first recognize giving thanks before everything resolves as a spiritual issue. It feels ordinary, emotional, or circumstantial. Yet Gratitude in Unfinished Seasons shows that what seems ordinary often becomes one of the places where Christ most deeply forms the heart. The believer is not invited merely to survive these pressures, but to let them become places of holy response. When the soul has been shaped by complaint, comparison, restless desire, and anxious scarcity, it can lose its center without realizing it. The grace of God meets us there and begins the slow work of reordering what has drifted.

In Romans 8:23-25; Psalm 27:13-14; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18, Scripture speaks with striking clarity. These passages do not reduce spiritual life to one emotional tone or one predictable pathway. They reveal the character of God and the shape of a life that answers Him rightly. The Word teaches that the believer is not asked to produce holiness by force of personality. Rather, the soul is invited into a responsive life: seeing more clearly, remembering more truthfully, and walking more obediently under God's care. Again and again, the Scriptures gathered here insist that grace does not leave the inner life untouched.

The heart is easily trained by scarcity, comparison, and restless appetite. It begins to believe that peace always lies one possession, one answer, or one changed circumstance farther ahead. That is why giving thanks before everything resolves matters so deeply. Gratitude and contentment are not passive emotions; they are acts of spiritual realism. They teach the soul to notice grace, to receive enoughness, and to resist the lie that life can only be blessed once every longing has been satisfied.

For everyday discipleship, this means naming mercies inside incomplete seasons. Such faithfulness may seem quiet, but it is rarely small. It changes the texture of prayer, the tone of speech, the pace of thought, and the direction of desire. It teaches the believer to cooperate with grace in ordinary ways: by returning, by remembering, by yielding, by refusing old reflexes, and by taking concrete steps of obedience. In that slow practice, the soul becomes more teachable, more stable, and more available to the life of Christ.

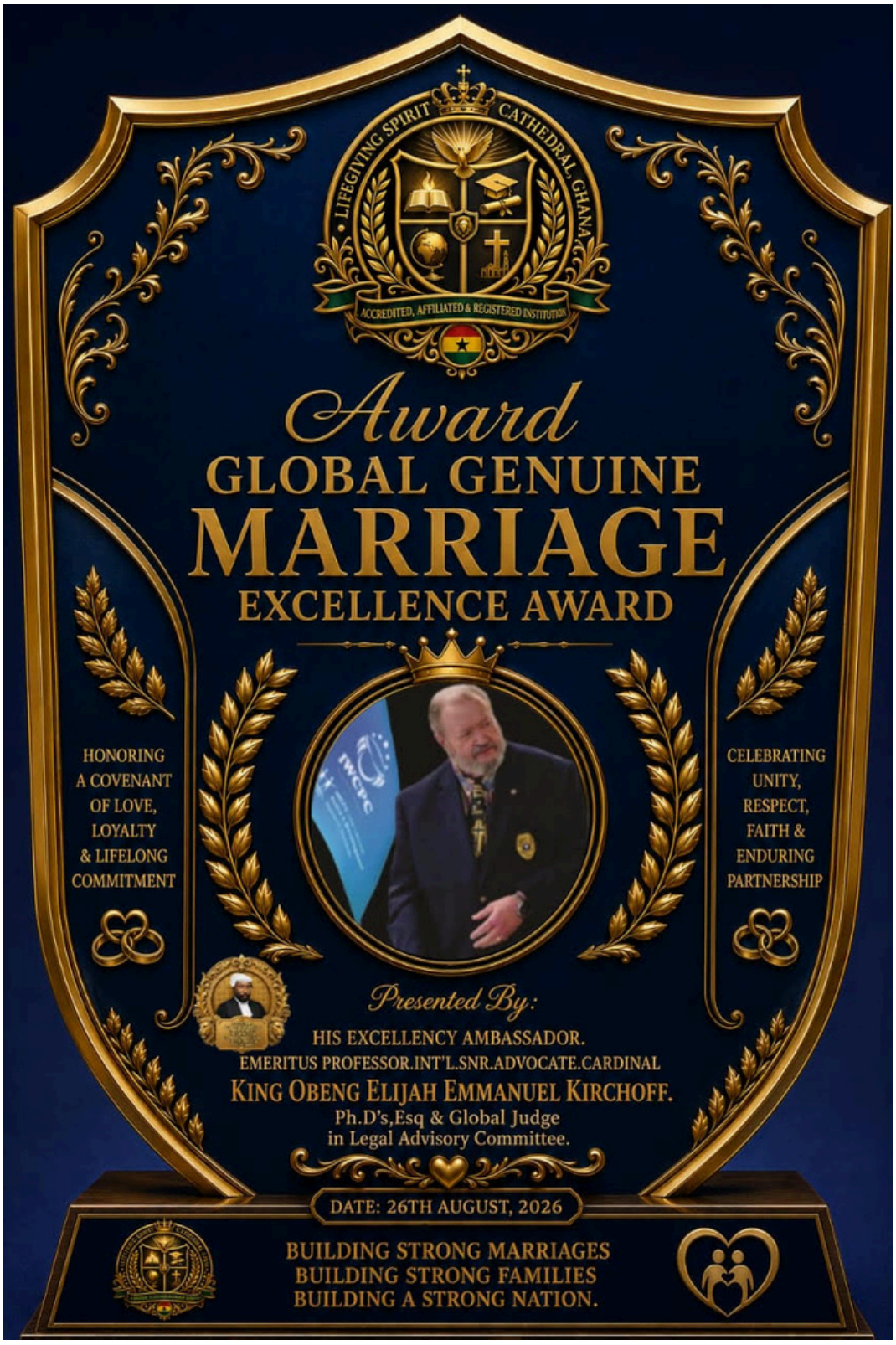
In the end, gratitude in Unfinished Seasons is not only about giving thanks before everything resolves. It is about hopeful gratitude while waiting. It is about becoming the kind of person whose inner life is increasingly governed by God rather than by impulse, fear, or spiritual drift. The Lord does not despise slow formation. He knows how to turn repeated return into maturity. As the believer remains open, honest, and responsive, grace works below the surface. What begins as struggle can become surrender, and what begins as weakness can become a steadier witness to the goodness of God.

