

WORLDWIDE PENTECOSTAL FELLOWSHIP

TOGETHER

CONNECTING THE APOSTOLIC WORLD

COME UNTO ME,

ALL YE THAT LABOUR AND
ARE HEAVY LADEN, AND

I WILL GIVE YOU REST.

— MATTHEW 11:28 —



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**WORLDWIDE PENTECOSTAL
FELLOWSHIP**

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Editor
Johnny King
GoWPF.org

FOUNDERS

Johnny Godair Floyd Odum Larry Booker
Crawford Coon Nathaniel Wilson Kenny Godair

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Stephen Buxton Joel Booker Wade Bass
James Townley Paul Deeds Johnny King

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Nathan Cox	Aaron Henson	Cade Posey	

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Worldwide Pentecostal Fellowship
2250 E. 73rd St. Suite 350 • Tulsa, OK 74136
(918) 622-4200 • GoWPF.org

HEADQUARTERS STAFF

Executive Administrator

Mikhael Berrier - MikhaelBerrier@WPFMail.net

Assistant to the Executive Administrator

Benjamin C. Davis - BenDavis@WPFMail.net

Office Administrator

Jon Cecrle - WPF_Support@WPFMail.net

Editor

Johnny King

Assistant Editor

Dallas Bryant

Layout & Design

JoLynn Albritton

Editors

Aleph - Omega Douglas Walker James Macleod	Church Development Billy Chapman	Hope Corps Douglas Walker	Prison Ministry Bryan Dickinson
Bible Quizzing Jeff Mercer	Deaf Ministry Misty Chapman	Informe Español Jesse Galindo	Theology Jeremy Wilbanks
Children's Ministry Philip Booker	Education Jeremy Wilbanks	Global Missions Jerry Rowley, Jr.	Youth Development Zach Wells
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This Issue ... at a Glance



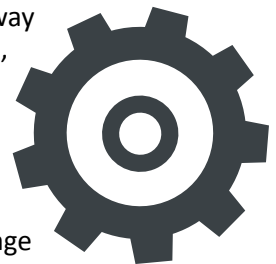
Johnny King
Calgary, Canada

In “Situational Awareness” (page 23), Bro. James Macleod has deviated from his usual article format to tackle a crucial issue in an article that reads like a book review. But the subject addressed provides a needed answer to some scriptures that have been twisted by many toward self-destruction (2 Peter 3:16). A related passage in Mark 3:28, 29 refers to “blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.” Some people have called this the unpardonable sin, but we should stick to biblical language and be careful to view these words of Jesus in the context they were spoken. He was referring to the scribes from Jerusalem who had said, “He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils,” thus attributing to Satan, the healings and deliverances performed by Jesus. The Amplified Study Bible says, “It is apparently not a single act of defiant behavior, but a continued state of opposition entered into willingly.” It is true, that so long as a person doubts and mocks the Holy Ghost, they are not in a position of repentance and belief to receive this precious gift. But to imagine that such a person has committed a sin which can never be forgiven and washed away by the blood of Jesus at repentance and baptism in His name, is to limit the power of atonement. Reform theology believes in limited atonement, but Apostolics believe that the blood of Jesus provides atonement for every person who sees the blood applied in the new birth process. Satan himself is the biggest champion of the “unpardonable sin,” and he accuses every believer of having committed a sin that can never be forgiven. He is a liar and the father of lies. Preachers have a responsibility to preach hope rather than damnation. We should not do the devil’s business for him. Macleod has done us a service by his thoughtful interpretation of such

difficult passages from the book of Hebrews.

Dr. Jesse Galindo again focuses our attention upon the revival among Hispanics with his bilingual article in “Stretching the Field.” Look for the Five C’s in Stanley Hopkins’ submission from the Evangelist’s Council. In “Because I Knocked”, a Guest Article by one of Pentecost’s hardest working pastors’ wives, Sis. Shaye Spell touches our heart with a story about the closest mission field. Bro. Curtis Noland shares a wonderful report about a deaf conference in our Deaf Ministry section. Pastor Douglas Walker, who usually presents articles digging into the meaning of Hebrew words has jumped into the New Testament with a much-needed explanation of “Early Church Gatherings and the Theology of Growth.” The ever-practical Pastor Billy Chapman shares how to change the dynamics of your church in a positive way in “Messy Revival.” In the Family Section, Sis. Beth Baus offers hope in her article entitled “Singing in the Dark.” Read about Bible Quizzing in Jeff Mercer’s WPF Bible Quizzing report. Wilson University shares the exciting report of a new Business as Mission (BAM) Certificate as described on page 37. Get to know some of our missionaries, as Global Missions highlights them over the next several issues. Last but not least is Chairman Nathaniel Urshan’s encouraging message about the abiding presence of the Lord with us in every situation.

Be blessed as you read this Summer Edition of Together Magazine. 



Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world...



Nathaniel Urshan
Executive Chairman

We rarely focus on Matthew 28:20. As apostolic believers we deal extensively with 28:19. It is quoted, explained, and parsed every day, and rightly so. Yet verse 20 can feel distant, almost overlooked. It is here, however, that we find the answer to the modern Christian's loneliness and malaise.

The call to preach the gospel and make disciples of all nations stirs genuine passion. We charge forward armed with Scripture and fresh fire from the latest conference. Yet we quickly discover that Satan does not yield ground easily. The battle is fierce, and the ancient enmity of Genesis 3:15 boils and foams around us.

It is in this clash that isolation often sets in. Loneliness looms large. The man or woman of God can feel as though they are walking through a deep, dark crevasse, hand in hand with their spouse, small children in tow. All this while standing seemingly alone for truth in a hostile world. Missionaries far from home ache for familiar faces. Home missionaries labor in their own cities yet still feel disconnected. Children feel the weight of the apostolic banner, often lacking friends who share their convictions.

I call to mind the early days in both home and foreign missions. The world I once knew seemed impossibly distant, while the culture I entered daily could be cold or openly hostile. It was in those seasons that Jesus' words in Matthew 28:20 became my lifeline. In the dark, early-morning hours of prayer, golden shafts of encouragement would break through. I felt a profound connection with the great heroes of faith who had labored before me in lonely places and won mighty victories. Most of them

began small and alone, yet discovered their Redeemer was never far away.

This promise is no mere postscript to the Great Commission; it is its sustaining heartbeat. Jesus did not say, "Go, and I will check on you later." He declared His continuous, abiding presence. The original language carries the force of covenant companionship, "Emmanuel, God with us," not only at Bethlehem but in every marketplace, mud pit, midnight hour, and moment of unanswered support letters.

Scripture bears this out repeatedly. Paul and Silas sang in the Philippian jail. Elijah, convinced he alone remained, learned God had reserved seven thousand. Moses stood at the burning bush, reluctant and stuttering, yet was sent with the assurance that the great I AM would be with him. God's greatest works are rarely birthed in applause and success; they are forged in the furnace of felt aloneness where dependence on Him deepens.

For the missionary mother wiping tears in a foreign kitchen, for the home missions pastor preaching to modest crowds, for the young believer choosing holiness over popularity and eating lunch alone, your great King sits beside you. His presence is not a fleeting emotion but a covenant reality. He abides with you in the car rides between appointments, the quiet evenings, and the hospital waiting rooms.

This truth does not always remove the ache, but it does reframe it. What feels like abandonment becomes something different, sacred ground, where intimacy with Christ is perfected.

So, press on, dear laborer. The harvest is still white, the night is coming, and the One who called you has sworn by His own name: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." That is not distant theology. That is your daily companionship. And it makes all the difference. **T**

*What feels like abandonment becomes
something different, sacred ground,
where intimacy with Christ is perfected.*

UNDERSTANDING THE PROPOSAL PROCESS OF THE COMBINED COUNCIL

One of the strengths of the Worldwide Pentecostal Fellowship is the way its leadership bodies work in tandem. The General Council (GC) and the Executive Council (EC) are not competing entities, but complementary ones. Their collaboration finds its clearest expression in the work of the Combined Council, where ideas are developed, refined, and ultimately decided.