Prayer

Faithful Provider, draw me away from complaint, comparison, restless desire, and anxious scarcity, and teach me the grace of naming mercies inside incomplete seasons. Lead me into hopeful gratitude while waiting, and keep my heart near Christ. In the Mighty Name of Jesus, I pray. Amen.


INTERNATIONAL CIRCLE OF FAITH
ONE BODY
JOHN 17:20-23
FREE
TRAINING
ONLINE
CLASSES ONLY
Sharing
HOPE
in the
STREETS
ICOF NIGERIA
CELEBRATION OF LIFE DEPARTMENT
MISSIONARY
TRAINING
& DEPLOYMENT
FOR
STREET EVANGELISM
RESCUING DRUG ADDICTS • RESTORING HOPE • WINNING SOULS FOR CHRIST
BIBLICAL TRAINING
Solid foundation in God's Word
COMPASSIONATE OUTREACH
Reaching the lost, loving the broken
PRACTICAL EVANGELISM
Equipped to win souls everywhere
DISCIPLESHIP & RESTORATION
Transforming lives, building disciples
Be Part of
SOMETHING
ETERNAL!
COME, LEARN, BE EQUIPPED & MAKE IMPACT!
12-WEEK ONLINE TRAINING
FLEXIBLE & IMPACTFUL
OPEN TO:
Ministers of the Gospel, Missionaries, Evangelists, Church Workers & All Passsionate Souls for God's Kingdom.
REGISTER TODAY!
Equip Yourself. Reach Lives. Change Eternities.
TOGETHER, LET'S TAKE THE GOSPEL TO THE STREETS AND TRANSFORM LIVES!

Congratulations!





Special Update

from Her Majesty Queen Eden Soriano Trinidad of the State Of Birland

Reported by John Losh II



Dear friends and supporters,

I am deeply grateful for your continued support and for cheering me on through the years. 🙏 I hope you will take the time to learn about my greatest humanitarian endeavour: the creation and establishment of the world's first humanitarian country — the State of Birland.

Those who wish to join us in building this 1st Humanitarian Country of the World are most welcome. However, please do not ask for any position or title at this stage. First show us what you can do for Birland — through remarkable initiatives and concrete actions that demonstrate genuine commitment. Titles and positions will not be granted simply for the asking.

Some may say —or quietly mock —"All you have is a Digital State — nothing more." And so, what if we began as a Digital State with a digital currency while we are not yet on physical land? Are we not living in the Digital Age?

Even if a physical territory is not yet secured, that is no obstacle. The Sovereign Military Order of Malta holds no sovereign land of its own, yet it continues to open embassies in countries around the world and enjoys United Nations Observer Status — earned through decades of outstanding humanitarian service.

The State of Birland is new and emerging. Join us by supporting this vision and create the greatest legacy of your life in this world. And if you choose not to, that is perfectly fine as well.

How can you become part of this establishment?

Promote Birland in your area, in your workplace, in your home, and in every gathering — big or small. Every effort counts. We began simply: by holding printed paper flaglets of Birland, sewing fabric flags, creating poems that shower pearls of

inspiration upon this State, gathering in small meetings, and wearing Birland shirts and caps and using Birland mugs — all at our own expense.

Today we stand in our 12th year. This is not something that started yesterday.

Please check our websites and social media accounts.
https://birland.net
https://birlandstate.org (under reconstruction)
https://birland.digital
https://birland.bond

With sincerest regards,

Queen Eden Soriano Trinidad, GCBS, JP

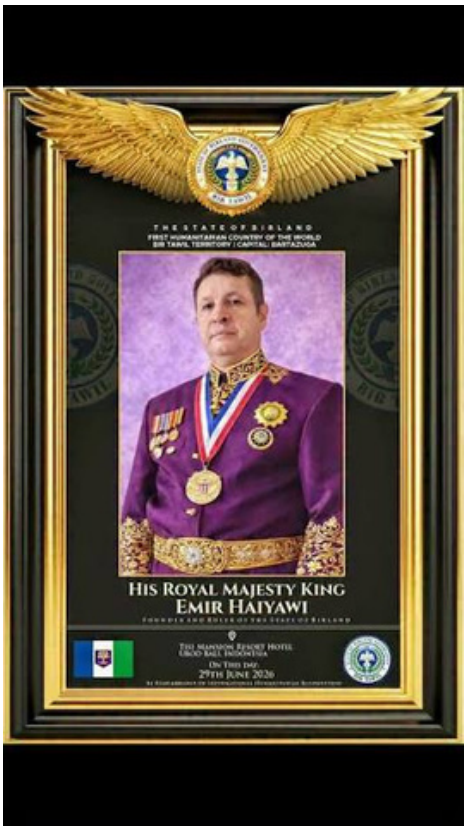
- Founding Prime Minister, State of Birland
- Lt. Col., International Police Forum
- Intergovernmental Organization (IPF)
- President, Birland International Royal
- University (BIR U) Queen of Ohanaeze
- Kingdom Worldwide International Queen of Ovuorie
- Kingdom Queen Naladuta Kutai Mulawarman
- Kingdom Queen of SacroTrono delos Amerindios y Afrodescendientes-SATROAMAD
- Secretary General United Global Kingdoms-UGK





ABOUT THE STATE OF BIRLAND

Since 2015, Birland State has been established as a new country in the Bir Tawil land, 2060 km2, located between Egypt and Sudan. It is still waiting for United Nations recognition as a small country founded by the Ruler H.R.M. King of Birland, Dr. Emil A. Halyawi, and the Prime Minister and Queen of Birland, H.R. M. Queen Eden Soriano Trinidad.



Resurrection and the Reordering of Fear

Scripture Focus: Matthew 28:8–10; Hebrews 12:28–29; 2 Timothy 1:7

Fear does not always vanish at the empty tomb. In **Matthew 28**, the women depart from the sepulcher with fear and great joy. That pairing is deeply human and deeply instructive. Resurrection does not always remove every trembling at once, but it does begin to reorder fear. Lesser fears lose ultimate authority because a greater reality has entered the field: Christ is alive. Scripture does not call believers into recklessness.

Hebrews 12 still says we are to serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. But resurrection transforms fear from slavery into reverent awe. The panic that once governed the soul must now bow before the risen Lord. When death itself has been overthrown in principle, all the other fears that fed upon death begin to weaken. Their voices may still be heard, but they are no longer enthroned.

Second Timothy 1 says God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind. Resurrection undergirds this promise. The Christian does not borrow courage from temperament alone. He receives it from union with the living Christ. This means courage may coexist with trembling. The women run with both fear and great joy. They are still physically shaken, yet they are already moving under the influence of a stronger reality.

The reordering of fear changes practical life. It allows obedience to outrun anxiety. It gives believers grace to speak, serve, witness, and endure without waiting for every internal tremor to subside. The old logic says, *'When I feel no fear, I will act.'* Resurrection teaches, *'Because Christ lives, I may act even while fear is being brought into order.'* The risen Lord does not demand a sensation of mastery before faithfulness. He gives His presence and says, 'Be not afraid.'

This is one of Easter's quiet triumphs. Fear is not always erased immediately, but it is dethroned. Joy, worship, mission, and obedience begin to rise in a heart that once would have remained locked away. The empty tomb does not make human beings emotionally invincible. It makes them governed by a stronger hope than fear can finally sustain.

Prayer

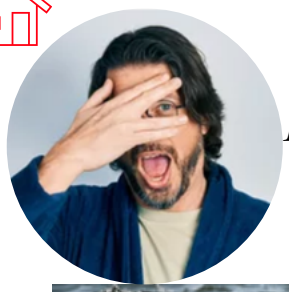
Lord Jesus, reorder my fears in the light of Your resurrection. Let reverence for You become greater than panic about circumstance, and make me able to obey even while courage is still growing.

Reflection Questions

- What fear still speaks loudly in me, even though I believe Christ is risen?
- How does the women's mixture of fear and joy help me understand courageous obedience?
- What practical act of faith might resurrection call me to take before all fear has disappeared?

Closing Prayer

All Holy and Risen Lord, let holy awe displace lesser fears. Teach me to live beneath the authority of Your life, and not beneath the tyranny of my anxieties. In Your Glorious Name, Amen.



CAUGHT

How do we resist violence without becoming what we're fighting?

by Montgomery A. Kaine



This is where the real work begins: What do we believe? What ground are we standing on?

What stories have formed us, and which ones are still writing themselves through us right now?

Naming evil takes courage, and we need that courage. But there's a harder truth underneath it — the moment we point outward, we must also look at our own hands. We are never simply witnesses to what's wrong in the world. We're implicated in it.

Every uprising that promised freedom and then reproduced the very cruelty it fought. Every justice movement that got quietly hijacked by ego. Every institution founded to resist domination that became, in time, another version of what it resisted. This isn't someone else's failure. It's a pattern we're capable of repeating ourselves if we only look outward and never in.

So the question isn't just *"what's wrong out there."* It's *"what in me still belongs to that same current."*

Jesus told his followers he'd make them fishers of people — meaning caught. Pulled up out of the water they'd been swimming in their entire lives without noticing it was there. A world that runs on domination, on climbing over each other to get ahead, on treating power as something to be seized and used against people.

That's the water. The question worth sitting with is whether we've actually been pulled out of it, or whether we're still submerged — still moving with its currents, just calling it something else.

If we have been caught—if love has truly taken hold of us—then the way we see and act must change. The inner reckoning and the outer resistance are not separate work; they are one and the same.

That means saying a real no to violence, greed, and any power that sustains itself by consuming others. Not an easy no, but one that costs us something—because that is often how we know it is real. Anything less is only rearranging the water.

This is exactly why the practices matter now — coming back to the gospel, tending an actual spiritual life, not as an escape from the crisis but as the only sane response to it.