To provide clarity for our constituents, here is a straightforward look at how that process works.

Where Proposals Begin

Every meaningful decision starts with a proposal, and those proposals can originate from two places.

The General Council has the ability to identify needs, form teams, and develop ideas independently. This allows for grassroots insight and broad participation across the fellowship.

At the same time, the Executive Council, through its Chairman, may identify key initiatives and assign them to the General Council for development. In this way, vision and direction from the Executive Council are strengthened by the collaborative work of the General Council.

Who Presents the Proposal

When a proposal is ready, it is brought before the Combined Council.

Both the Chairman of the Executive Council and the Speaker of the General Council are authorized to present proposals. Either may guide the room by opening discussion or sensing when the body is nearing a point of decision.

This shared responsibility ensures that proposals are both clearly communicated and carefully considered.

Who Calls the Motion

While both leaders may present and facilitate discussion, there is a clear distinction when it comes to formal action.

Only the Chairman of the Executive Council, or a designated representative, calls for the actual motion and recognizes the second.

This preserves order and clarity, ensuring that the process remains consistent and properly governed.

The Role of Discussion

Once a proposal is presented, it is opened to the Combined Council for discussion.

This is not a formality. It is a vital part of the process. Questions are asked, perspectives are shared, and clarification is sought. The goal is not speed, but understanding. A well-informed council makes better decisions.

When a Proposal Needs More Time

Not every proposal is ready for immediate action.

If concerns arise or further development is needed, a proposal may be tabled until the next Combined Council meeting. However, this is not a way to indefinitely delay decisions. A tabled proposal must be addressed at the following meeting, ensuring both diligence and momentum.

How Decisions Are Made

When discussion has run its course and the body is prepared, the Chairman calls for a motion.

A motion and a second are required before the proposal moves to a vote. At that point, the Combined Council renders its decision. That decision stands as final unless it is formally reconsidered under established rules.

Why This Matters

This process is more than structure. It reflects a deliberate balance.

The Executive Council provides direction and authority.

The General Council brings collaboration and development.

The Combined Council ensures unity in decision-making.

Together, they create a system that values both leadership and voice, both order and participation.

And that is the goal, not just to make decisions, but to make them well, together. 



Kevin Bradford
Bakersfield, CA
*Speaker of the
General Council*

PEAK



Zach Wells
Jena, LA

YOUTH MINISTRY

Is there a better time of year than the summer?? Campmeetings, Youth Camps, Hope Corps Intensive Training Weeks, PEAK Youth Conference. Almost every week of the summer is filled with opportunities to be a part of something life-changing! We will together expend physical and financial resources to facilitate structures where God's kingdom will break into the lives of those who are following us. This time of year calls to mind Paul's exclamation to the Corinthian church in 2 Corinthians 2:15, "I will gladly spend and be spent for you..." Resources will be tapped, stretched, and synchronized across our fellowship for young people to be involved in some of the most wonderful times of their lives. To every pastor, leader, and parent who will expend yourself and your energy and resources for any purpose to benefit the youth of the apostolic church, I salute and thank you! What we are able to do together is a testament to the willingness of faithful people to invest in the kingdom of God.

By the time you read this, youth camps will be in near or full swing in your region. I cannot express the importance of these special times of the year. I've said this before here probably, God does things at youth camps that we don't see in other efforts. With my whole heart, I encourage parents and pastors, whatever you have to do to get your kids to a youth camp, it will be greatly rewarded. Young ministers, I implore you to be involved in the work of a youth camp. No other structure creates the opportunities for real lifelong influence upon young people like youth camps. Don't just attend the services, sign up to help in the dorms, cafeterias, and recreation efforts. Time and time again I have watched the ministers who expend themselves at youth camps continue to find doors open in ministry and anointing. Sign up today to be on staff at your

regional camp. You'll be exhausted at the end of the week, but the fulfillment you'll experience is hard to replicate anywhere else. Pastors, find an opportunity to invest in a youth camp this summer. Give financially, find a way to attend, and be involved in whatever capacity you can find. There really is nothing like it.

When you read this, PEAK will be less than two months away. Register today at peak2026.com or scan the QR code in this magazine. Register early this year to avoid the rush. We are launching a new registration system that we hope will eliminate lines, reduce congestion, and shorten wait times to get into the Mabee Center. Everything will be digital this year, but there is a substantial savings to register early, so register today!

Business owners, pastors, and ministers, this year we are introducing the opportunity to become a financial sponsor for PEAK Conference. Benefits like reserved parking, and backstage access will be included in this opportunity. Consider being a foundation or architect sponsor and help us make this PEAK and future ones the best they can be. This year's PEAK is lining up to be the best one yet! Our speakers are praying and seeking the mind of God to preach to us like never before. Musicians and singers are practicing as we write this to lead us into the presence of God and to experience greater things together!

The summer and its wonderful but demanding schedule is now in full effect. Let us remember as Paul wrote, let us gladly spend and be spent for those we love and those we may never meet; to see the great power of God revealed in their life. I'll see you at a camp somewhere soon and hope to see all of you at PEAK. 2026 July 15-17 at the Mabee Center in Tulsa, OK!

To God be the Glory!  



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SCAN TO REGISTER

Singing in the DARK



Beth Baus
Elk Grove, CA

She sat in the car just a little longer than usual. The engine was off, but she wasn't ready to go inside. Just a few years ago, life looked different. Her family sat together in church. Her children raised their hands in worship. There was laughter, hope, and a quiet confidence that they were all walking in truth together. But somewhere along the way, things changed. Now, one child no longer goes to church. Conversations feel strained. There are choices being made that she never imagined her family would face. And beneath it all is a quiet, aching question: *"Where did I go wrong?"*

As a counselor, I have sat across from many parents who carry this same burden. It often doesn't begin with anger—it begins with shame. A kind of silent shame that whispers: "If I had done things differently..." What will people think?"

So they sit in church, smile when spoken to, and carry a story no one else can see. But the truth is, many families are quietly walking through their own version of this story. Because sometimes, life doesn't unfold the way we prayed it would. Sometimes children walk away. Sometimes marriages fall apart. Sometimes healing comes for others... but not for the one you love most.

And in those moments, faith can feel less like a celebration—and more like a choice. Scripture gently reminds us in Isaiah 55:8–9: *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your*

ways my ways, saith the Lord." Those words can be comforting... and incredibly hard. Because if we're honest, most of us have a picture in our mind of how God *should* work. We believe in healing. We believe in restoration. We believe in salvation for our families. And when it doesn't happen the way we expected—or in the timing we hoped—it can leave us with unanswered questions we don't know what to do with.



There is a moment in Scripture that has always been striking to me. Paul and Silas, beaten and thrown into prison, were sitting in the dark with their feet bound. And yet, in that place, the Bible says in Acts 16:25: *"At midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God..."* Not after they were delivered. Not once everything made sense. But in the middle of the darkness. They sang. That kind of faith is not loud or polished. It doesn't always look like victory. Sometimes it looks like a quiet prayer whispered through tears. Sometimes it sounds like a trembling voice saying, *"God, I still trust You... even here."*

As a therapist, I often tell clients that unresolved pain has a way of isolating us. We begin to withdraw, not just from people—but sometimes even from God. But there is something powerful about staying connected to Him, even when we don't understand. Especially then.

You may be carrying disappointment today. You may be grieving the family you thought you

There is no perfect family.

would have. You may be holding the weight of a prodigal child. You may be wondering why healing came for someone else—but not for your loved one.

And if we're honest, those questions don't always have easy answers. But faith was never about having all the answers. It was about holding on to the One who does. Scripture gives us this simple but profound reminder in Galatians 6:9: *"Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."* Sometimes "not fainting" looks like continuing to pray for that child. Sometimes it looks like choosing not to give up on your marriage. Sometimes it simply looks like getting up, going to church, and lifting your hands even when your heart feels heavy.

There is no perfect family.

Only families in process. Families learning. Families growing. Families trusting God through seasons they never expected. And in the middle of it all, God is still present. He is still working—even when we don't see it, even when we don't feel it, even when the story isn't unfolding the way we hoped.

So, if you find yourself in a dark season today... Keep praying. Keep trusting. Keep showing up. And when you can, even if it's quiet, even if it's through tears—keep singing. Because God is still writing your story. And He still knows how to make something beautiful...even from the broken notes. [T](#)



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NOBODY SEES THE EMPTY PEWS



Philip Booker
Rialto, CA

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Most people only see the final product. They see the loud game, the screaming kids, the action song motions that easily qualify as cardio, the puppet with the concerning accent, and the object lesson involving fire, balloons, dry ice, or all three simultaneously. They see the altar call where kids begin praying and crying and somebody's 7-year-old suddenly starts speaking in tongues while another child accidentally falls off a chair in the background. That's the part people see. What they do not see is the preparation.

They do not see the teacher sitting at the kitchen table on Tuesday night rewriting an introduction because it "just doesn't sound right." They do not see the volunteer awkwardly practicing a skit in the mirror while brushing their teeth. They do not see somebody testing an object lesson in their garage while praying the smoke detector doesn't go off and alert the entire neighborhood. They do not see the stacks of notes, the rewrites, the practice runs, the panic, or the prayer, but all of this... the preparation, matters far more than many people realize.

I was listening to Alex Honnold talk about free soloing El Capitan, and the whole thing was, quite frankly, terrifying. For the uninitiated, free soloing means climbing thousands of feet in the air with absolutely no rope whatsoever. No harness or buddy. No backup plan of any kind. One mistake and you are now a cautionary tale discussed in hushed whispers.

What makes it even crazier is that years before El Capitan, Alex climbed Half Dome with very little preparation. During that climb, he reached a certain point, a tiny foothold, and realized something almost unbelievable. He wasn't sure the foothold would actually hold him. Here he was, thousands of feet in the air, without a rope or any support, wondering if his next step was about to become his

last. Thankfully, the foothold held, but just barely.

This experience shook him deeply, and understandably so. Everything about that climb had involved uncertainty, guesswork, and improvisation. He had been reacting instead of operating from preparation. He was an unbelievably good climber, world-class even, but even the greatest require preparation, and this particular climb shook him so badly he nearly walked away from the sport entirely.

Years later, when he climbed El Capitan, everything had changed. He had prepared this time. He had climbed that mountain so many times with ropes that he knew every inch of it: every crack, every handhold, every foothold. There was no guessing anymore. He had practiced the route endlessly. The whole climb, thousands of moves in totality, was memorized perfectly. One difficult section called "the crux" required an incredibly specific kick and body movement that demanded so much flexibility he reportedly spent nearly a year stretching and training for that one move alone. One year for one move, and most of us panic if a lesson takes more than 20 minutes to prepare.

At another point, he and a friend climbed over 1,500 feet carrying empty backpacks just so they could remove tiny stones from a crack in the mountain because those pebbles might interfere with a grip or fall on someone below. Think about that level of detail. They cleaned... a... mountain and put the debris in backpacks they had to carry back down. There was a foothold about 500 feet up the route that had terrified him on previous climbs but this time, he had already tested it repeatedly. He had scouted the surrounding rock for hundreds of feet in every direction. He knew exactly what would hold him and what would not, and because of all that preparation, he later said he felt almost no fear during the actual climb.

Preparation took the fear away.

So how does this apply to children's ministry? Far too many times I have walked into class unprepared and then acted genuinely shocked when things descended into chaos. I have skimmed the lesson Saturday night at 9:43 PM thinking I already knew the story well enough then Sunday morning arrives and suddenly the object lesson doesn't make sense, the transitions are clunky, the kids are restless, the volunteers are confused, and one child is now upside down beneath a table making dinosaur noises. And then I try to call it a discipline issue, but many times it is not that at all. Sometimes it is a preparation issue. A well-prepared lesson solves a shocking number of classroom problems before they ever begin. Student engagement is your first line of defense, because if you are not engaging them, they will engage themselves, and children are frighteningly creative when left mentally unsupervised.

The best teachers plan ahead. They do not start preparing Saturday night. They start Sunday afternoon, right after class, while everything is still fresh. What worked? What bombed? What connected? Where did you lose them? If you wait until Thursday, you will have forgotten half of it. I run a website called **ApostolicSundaySchool.com**. It has hundreds of object lessons, games, skits, puppet shows, action songs, and more. The site tracks its own traffic, and I noticed a disturbing trend. The single busiest hour on that website, a Sunday school preparation website, consistently fell somewhere between 8 and 9 PM on Saturday night. Saturday night. The night before. Oof.

There is something called the Red Car Effect. The moment someone mentions red cars, you suddenly see them everywhere, not because there are more of them, but because your brain has been pointed in that direction. Preparation works the same way. When you spend all week thinking about your lesson, your brain starts gathering material automatically. A random conversation becomes an illustration. A scripture suddenly connects to something you read earlier in the week. An object lesson idea surfaces while wandering through Home Depot buying something you absolutely do not need but are now deeply convinced could somehow illustrate repentance.

Preparation tunes your mind toward Sunday but if the first time you think seriously about your

lesson is Saturday night while fighting a printer that has chosen that exact moment to run out of ink, you miss all of that. You may only get one shot at some of these kids. Some children only come occasionally, brought by bus workers who fought through genuine chaos just to get them there. Every lesson matters.

My dad preached his first real message at his local church and people were amazed. They assumed it came naturally, that he was simply gifted that way. What they did not know was that he had already preached that same message three full times before anyone ever heard it. Three nights in a row, alone in the sanctuary. Nobody shouting, nobody clapping, nobody playing softly on the piano behind him. Just empty pews.

That story forces a difficult question. How prepared do we actually want to be? Are we willing to preach to empty pews for an hour, three nights in a row? Are we willing to practice an object lesson repeatedly before trying it in front of children? Because some of us, and by "some of us" I absolutely include myself, have tested an object lesson live in front of kids for the very first time and things did not go well. Preparation matters. Practice giving the entire lesson out loud at home, not just the fun visual part, but the actual teaching. Practice the altar call, because there is a massive difference between having ideas in your head and communicating them effectively out loud.

God honors preparation, not because preparation replaces prayer. It absolutely does not. David trusted God, but he still practiced with the sling and the five wise virgins prepared their lamps before the midnight cry came. Preparation has always been part of God's plan. Some of the greatest moments in ministry stand on top of hundreds of invisible moments nobody else saw. The prayer, the practice, the late nights, the frustration, the running from store to store because nobody carries that one specific item you need. Kids may only see 60 minutes, but those 60 minutes should be built on something solid, and the confidence people see and wish they had is almost always built in private, long before anyone showed up. 

A well-prepared lesson solves a shocking number of classroom problems before they ever begin.

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EARLY CHURCH GATHERINGS AND THE **THEOLOGY OF GROWTH**

Why does *where* the early believers had church matter? Was it in a house or a church? Was it a small group setting or a large one? The reason these questions matter is that they directly affect what one believes about church growth, vision and implementation, ecclesiology, missiology, and much more. Settling on an answer to the above question is the penultimate concern; the ultimate consideration is what one does with the answer. The answer to this single question will shape a wide variety of outlooks in a Christian's life. The answer could lead one to believe in an expansive, far-reaching, ever-growing church vision, or to justify a lack of vision and a shrinking church in retreat. The best case is that the answer leads one to a more accurate representation of God's church, advancing the vision of God's kingdom. In a worst-case scenario, the answer can become a tool of deconstructionism to assail the modern church and de-legitimize the methodology of a vibrant church.