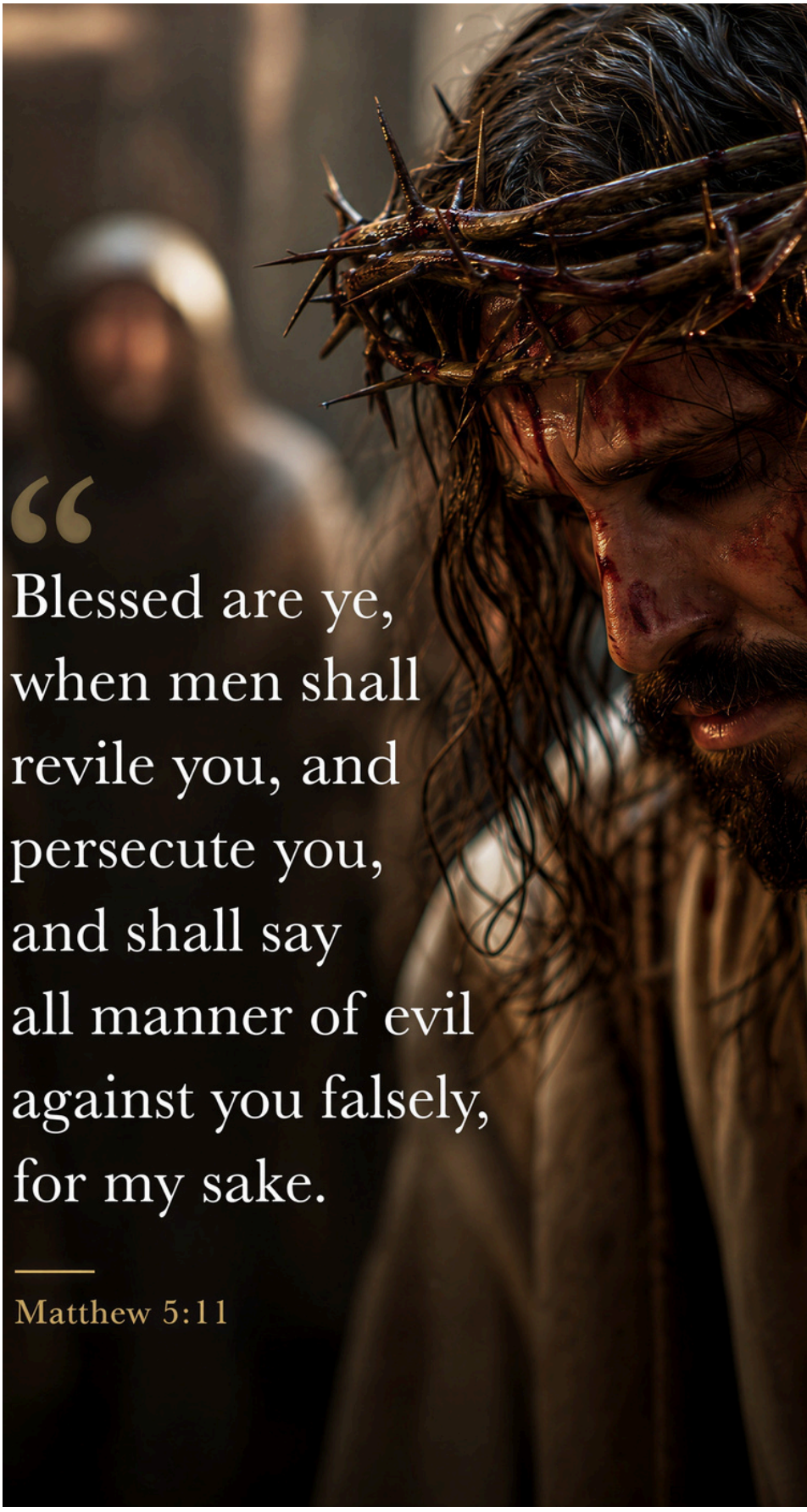
We don't get to choose how the world unfolds from here. Nobody does. But we get to choose what we hold onto while it unfolds — which practices keep feeding us, which truths keep steadying us, whether we act with integrity when it would be easier not to. Nonviolence and noncooperation aren't naive positions in a moment like this. They might be the only sane ones.

Because here's what Jesus was actually clear about: love the people who hate you. Bless the ones working against you. Forgive what feels unforgivable. Turn the other cheek — not as capitulation, but as a direct refusal to let violence set the terms.

Don't answer evil with more evil; answer it with good. None of this comes with a guarantee that it changes anything. Sometimes you do the right thing simply because it's right, and that has to be enough.

In the end, integrity might be the only thing we actually get to keep. So we hold onto it — not by our own strength, but grounded in the One who keeps making us new, who calls us into a love wide enough to hold the people we love and the people working against us in the same breath.

That kind of love outlasts whatever violence throws at it. It has to. It's the only thing that ever has.



September 5, 2025

Reprinted from the Tribute Issue of Influence-Magazine.Today





On The Cover



On September 10, 2025, Charlie Kirk was assassinated while speaking to students at Utah Valley University. The moment pierced more than a movement; it tore at the fabric of civic courage. Yet even in grief, the story of Charlie and Erika reads like a vow—two lives braided by conviction, grit, and an unembarrassed faith that the public square still has room for Christian voices. "Destined" is not a haloed word here; it is a charge. It reminds us that purpose outlives a bullet, that ideals outlast the noise, and that courage, taught young, can steady a nation.

Eight days later, Turning Point USA's board elected Erika Kirk as CEO and chair. She stepped forward not as a placeholder, but as a standard-bearer—resolute, clear-eyed, and unflinching—pledging to advance the mission her husband championed: to form citizens who speak truth, defend liberty, and live their faith in public.

Their partnership—now a legacy—will continue shaping the debate over conscience, free speech, and the moral courage America requires to renew itself.

This special issue honors that resolve, invites sober reflection on political violence, and calls our readers to the same steady posture: conviction without venom, faith without fear, and hope that works.




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Congratulations!

Dr. Jorge Parrott, Founder and President of CMM College of Theology (CMMTheology.org), as well as President of Christ's Mandate for Missions (CMM.world), has become our most recent ICOF Chaplain with the rank of Captain.