Debates about early Christian gatherings often focus on their size and setting. Some claim the early church met only in small, home settings, shaping ecclesiological views and critiquing larger assemblies. However, the New Testament shows that the early church met in diverse settings: homes, temple courts, synagogues, rented halls, and open spaces. Examples include:

- In upper rooms and rented spaces (Acts 1:13; Acts 19:9)
- In the Temple courts for public teaching (Acts 2:46; Acts 5:42)

- In homes (Acts 2:42–46; 5:42; 20:20; Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19; Philemon 1:2)
- In synagogues (Acts 17:1–3, 10–11, 17; 18:4; 19:8)
- In open natural spaces (Acts 16:13–14)

Both small and large spaces were used simultaneously, with a high degree of functional oversight and leadership, demonstrated by a robust ecclesiology. Few questions influence modern ecclesiology any more than the question of where and how the earliest Christians gathered. Many use the exclusive “house church” ideology to delegitimize strong apostolic leadership and to argue for historically small churches and spiritualizing weak leadership models. These issues directly shape beliefs about church growth, leadership, mission, and vision. This question is not merely academic; it is ideological, and conclusions drawn from this debate frequently inform positions on pastoral legitimacy, institutional authority, missional scope, and the value—or danger—of numerical growth.

The book of Acts offers a multi-modal pattern with which the church facilitated growth. The early church was a large and growing organism that required leadership, structure, development, discipleship, and the collection and distribution of money, all of which were rooted in a Hebrew construct. The New Testament followed a pattern closely aligned with Jewish synagogues. These buildings were an integral part of the early church's life and remained so as it grew and spread. Jesus used the synagogue as a launching point in his ministry (Luke 4:16–21),

and Paul also used synagogues in his evangelistic endeavors (Acts 17:1-3).

The church of Acts was no “small group” movement. Scholarship varies on how large the Jerusalem church was, but most place it in the 30,000-50,000-member range.¹ The church was rapidly growing, and the apostles used their authority to organize and oversee the growth of the church. Attempts to make the house-church model the preferred model misunderstands both the historical narrative and the theological themes of Luke’s writings. Modern ecclesiological debates often proceed from a false dichotomy: small gatherings are portrayed as authentic and biblical, while large gatherings are viewed as later institutional distortions. This assumption is often reinforced by selected scriptures, such as Acts 2:42-46, but is dishonest because it ignores the context. The deconstructionist who uses the “proof text” that states they were “breaking bread from house to house” ignores that they were “continuing daily with one accord in the temple.” The famed temple in Jerusalem was a monstrosity of a complex. Crowds thronged the area, and many would gather there to sing, worship, pray, and teach (Acts 5:42).

Other meetings in the temple must also have been common; it provided the largest available open space in Jerusalem and a natural place for teaching. The massive Jerusalem temple, easily one of the largest in the empire, could host vast crowds in its courts and surrounding areas (e.g., the gallery in Jos. War 2.344). The Temple Mount comprised 1,527,920 square feet, that is, about 35 acres.²

The temple courts were public spaces accommodating thousands. Their use indicates that the earliest believers did not equate spiritual authenticity with intimacy or obscurity. Based on the daily teaching and public gatherings of the early church, one could not make the case that the house church was the ideal (or even preferred) model without doing violence to the text.

The spatial choices demonstrated the early church’s passion to assemble regardless of the building. These spatial choices were practical and not theological. A case can be made that most synagogues began in private homes, and once enough funds were secured, they bought the house for teaching and study. It took many years for observant, God-fearing Jews to raise

their status to the point where they could acquire or build their own stand-alone synagogues.

Like meetings in the temple, the house meetings undoubtedly reflect authentic tradition from the earliest period. The house church model preceded Paul’s church-planting ministry; the Roman church, which he did not found, used it; synagogues often started in homes; and there was no other practical place to meet in difficult times.³

House meetings were common in the early church when seeking adequate space for teaching and discipling. One must consider that the church would not have had the freedom to use these public spaces or rent space during times of persecution, making house churches or natural spaces the preferred places to meet. It would be a grave mistake to believe that the church was more authentic or that a small(er) group was in some way a spiritual preference. Whenever the early church had the opportunity to assemble in a larger venue, they readily did so to evangelize and expand the church’s influence. Paul taught daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus (Acts 19:9), a rented public facility distinct from both synagogue and home. These settings demonstrate that early Christian leaders did not restrict gatherings to domestic environments. Functionality, access, and mission guided the early church on where to meet. The use of rented halls undermines claims that informal or domestic spaces carry inherent theological superiority. House churches functioned as vital places of fellowship and pastoral care (Acts 2:46; Romans 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19) but according to Luke this was in addition to a larger public gathering (Acts 20:20). The idea of house church as an exclusive or exhaustive expression of church life is entirely absent from scripture, what is more authentically biblical is that these house churches existed alongside larger public gatherings, serving to compliment and not compete with that model.

One historian warns of the dangers of idealizing the early church. “The ideal picture of the community and its gathering is sketched in Acts 2:42–47. Again, one must attempt to discover the everyday reality behind the idealizing portrait.”⁴ The early church was a vibrant, dynamic, and exponentially growing church that had a strong sense of leadership. The biblical record never idealizes small group gatherings



Douglas Walker
Calgary, Canada

When the language of “primitive Christianity” is employed to undermine vision, resist growth, or erode leadership authority, it ceases to be a pursuit of historical authenticity and becomes a ghastly grasp at smallness and an embrace of confusion.

as a more spiritual or authentic model. Growth is consistently depicted as a sign of divine blessing and effective mission (Acts 2:41; 4:4; 6:7). Often, when this argument comes up, it is in the spirit of a critique of the modern Christian church, either its size or its ecclesiology. In the early church, leadership development, organizational adjustments, and administrative changes occur precisely as the church grows (Acts 6:1–6; 14:23). Growth is not portrayed as a threat to spiritual health but as its goal. Luke, in Acts, offers no indication that large public gatherings or strong, organized leadership models compromised authenticity or stagnated the spiritual growth of the early church. Appeals to mimic the early church in the exactness of spatial proportion are often a tool of deconstruction and miss the necessity that was the reality of either a fledgling or persecuted church. When the language of “primitive Christianity” is employed to undermine vision, resist growth, or

erode leadership authority, it ceases to be a pursuit of historical authenticity and becomes a ghastly grasp at smallness and an embrace of confusion. What activated the early church was the power of Jesus Christ and His kingdom, not size or location. The modern church must mirror that Apostolic flexibility and expansion. Based on this author’s estimation of the early church and their desire to expand the kingdom of God and His church, large corporate gatherings, and revivals that are city-impacting, are not departures from biblical Christianity – they are among its earliest manifestations. [1]

ENDNOTES

1. https://jgrchj.net/volume7/JGRChJ7-9_Keener.pdf
2. Keener, Craig, S., Acts, An Exegetical Commentary, Vol.3 (Grand Rapids, MI, Baker Academic, 2014) p. 1030.
3. Ibid, p. 1031
4. Conzelman, Hans, History of Primitive Christianity, Abingdon Press, Nashville, TN, (1973), p. 51

CALIFORNIA DEAF CONFERENCE

One Gospel, One Mission



Curtis Noland
Elk Grove, CA

DEAF MINISTRY

I am excited to share a wonderful report from our annual California Deaf Conference, held at The Rock Church in Elk Grove, California. The services were powerful, and many lives were touched, transformed, and inspired to return home and expand the Kingdom of God within the deaf community in their cities. Deaf attendees and sign language interpreters alike were stirred to fulfill the call to soul-winning and to pursue new victories that God has for deaf ministries across the country.

During the conference, we celebrated two baptisms in the name of Jesus Christ and one individual receiving the infilling of the Holy Ghost, speaking in other tongues in obedience to Peter’s message in Acts 2:38. Just before his baptism, one deaf man approached me with astonishment in his eyes and shared that when he lifted his hands to pray, his lips began to move uncontrollably. The two who were baptized came from different cities and were brought to the conference through the ministry of church sign language interpreters. Revival!

Throughout the conference, both in day sessions and evening services, deaf and hearing believers worshiped and ministered together with a shared passion to reach one of the most under-reached demographics in our world today: the deaf community. While statistics may highlight this need, the greater truth is that we are positioned for a great harvest, and that harvest is now. The California Deaf Conference stood as a powerful example of deaf and hearing laboring together in a field that is truly ripe for harvest.

Mark 16:15 commands us, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.” Now is the time for revival! [1]



2026 WPF BIBLE QUIZZING

Pentecostal Doctrine

Across the Worldwide Pentecostal Fellowship, a powerful movement is sweeping through homes, churches, and regions as families respond to the biblical call of Deuteronomy 6 to teach the Word diligently to their children. What began as a simple commitment to Scripture has grown into one of the most vibrant children and youth ministries in our fellowship. This year alone, more than 1,000 participants—from eager 3-year-old Cadets to seasoned Senior competitors, from dedicated Coaches to steadfast Officials—have united with one purpose: to hide the Word of God in the hearts of our children and young people and let it shape their lives.

This year's study material takes quizzers deep into the heart of Pentecostal Doctrine. Rather than memorizing verses in book order, students explore Scripture by theme—The Word of God, the Oneness of God, the Identity of Jesus Christ, the Gospel, Repentance, Water Baptism in Jesus' Name, the Infilling of the Holy Ghost, Holiness, and Christian Living. They will encounter foundational truths such as "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD," the call to repentance in Acts 2:38, the revelation of Jesus as the mighty God, and the promise of Spirit-empowerment in Acts 1:8. These verses give quizzers more than memory work—they provide a biblical framework for understanding who God is, how He saves, and how His people are called to live.

Churches across North America are discovering that WPF Bible Quizzing is far more than a competition—it is a discipleship engine. As quizzers commit Scripture to memory, they also develop habits that will serve them for life: daily devotion, disciplined study, teamwork, and perseverance. Whether celebrating

a victory or learning from a loss, quizzers grow in confidence and character. Most importantly, we continually witness the Word of God coming alive in their hearts as they develop a deeper walk with God.

WPF Bible Quizzing immerses quizzers in Scripture in a way few ministries can. Hour after hour, they learn and review the Word until it becomes part of them. This year's material—filled with verses about truth, salvation, holiness, and the power of the Holy Ghost—invites quizzers to experience the Bible not just as text, but as life! Our prayer is that every quizzer will encounter that life-giving power as they study.

Momentum is building across the fellowship. New churches are joining, returning churches are expanding their teams, and regions are reporting record attendance. With anticipation rising, we look toward the 2026 National Tournament—expected to be one of the largest in WPF BQ history. Nationals is more than a competition; it is a celebration of what God is doing in the lives of our young people as they boldly declare His Word. We welcome you to join us this year.

We invite every pastor, parent, and young person to be part of this growing movement. Whether you are launching a new team or strengthening an existing ministry, WPF Bible Quizzing offers resources, training, and support to help you succeed. Visit www.wpfbiblequizzing.com and fill out the contact form to get connected. Regional Finals and Nationals dates are posted online—we encourage you to attend, cheer on our quizzers, and witness firsthand the impact of the Word of God in this generation. **T**



Jeff Mercer
Santa Maria, CA

WPF BIBLE QUIZZING

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OPMENT – **CALEB ADAMS** | THURSDAY EVENING · GLOBAL MISSIONS – **MYLES YOUNG**
ONATHAN ALVEAR | FRIDAY EVENING – **COLTON CARROLL**

An illustration of two hands shaking in a firm grip. The hand on the left is wearing a gold-colored suit sleeve, and the hand on the right is wearing a blue suit sleeve. They are positioned in front of two large puzzle pieces: a light blue one on the left and a yellow one on the right. The puzzle pieces have white circular cutouts.

THE STRENGTH BESIDE YOU

To be alive in this end-time hour is an honor without peer—and a responsibility we were never meant to carry alone. We are especially blessed to be evangelists and ministers in this hour, reaping an end-time harvest for the Kingdom.

The preacher gives us compelling and timeless insight by simply telling us, “Two are better than one.” A well-known proverb says, “If you want to go fast, go alone; but if you want to go far, go together.”

If we are honest, we all live in the tension between wanting to see things happen quickly and achieve a great Kingdom impact that can seem far away at times. I would submit that the answer to this tension is not an either/or scenario. Rather, we can go fast and far. The times we are living in demand it.

Jeremiah captures this idea well: “If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses?” (Jeremiah 12:5). As the final curtain of time closes, our desire for the harvest increases, our focus sharpens, and the weight of Kingdom matters grows heavier. We have a great distance to run and a short time to get there. The days have indeed been shortened.

Paul instructs us: “And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you” (1 Thessalonians 5:12).

Ecclesiastes 4:9
Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labour.

The simple truth is this: the distance I run hinges upon who I am running with. In life and ministry, I have found that there are five people we need to help us reach our goal: a Confronter, a Challenger, a Counselor, a Comforter, and a Celebrator.

A Confronter is one who is willing to speak to us without fear or favor. This is the person who tells us the hard truths we need to hear, when we need to hear them, and who values our purpose in the Kingdom above their personal relationship with us. They are willing to break decorum and may even call you by your name, not your title.

Consider Nathan. Second Samuel 12:1 tells us, “The Lord sent Nathan unto David...” A true Confronter is always sent by God. This person may be an elder, pastor or a spouse. When Nathan tells David, “Thou art the man,” David is brought to a defining moment that redirects the course of his life. The wise man wrote in Proverbs 27:5, “Open rebuke is better than secret love.” And verse 6 continues, “Faithful are the wounds of a friend...”

Enter the Challenger.

To go the distance, we cannot be without a Challenger—someone who has been where we are and has come through with victory. Simply said, this is someone further along in life and ministry who challenges us to be better and more effective in the Kingdom.

Jim Rohn said it this way: “We are the average of the five people we spend the most time with.” If that is true, being the biggest fish in the pond is not a good thing.

A Counselor is someone who walks with us, understands us, and knows when to give us a hearing rather than a verdict. They seek to understand our perspective while also recognizing dynamics we may not have considered. Their presence and listening ear help unburden our minds and souls. Proverbs 27:9 reminds us, "Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel."

Ministry includes quiet truths that are not often discussed: misunderstandings, hurts, and wounds. When left unaddressed, they can take root as bitterness and affect many. In these moments, a Comforter is essential. The tragedy of ministry without one is this: you will expect the one who hurt you to heal you.

A Comforter is a gift. They do not simply listen to our fears; they help us find God in our present circumstance while reminding us of His promises for the future. A perfect picture is found in Jonathan's words to David: "Fear not: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel..." In essence, he was saying, "I see where you are now, but this is not how things will always be. God has a plan, and I will stand with you through it."

Finally, we all need someone who refuses to let us remain in a low place. We need someone with whom we can share our victories, big or small, knowing they will celebrate with us.

As ministers, if we are not careful, the adversary would love for competition to replace celebration. We all need a Celebrator. The church in Antioch experienced a great revival. Acts 11 records, "And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord." When the church in Jerusalem heard about it, they sent Barnabas—a Celebrator. When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain faithful to the Lord with purpose of heart.

So here is a question we must ask ourselves: how far will we go, and how fast will we get there? The answer is not one we hold alone, but one shaped by those beside us.

In this end-time hour, we do not have the luxury of choosing between speed and distance. Two are better than one. Let us reap a great harvest—together—running faster and going further for the Kingdom. [T](#)



Stanley Hopkins
Evangelist

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The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise. Proverbs 11:30

“There is no issue, or hardship of the local church that six new families wouldn’t fix.”