Let’s face it. The world does not need another church that looks the same as the one next door or even the one across town. We have more than our fair share of that going on around us already, which is why at Life Church, we are intentional about not trying to duplicate what others are doing (regardless of how successful they may appear to be). Instead, all of us here at Life Church want people to recognize that their value to us comes from the depth of their relationship with Jesus Christ and not what they can do for us. But it is so much more than that! Collectively, our value comes from each other and how well we *“do life together.”*

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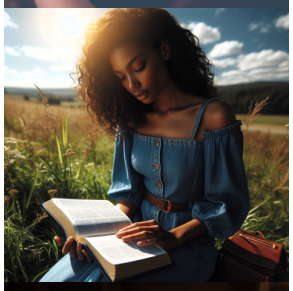
Life College offers a diverse selection of biblically grounded courses and degree programs designed to deepen students' understanding of Scripture while preparing them for meaningful service and effective ministry. Areas of study include Biblical Studies, Divinity, Theology, Church Leadership, and Missional Leadership.

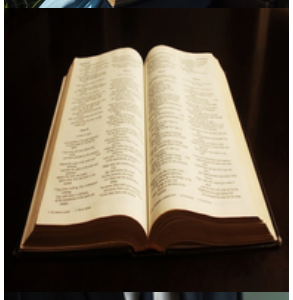
Students explore the history, literary structure, cultural setting, major themes, and enduring teachings of the Old and New Testaments while developing a stronger understanding of God, creation, sin, redemption, Christian doctrine, and the destiny of humankind.

Through these academic and ministry-focused programs, students can work toward recognized certificates and degrees appropriate to their chosen level of study.

Each program combines sound biblical instruction with practical leadership development, organizational skills, strategic planning, and ministry preparation. Whether a student is preparing for pastoral ministry, church administration, missions, teaching, nonprofit leadership, or personal spiritual growth, Life College provides an educational pathway intended to strengthen biblical knowledge, develop capable leaders, and equip graduates to serve their churches and communities with wisdom, confidence, and integrity.











Rethinking the Diploma:
What Alternative High School Programs Look Like Today





For a growing number of families, the traditional public high school classroom no longer feels like the only — or even the best — path to a diploma. Some parents are drawn to homeschooling for the flexibility it offers. Others want more say in what their children are taught, or need a schedule that works around a job, a move, or a life already in progress. Whatever the motivation, the same question tends to follow: what are the real alternatives, and how do you tell a solid one from a shaky one?

Online and self-paced diploma programs have multiplied to meet that demand. One example is ***Harvard High School International (HHSI)***, based in La Grange, Kentucky, which describes itself as having assisted students working toward a diploma since 1990. It's worth a closer look — both for what it offers and for what prospective families should understand before enrolling.

What HHSI Offers

HHSI markets itself around flexibility: self-paced, online coursework that lets a student — whether a teenager or an adult who never finished high school — work toward a diploma on their own timeline. The pitch is straightforward: personalized planning, educational counseling is a process that starts with an online application and ends, ideally, with a diploma that can open doors to college, a job, or military enlistment.

For an adult who left school years ago and needs a diploma to change careers, or a family that wants full control over pacing and content, that kind of program can be genuinely useful. Flexibility and affordability are real value propositions, and HHSI has been operating long enough to have served a substantial number of students.

The Name and the Accreditation Question

Here's where families should slow down and ask questions — of HHSI or any similar program.

Despite the name, Harvard High School International has no affiliation with Harvard University. It's part of a network of religious and educational organizations operating under the banner of the "International Circle of Faith," which also includes Life College, Life University, and related entities. HHSI's accrediting body, the American Association of Higher Education Accreditation (AAHEA), which



the school, cited as active since 1932, is also part of that same network — a structural detail worth understanding, since it means the school and its accreditor aren't fully independent of one another.

That doesn't automatically make a diploma worthless. But it does mean the accreditation isn't the kind issued by a regional or federally recognized accrediting body — the standard that most colleges, employers, and the U.S. military use as a baseline when evaluating a high school credential.

Whether a specific college, employer, or licensing board will accept a diploma from a faith-network-accredited school is genuinely case-by-case, and it's a question worth answering **before** enrolling, not after.

Questions Worth Asking Before Choosing Any Alternative Program

Whether it's HHSI or another online or alternative diploma option, a few questions apply universally:
- Who accredits this school, and who accredits the accreditor? *Independent, nationally or regionally recognized accreditation (bodies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or CHEA) is most widely accepted.*
- Will the specific college, employer, or program I care about accept this diploma? *Please don't assume—call and ask directly, using the school's exact name and accreditor.*
- What does the curriculum actually cover? *Ask for a syllabus or course list, not just marketing language.*
- **What support exists if my student struggles?** *Self-paced doesn't have to mean unsupported — find out what counseling, tutoring, or check-ins are built in.*
- What's the total cost, and what's included? *Compare against public alternatives, other online charter schools, and other private diploma programs.*