—Bishop Jesse Parker

How quickly can you add six new families to your church? How would that change the dynamic of your church? How would that change the focus of your church?

Three P’s that hold us back:

- **Procrastination.** Procrastination is the graveyard where opportunities are buried. The failure to do the little things every day will cripple your efforts to achieve your goals. “Start by doing what is necessary; then do what’s possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible.”—Francis of Assisi. What’s stopping us from adding to the church? The Bible doesn’t say there is a problem with the harvest, but rather a problem with workers for the harvest. It’s time to work!
- **Perfectionism.** “Anything worth doing is worth doing messy.” —Zig Ziglar. Messy success is far better than perfect mediocrity. Some are falling into a trap of “comparing ourselves among ourselves” (2 Cor. 10:12). You can’t say, “Well, if I can just have the production this brother has, or if I had the music team this church has...” Brother, you just gotta get **messy** sometimes! Now, I’m not promoting laziness. Nor do I feel laziness is the problem in our movement. On the contrary, I see men working very hard and being very efficient, but not being very effective. Efficiency is being busy doing things right. Effectiveness is being busy doing the right thing. You may say, “Bro Chapman, we’ve got a building, a sign, chairs, and we keep it all looking good,” and that’s great. But, when it’s time for battle, put the broom and the lawn mower up and get to the battle stations. How silly would it look to see a sailor mopping the deck in the middle of the battle?! We must learn to balance our time. There is time for efficient busy work (i.e. cleaning, preparing, etc.). However, we must take time for effective soul-winning work as well.
- **Paralysis Analysis.** I heard a story once of a mountain climber scaling the side of one of the world’s tallest mountains. As often happens on these mountains a fierce storm blew in without warning. Visibility went to zero. Literally, he could not see his own hands. Here he was climbing the face of an inverted cliff hundreds of feet from the foot of the mountain. He slipped and began to fall. Several safety measures failed before his fall was finally stopped. He dangled in mid-air, unable to touch the rocky cliffside or see how far he had fallen. As the night sky grew darker, he had a choice to make: take his knife from his leg sheath and cut the rope falling to the unknown, or hang there and freeze to death. The story goes that when the sun broke the horizon the next morning and rescue teams went looking for him, He was easily found. For hanging just 4 feet from the softly packed snow was his frozen body. The human mind abhors the unknown. We too can choose to die where we are rather than to fall into the unknown. I want to encourage you church builder--or maybe I should challenge you, fail forward. Don’t get stuck in just planning but never doing.

In closing, I share this with you. To win souls, is to simply talk to lots of people every day. Here’s what is so exciting about that --- **there are lots of people!** 



Billy Chapman
Gastonia, NC

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

Few passages in the New Testament have generated as much theological debate as Hebrews 6:4–6. This passage, along with similar warning passages in Hebrews 10:26–29 and Hebrews 12:14–17, has troubled Christians for centuries. The stark declaration that it is “impossible” for certain people to be renewed again unto repentance raises difficult questions about the nature of apostasy and the limits of grace. Yet we know from scripture that repentance is available for a Christian’s inevitable moral failures. As John lays out in his epistle to Believers, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins” (1 John 1:8–9). Likewise, Paul encourages the Corinthian Church to forgive a man who had fallen into a great moral sin, a sin unknown even among the pagan gentiles, lest that man be “swallowed up with overmuch sorrow” (1 Cor 5:1–2; 2 Cor 2:3:8).

In his recent book, *Impossible to be Restored? Temptation and Warning in the Epistle of Hebrews*: Marcus Mininger offers a different interpretation of this challenging passage that sheds new light on its intended meaning. My typical practice when writing about scripture is to exegete a passage first, then, if pertinent, interact with other authors. But in this case, I believe Mininger’s reading of Hebrews 6 is exceptional enough to warrant a summarization for the reader’s consideration. That said, I am impressed, but not 100% convinced by his reading.

Context

Rather than reading Hebrews 6 primarily through the lens of later theological debates about perseverance and apostasy, Mininger seeks to understand the warning within the broader context of the epistle itself. His approach reveals that the passage is not primarily about individual believers losing their salvation, but about the

temptation facing his audience, the lure to abandon the new covenant and return to the old. In other words, Hebrews is written to Jewish Christians in danger of returning to Judaism. The audience had endured persecution for their faith in the past (10:32–34) and now appears to be facing the prospect of renewed suffering, which has undermined their confidence in the sufficiency of Christ. This is the reason the author goes to great lengths to convince his audience that Jesus is better than all that precedes him.

Laying A Foundation

One of Mininger’s most significant contributions to a reading of Hebrews 6 is his argument that the “milk” metaphor in Hebrews 5:12–14 and the “foundation-laying” language of 6:1 describe two fundamentally different problems, not one. Most scholars have treated these as synonymous, understanding the exhortation in 6:1 as a continuation of the rebuke in 5:12. The audience needs to stop drinking milk (repeating elementary teaching) and move on to solid food (mature doctrine).¹

Mininger challenges this reading on a couple of grounds. The milk-to-meat metaphor, common in contemporary Greek writings, describes a movement from elementary to advanced stages of learning. To re-lay a foundation, however, is not merely revisiting elementary lessons, but tearing down an existing structure and starting over with an entirely different base. Also, the Greek construction in 6:1 uses a hortatory subjunctive (“let us go on unto perfection”) followed by a participial clause (“not laying again the foundation”), and Mininger believes that this Greek construction in the epistle describes two contrasting courses of action.² So what the author of Hebrews is dealing with here is not a failure of his readers to advance in theology, but



James Macleod
Calgary, Canada

the temptation to abandon one foundation, that being Christ, and attempting to build on a different foundation.

To support his view that the author of Hebrews is speaking of a new foundation being laid, Mininger explains that there are three characteristics of foundation-laying in the ancient world.³ First, the most defining characteristic of a foundation is its permanence. This differs from the temporary nature of a milk diet, which only sustains someone until they can eat more substantial food. Second, the foundation determines the essence of the building erected on it. If one changes the foundation, they will change the substance of the building. Finally, confidence in a building is determined by the confidence one has in the foundation. Exchanging your foundation means your confidence is based on something different.

Central to Mininger's argument is his view that two lists appear in Hebrews 6:1b–2 and 6:4–5. The first list contains the foundation the audience is tempted to re-lay, while the second list describes the experiences of those who have been in the new covenant. Items in the first list are more closely associated with the old covenant than the new. “Faith toward God” (πίστεως ἐπὶ θεόν), for example, focuses on God in general rather than on Christ. Similarly, the plural “washings” (βαπτισμῶν)⁴ refers to the multiple ceremonial washings of the Levitical system, which Hebrews elsewhere associates with the old covenant's relative inefficacy (Heb 9:10). “Baptisms” in the plural is never used of Christian Baptism in the New Testament. It is, however, used by Christ to refer to the ceremonial washings of vessels (Mark 7:8).⁵

In contrast, every item in the second list is distinctively connected to the new covenant in

Hebrews. The term “enlightened” (φωτισθέντας) serves to describe the initial entry into the new covenant. The “heavenly gift” connects to the spiritual realities of the new covenant. Participation in the Holy Spirit and tasting “the powers of the age to come” are likewise experiences based on the finished work of Christ at Calvary. These two lists stand in stark contrast. The temptation facing the audience was to leave the foundation of Christ so that they might return to a former foundation.