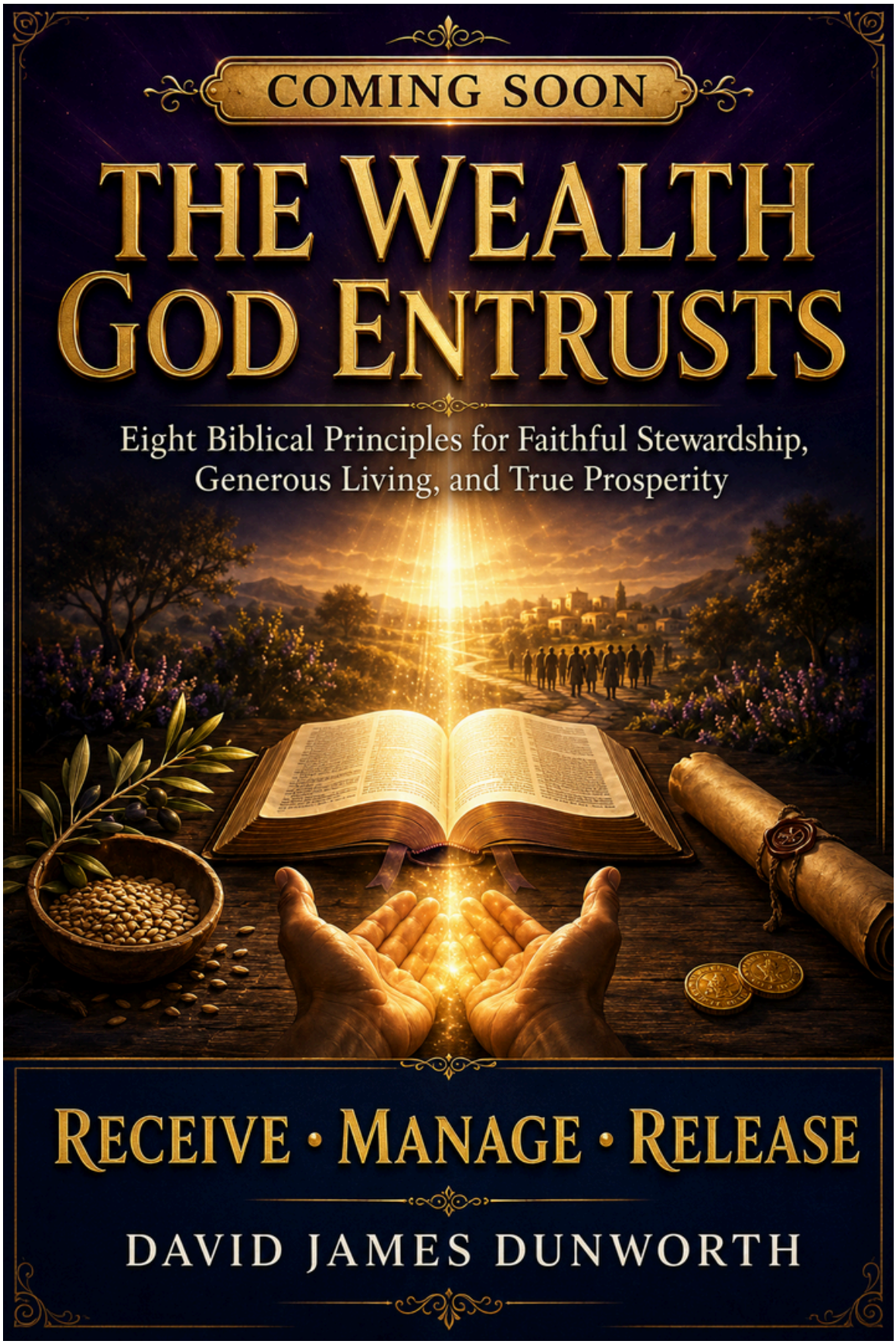
The Bigger Picture

The rise of programs like HHSI reflects something real: many families want more control over their children's education, or need a second chance to finish their own. That instinct deserves respect, not dismissal. But *"alternative"* doesn't automatically mean *"lesser"* or *"better"* — it means different rules apply, and due diligence matters more, not less.

For families genuinely exploring their options, the healthiest approach is the same one you'd bring to any major decision: ask direct questions, verify claims independently, and choose based on what will actually work for your student — not just the name on the diploma.



Being Published this Fall



The Hope That Moves

Living the Adventure of Jesus

by David James Dunworth S.D.G.



Christianity is often introduced as a set of beliefs, a collection of moral instructions, or an institution represented by a building. Beliefs matter. Moral formation matters. The gathered church matters. Yet when these become the whole picture, faith can be flattened into something merely protected, maintained, and defended.

In the Gospels, Jesus does not call people merely to admire Him, agree with Him, or remain safely where He found them. He says, *"Follow me."* Nets are left behind. Boats are stepped out of. Familiar roads give way to uncertain ones. People who thought they understood their lives discover that Christ is leading them toward a future they cannot yet see.

To be alive in the adventure of Jesus is to have a desire, a dream, and a hope for the future. It is to translate that hope into action in the present and to keep acting in light of it. Christian faith is not motion for motion's sake, nor is it a restless search for excitement. It is a life moving faithfully in response to the One who calls.

Where the Adventure Begins

Every adventure begins with desire. Before someone leaves the familiar, attempts the difficult, or reaches toward the seemingly impossible, something awakens within that person. There is a longing for what might be—a healed relationship, a restored community, a meaningful vocation, a just society, a faithful ministry, or a life more fully surrendered to God.

Desire alone, however, is not Christian hope. We can desire what is selfish, destructive, or disconnected from God's purposes. Our



longings must be brought before Christ, examined in Scripture, tested in prayer, and discerned within faithful community.

Biblical hope must also be distinguished from optimism. Optimism expects favorable circumstances. It often rests on an assessment that conditions will improve.

Christian hope can remain alive when circumstances offer no such reassurance because its foundation is not a prediction. Its foundation is the character and promise of God.

Paul writes in Romans 8 that hope already seen is not hope. We wait for what we do not yet see, and we wait with perseverance. Abraham obeyed God's call without knowing where he was going.

He lived toward a promise whose complete fulfillment remained beyond his lifetime. His faith was not certainty about the route; it was confidence in the One directing him.

The Christian hope is anchored most decisively in the resurrection of Jesus. The empty tomb declares that suffering, injustice, sin, and death do not possess the final word. The theologian Jürgen Moltmann [1] emphasized that Christian faith is turned toward the future promised by the God of resurrection.

Hope does not merely remember what God has done. It anticipates what God will do—and it reshapes how we live now.