The idea that there is a “first list” referring to a Jewish foundation is the crux of Mininger's argument. If one doesn't accept this premise, then the rest of Mininger's argument fails. It is worth noting that Treece, in his commentary on Hebrews, would not accept Mininger's view on two lists, noting that “To try to substantiate Jewish culture of the practice of washings...is going beyond that which is essential for correct exegesis.”⁶

The Meaning of “Impossible”

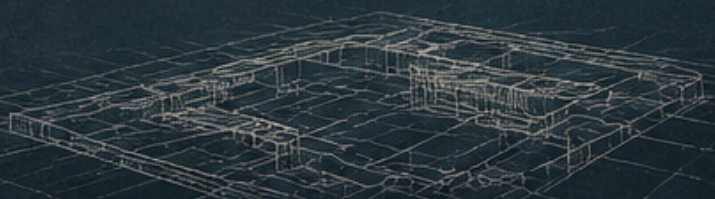
The word “impossible” (ἄδύνατον) in Hebrews 6:4 has posed immense interpretive difficulties. Mininger's own interpretation centers on what he calls “situational change.”⁷ The arrival of the new covenant in Christ has created an irreversible change in the spiritual landscape. The author of Hebrews reinforces this point by noting that if the old covenant was sufficient, there would be no need for a new one to be promised (Heb 8:7). This line of thinking reveals that the impossibility that Hebrews describes is not about an individual committing some kind of unforgivable sin, but rather, the objective nature of the two covenants. The old covenant served its purpose and remains good, but it cannot provide the salvation that only the new covenant in Christ can deliver.

Throughout Hebrews, the author describes situations in which a decisive event initiates an irreversible progression from one place to another, resulting in something that was previously available becoming no longer attainable. The wilderness generation, for example, once had the promise of entering God's rest, but after they refused to enter in because of unbelief, that opportunity was closed to them. In the same way, the audience of Hebrews once lived under the old covenant, but having now been enlightened and having experienced the blessings of the new covenant, the situation has changed irreversibly.

The “impossibility,” therefore, is not primarily about the salvific state of the individual who has fallen away or about God's willingness to forgive. It is about the covenantal situation in which they

“Let us go on unto
perfection, not laying again
the foundation...”

HEBREWS 6:1



find themselves.

We saw earlier that the term ‘repentance’ in Hebrews 6 is used in a particular way, not to speak about remorse for sins in general or about returning to Christ for forgiveness after having fallen away, but instead as the gateway into right standing under the old covenant. Given this meaning for the term ‘repentance’, the logic of the warning about the impossibility of repentance also becomes apparent.⁸

Once a person has been enlightened through the new covenant, one cannot return to the old-covenant system as though they had not been translated into a new spiritual location (Col 1:13). In Mininger’s view, the repentance spoken of in 6:1 and 6:6 – a status-changing move that would transfer a person back to standing under the old covenant – is the specific thing that is impossible. None of this means that one is saved by staying in the old covenant and never moving into the new covenant. The point that the author of Hebrews is making is that the movement between covenants is one-way.

Crucifying the Son of God

The author of Hebrews adds a further dimension to his warning by stating that those who fall away “crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame” (6:6). Within Mininger’s framework, this language becomes more understandable. If the temptation facing the audience is to abandon the new covenant and re-lay a foundation drawn from the old covenant, then this action would be tantamount to treating Christ’s redemptive work as unnecessary or ineffective. It would, in effect, reenact the rejection of Christ that took place at the cross. According to Hebrews, the old covenant was designed to point forward and culminate in the work of Christ. To go back to it would be to side with those who crucified Christ, declaring with one’s actions that the Son of God and his sacrifice are dispensable. So, it is not the sins of an individual that will crucify Christ again. Rather, it is the attempt to return to another sacrificial system, an insufficient one, that has been previously left behind.

Conclusion

Mininger’s work represents a significant departure from the traditional interpretation of Hebrews 6. By showing three things: a distinction between laying a foundation and the milk metaphor, the contrasting content of the two lists in 6:1-5, and the pattern of situational change that runs through the epistle, he offers a reading that complements the rest of scripture, while remaining faithful to the overall context of Hebrews. The “impossibility” of Hebrews 6 does not speak of a person who struggles with doubt or sin, but it is a declaration of the irreversible nature of the new covenant. We, as believers in Christ, must be aware of where we are situated in covenantal history, as there is no going back to the old covenant and expecting to find repentance for sins there. Hebrews 6:1-6 is both a warning against abandoning Christ and an encouragement to move forward, knowing that what God has provided in the new covenant is sufficient. Eternal Security is not a biblical doctrine, but Believers who continue with Jesus Christ as their foundation will always find a place of repentance for their moral failings. ^[1]

Endnotes

1. Marcus A. Mininger, *Impossible to be Restored? Temptation and Warning in the Epistle of Hebrews*, NSBT 65 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2025), 72.
2. Mininger, 70.
3. Mininger, 60-68.
4. “Washings” is rendered “baptisms” in the KJV.
5. This article summarizes Mininger’s reading of Hebrews 6, but I do add my own comments. To get a “clean” version of Mininger’s argument, I would suggest reading his book.
6. M. D. Treece, *Hebrews, The Literal Word* (Shippensburg, PA: Treasure House), 122.
7. Mininger, 107.
8. Mininger, 116.

Seeing the Whole Garden:

A WORD FOR WOMEN CARRYING MUCH



Yalonda Uzzle
Union City, KY

LADIES' MINISTRY

From the very beginning of time, before schedules, responsibilities, and expectations, there was a garden.

In that garden, God spoke the first description of a woman. In Genesis 2:18 KJV, He said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." This was not a secondary role; it was a calling. The first description of a woman was that she would be a help.

Yet somewhere between Eden and today, the word "help" has quietly evolved into something much heavier. What was created as help often feels like holding everything together.

Women carry so much. They carry the emotional climate of their homes, stand beside their husbands in ministry, pour into their children, serve their churches, and meet the needs of others. They are planners, problem-solvers, encouragers, and caregivers. They give generously. And still, many quietly carry a deeper weight: emotional fatigue, spiritual exhaustion, and the pressure to keep everything from falling apart.

When Strength Becomes Strain

The word help in Scripture is not weak. In fact, in the Book of Psalms 46:1, the Bible says, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." The same term used to describe woman is used to describe God Himself. That changes the picture.

Women were never meant to be the source of strength. You were meant to stay connected to it. Yet it is easy to begin carrying responsibilities in our own strength. We take on burdens that were never meant to rest solely on us. And even when you pray about it, sometimes you pick it right back up.

Psalm 55:22 instructs, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." This is instructing us to not set it down temporarily, not revisit it five minutes later, but to cast it. What you continue to carry, will eventually start carrying you. The result is a life that appears put together outwardly, but feels strained and unstable inwardly.

The Danger of Being Busy but Burdened

In the Gospel of Luke 10, we are introduced to Martha, a woman who was faithfully serving, yet overwhelmed. The Scripture says she was "careful

and troubled about many things."

Martha was not idle. She was doing everything right. She was serving, preparing, and taking care of what needed to be done. She wasn't lazy. She wasn't distracted by the wrong things. She was faithful. And yet, she was troubled.

Sometimes the issue isn't that we're doing the wrong things, it's that we're doing so much that we're slowly losing space for what matters most. Jesus didn't tell Martha to stop serving. He simply reminded her to not forget him while she was doing it.

It is possible to be deeply committed, heavily involved, and outwardly faithful, yet inwardly weary.

How We Lose Sight of the Garden

In the Garden of Eden, God gave Adam and Eve access to abundance. In the Book of Genesis 2, He told them they could freely eat from every tree except one. God gave Adam and Eve access to everything, except one tree. But when the serpent came in Genesis 3:1, he didn't talk about everything they could have. He pointed them to what they couldn't.

This shift in focus was silent, but significant. Isn't that still how it works? Instead of seeing a house full of blessings, one problem will take the center stage of our focus. One unanswered prayer, one situation that hasn't worked out, one thing that feels off, and suddenly it feels like that one thing is everything. But it's not.

There is still breath in your body. There is still provision in your home. There are still people to love. There is still a God who has been faithful.

The enemy wants you staring at one tree, while God is saying, look around you. You're still in a garden.