The Courage to Come

Peter saw Jesus walking across the water and said, *"Lord, if it is You, command me to come."* Jesus answered with one word: *"Come."* Peter then moved from the relative safety of the boat into the uncertainty of the storm.

That moment captures something essential about the adventure of faith. Peter's step was not reckless because it was a response to

Christ's command. Christian adventure is not the pursuit of danger, novelty, or personal glory. Faithful risk begins by listening for Jesus and responding obediently.

Peter also sank. His fear became stronger than his focus, and he cried out for rescue. Jesus took hold of him. The story does not teach that faithful people never falter. It teaches that the One who calls us onto the water remains present when our courage fails.

Grace precedes every faithful step and meets us in every failure. We do not act to persuade God to accept us. We act because, in Christ, we have been received, forgiven, and invited to participate in His work. The adventure is demanding, but it is not sustained by human bravery alone. The Holy Spirit guides, strengthens, corrects, comforts, and renews those who follow Jesus.

When Hope Becomes Action

Desire that remains private is not yet adventure. Hope must be translated.

James writes that faith without works is dead. He is not teaching that people purchase salvation through good behavior. He is exposing the contradiction of claiming living faith while producing no evidence of love, mercy, obedience, or transformation. Living faith expresses itself.

The kingdom of God has been revealed in Jesus and will one day be fully realized. Christians therefore live between what God has already begun and what has not yet been completed. That tension does not excuse passivity; it gives present action its meaning.

N. T. Wright [2] has argued that resurrection hope is inseparable from how Christians live and work today. If God intends renewal rather than abandonment, then acts of justice, compassion, reconciliation, truth, beauty, and service are not meaningless gestures in a dying world. They are signs pointing toward God's promised future.



Translating hope into action rarely begins with something spectacular. It may mean making the telephone call reconciliation requires, teaching a child, feeding a neighbor, confronting an unjust practice, beginning the ministry that has remained in a notebook, or faithfully completing work that few people notice. It may mean giving, apologizing, mentoring, visiting, building, writing, praying, or staying when leaving would be easier.

Two counterfeits must be resisted. The first is escapism—hope for someday that neglects the responsibilities of today. The second is presumption—activity driven by anxiety, ego, or the need to prove ourselves. Escapism waits without obeying. Presumption acts without listening. Christian hope does neither. It listens, discerns, and then moves.

The Habit of Hope

The adventure of Jesus is not one dramatic leap followed by permanent confidence. It is a direction sustained through repeated acts of faithfulness.

Hebrews tells believers to run with endurance, fixing their eyes on Jesus. Endurance is necessary because the distance between promise and fulfillment can be long. Proverbs acknowledges that deferred hope makes the heart sick. Some prayers appear unanswered. Some faithful efforts produce disappointing results. Some doors remain closed. Some dreams must be surrendered because God is leading in another direction.

In such seasons, hope cannot survive as emotion alone. It must become a habit. We return to prayer when we feel nothing. We obey what is clear while waiting for what is not. We remain accountable to other believers.

We rest when weariness begins masquerading as faithfulness. We remember what God has done, receive strength for the present, and entrust the outcome to Him.



Hope is also practiced in community. The popular image of an adventurer is often a solitary figure, but Christian discipleship was never designed as a private expedition.

Jesus called a community of followers. We need believers who can recognize gifts we overlook, question motives we have excused, help carry burdens that have become too heavy, and remind us of God's promises when disappointment has clouded our vision.



Jesus' parable of the talents portrays servants entrusted with responsibilities while their master is away. The faithful servants continue working in light of his return. The fearful servant buries what he has received.

His caution appears safe, but it produces no faithfulness.

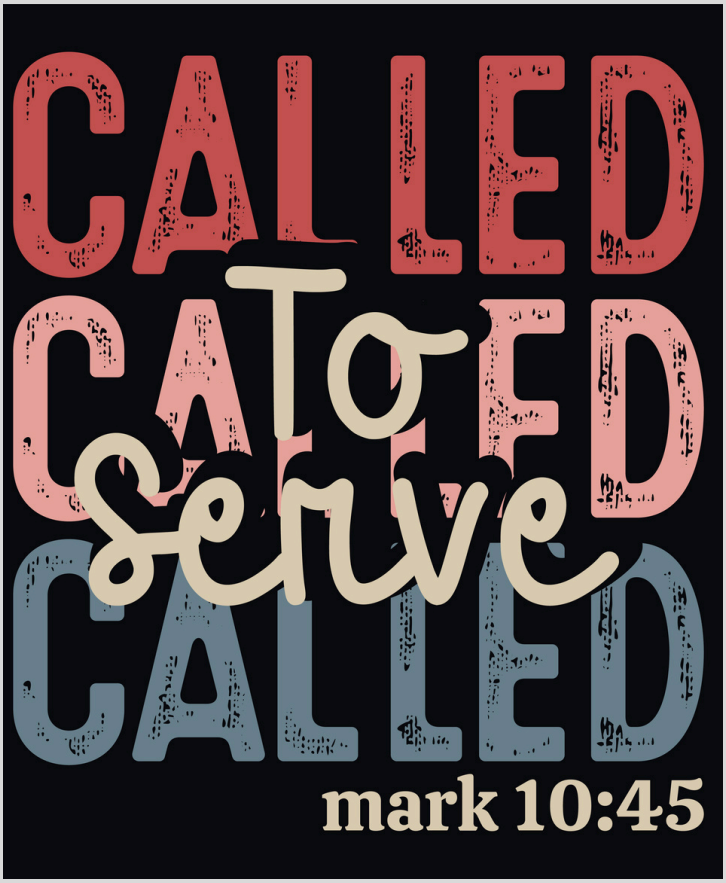
Fear frequently presents itself as wisdom. It tells us to wait until every uncertainty has disappeared, every resource has arrived, and failure has become impossible. But that day rarely comes. Faith does not require complete knowledge of the road. It requires trust sufficient for the next obedient step.



Eugene Peterson [3] described discipleship as *"a long obedience in the same direction."* That is the true shape of Christian adventure. It is less like a brief burst of excitement and more like a lifelong pilgrimage: continuing toward Christ through celebration and disappointment, clarity and confusion, visible fruit and hidden faithfulness.

The Right Kind of Life

The right kind of life is not one protected from uncertainty. It is one correctly oriented toward Jesus. Its desires are submitted to Him, its hope is grounded in His resurrection, its actions are shaped by His love, and its endurance rests on His faithfulness.



Some believers may be called to cross oceans. Others will discover the adventure of Jesus across a kitchen table, inside a classroom, beside a hospital bed, within a struggling congregation, or through years of quiet service. Adventure is not measured by distance traveled, applause received, or visible success. It is measured by faithfulness to the One who says, ***"Follow me."***

The people described in Hebrews 11 were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive everything promised within their lifetimes, yet they continued moving toward it. Their hope remained visible in their direction.

That is the invitation before us. Receive the hope Christ gives. Translate it into the next faithful action. Continue when the future remains unseen. The adventure is already underway, and Jesus is still calling: ***"Come."***

[1]https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/themelios/article/the-christology-of-jurgen-moltmann/
[2] https://www.audible.com/pd/Spiritual-and-Religious-Audiobook/B0DQ2BTQBM?
[3] https://www.audible.com/pd/Long-Obedience-in-the-Same-Direction-Audiobook/B002UZZ5YY?

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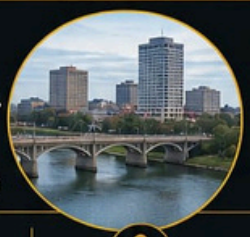
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Finding the Source:

A Practical Path to Christian Inspiration

by Montgomery A. Kaine



We spend a lot of energy learning how to work faster, plan better, and execute more efficiently. What we rarely study is where the energy for that work is supposed to come from in the first place. For the Christian, that source isn't willpower or discipline alone — it's the inspiration of God's Spirit. Scripture puts it simply: *"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me"* (**Philippians 4:13, KJV**). Job says something similar in his own words: *"there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding"* (**Job 32:8, KJV**).

Before getting to the practical steps, one thing matters more than the mechanics: inspiration from God isn't given for our own comfort or ambition. It's given to accomplish His purposes. Jesus made the order of priorities clear — *"seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you"* (**Matthew 6:33, KJV**). Put plainly: alignment with God's will comes before the inspiration flows, not after.

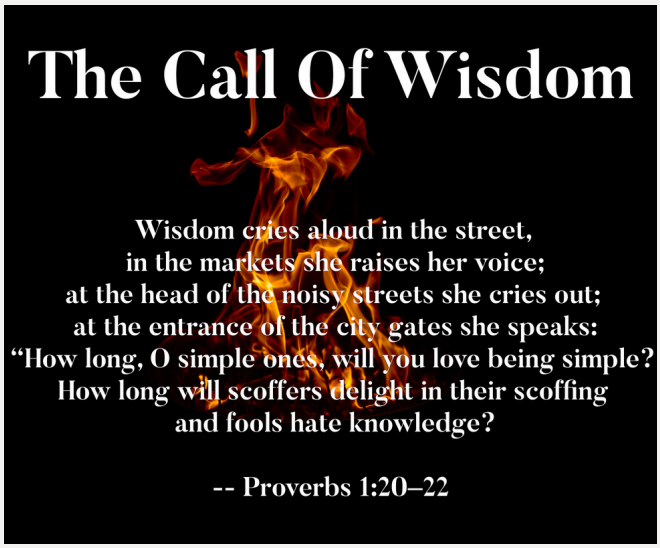
With that foundation in place, here's a four-part path toward walking in it consistently.

1. Start from a place of dependence, not ownership.

Everything a believer has — including insight, creativity, and wisdom — originates with God. Job describes this directly: wisdom and strength belong to *"the Ancient,"* and understanding comes from Him alone (**Job 12:12–13, KJV**). The starting posture isn't *"how do I generate inspiration,"* but *"how do I stay open to what's already being offered."* That shift alone changes how a person approaches problems, decisions, and creative work.

2. Actually ask for it.

This step gets skipped more than any other. James is direct about it: *"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him"* (**James 1:5, KJV**). Jesus reinforces the same principle in **Matthew 7:7** — ask, seek, knock.



Inspiration isn't something believers are expected to manufacture through effort; it's something they're invited to request directly, with the expectation that it will be granted.

3. Treat what you're given as a responsibility, not a possession.

Receiving insight or direction from God comes with an obligation to use it well. Jesus frames this as a matter of proportion: *"unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required"* (**Luke 12:48, KJV**). Inspiration that sits unused or is redirected toward self-interest instead of its intended purpose misses the point of having received it at all.

4. Put it into motion immediately.

Insight that isn't acted on tends to evaporate. When a thought, a solution, or a sense of direction arrives — particularly around something you've been wrestling with — the practical move is to capture it right away: write it down, take the first step, start the conversation. Like any capacity a person exercises regularly, responsiveness to inspiration seems to grow with use. Consistent action creates the conditions for the next round of insight to arrive.

None of these four steps functions in isolation from the others, and none of them is a one-time event. The pattern — depend, ask, steward, act — works best as a daily rhythm built around time spent with Christ rather than a technique applied occasionally under pressure. Read the passages referenced here slowly, sit with them, and let them shape not just what you believe about inspiration, but how you actually go looking for it.





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