When gratitude decreases, joy decreases.

Another example of how we lose sight of the garden can be seen in the lives of Sarah and Abraham in the Book of Genesis. God had already given them a promise, a son. The promise was clear. The outcome was certain. But the timing required waiting. God had already given them a promise, a son. The promise was clear. The outcome was certain. But the timing required waiting. God had already given them a promise, a son. The promise was clear. The outcome

was certain. But the timing required waiting.

And waiting can be one of the greatest tests of trust.

Over time, their focus shifted. Instead of resting in what God had spoken, they became consumed with what they could not see. The promise remained, but the waiting became louder than the promise.

So, they stepped in. They tried to help God fulfill what He had already promised. The result was Ishmael, decision born not out of rebellion, but out of impatience. How often does that mirror our own lives?

We know what God has said. We believe His promises. And yet, when the timeline doesn't match our expectations, we begin to move ahead of Him. We try to fix what feels delayed. We try to solve what feels uncertain. We try to produce what only God can provide.

But God's timing has always been perfect. What He promises, He fulfills completely, and at the right time. When we step ahead of Him, we create unnecessary strain and stress. But when we trust Him, even in the waiting, we position ourselves to receive what He intended all along.

Stop Waiting to Be Joyful

Many women unintentionally postpone their joy. One of the easiest traps to fall into is waiting until things get better to rejoice. Don't wait until the prayer is answered, the situation is fixed, everything feels right again. If we are not careful, we will keep pushing our joy further and further into the future.

In the Book of Ecclesiastes 3, we are reminded that "to everything there is a season." Even this one. Seasons are not meant to be rushed through or merely endured. They are places where God works, shapes, and teaches. The hurried years of raising children, the busy seasons of ministry, the demanding days that feel overwhelming, these are also the days filled with purpose.

Some of the seasons we're rushing through are the ones we will one day wish we could go back to. Time doesn't stop for anyone. Moments don't rewind. And when we are overly focused on what is next, we risk missing what is now.

Trusting God Beyond What We Can See

The story of the widow in the First Book of Kings 17 offers another powerful perspective. She had limited resources, just enough for what she believed would be her final meal. She was down to her last bit of food. She had measured it. Planned it. Accepted what she thinks is the end. Then she was asked to give first. It didn't match her plan. It didn't make sense,

but she obeyed anyway. Her response revealed where her trust was placed. She chose obedience before understanding, and in doing so, experienced provision that defied her circumstances.

This highlights a truth that resonates deeply with women in ministry: faith is not always expressed through what we do, but through what we let go. Trusting God often requires letting go of control and choosing Him first, even when the outcome is not yet visible.

There Is Still More Than Enough

Joy is not something that shows up after everything is fixed. Scripture consistently reveals that joy is found in the presence of God, not in the absence of difficulty. It's something that lives right in the middle of what isn't.

There will always be something incomplete, something in progress, something not yet answered. But there is also always something that has already been provided, sustained, or resolved. The question becomes: which will receive our focus?

Lifting Our Eyes Again

Psalm 121 offers a necessary redirection: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord."

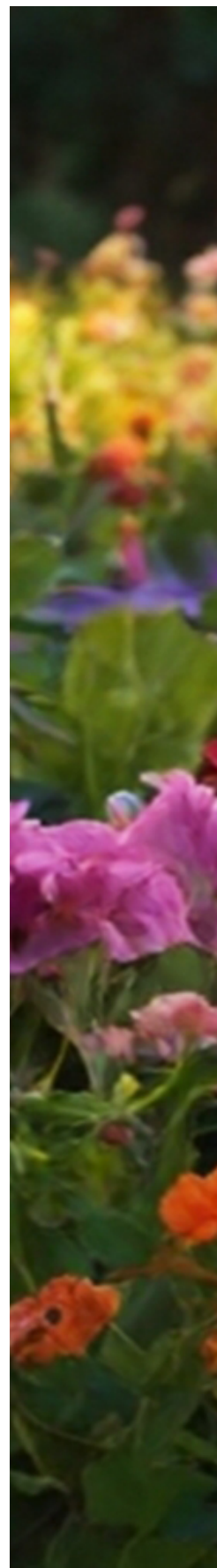
Women are not called to be the source of strength; they are called to remain connected to it. When burdens feel overwhelming, when responsibilities feel unending, and when focus begins to shift, the invitation is to look up again. Biblical joy goes beyond contentment, but is a choice to trust God's promises even in the middle of trials. Look up and remember the source. Recognize that even in seasons of pressure, God remains present.

A Closing Encouragement

Women will always have weight to carry, but you were never meant to carry it alone. The call is not to withdraw from responsibility, but to remain anchored in the presence of God while fulfilling it. To serve faithfully without becoming spiritually depleted. To trust deeply without attempting to control everything. To recognize that even when one area of life feels uncertain, there is still an abundance of God's goodness surrounding them.

There may always be one tree that draws our attention, but there is still an entire garden filled with evidence of His faithfulness. The challenge, and the invitation, is to see it. And in seeing it, to choose joy, not later, but now.

Because even with the one tree, there is still a whole garden. And there is still a faithful God walking with you in it. 





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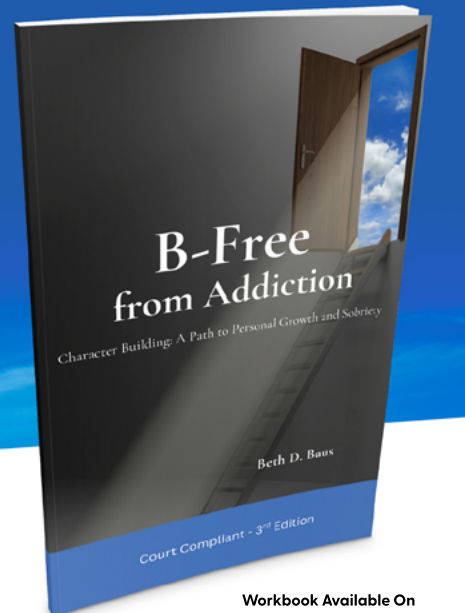
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Because I *Knocked*



Shaye Spell
Baton Rouge, LA

GUEST AUTHOR

As I drive into the subdivision, I notice there are children swarming over doorsteps and playing in almost every driveway. At first glance, it appears to be a very happy, thriving place. Then I begin my work. As I approach the first door with the invite in my hand, I clearly see what many cannot. The grassy yard is in need of watering; there are many dead patches with dirt showing. Next to the broken sidewalk reside bits of trash, blown and scattered by the wind. As I lift my hand to ring the doorbell, I notice it is hanging from the wall with its wires exposed. So, I knock instead. It takes several knocks to be heard over the loud music coming from within the home. A face appears in the cracked window, partially covered by a blanket instead of a curtain. Finally, the door opens, just a crack, and standing there is an angel.

She is about five years old wearing the sad eyes of a teenager. Her hair is falling into her eyes, greasy from days of neglect. Her face has yesterday's lunch remains stuck to it, and her fingernails have remnants of black grit from her recent enjoyment of making mud pies. Her unmatched clothes have been dug out from beneath a pile of dirty laundry in a corner. Nevertheless, she smiles up at me.

"Hello!" I smile my sweetest smile to project my love to her. She is nervous, looking around her shoulder to see if there is someone else I would be smiling at. Maybe she thinks she is undeserving of this love. I stoop down to her level. "I came here to see YOU," I tell her softly. Oh, how her eyes light up once again! She has the innocent eyes of a child. I then tell her about Sunday School. How the big church bus will pick her up tomorrow morning and bring her to church. I tell her about the breakfast, the songs, the puppets, and, most of all, about how she will learn about Jesus, the One who loves her the most.

From inside, a man yells, "Who is that? Shut the door!" I notice she flinches at his voice. I tell her to get her mommy or daddy so I can ask their permission for her to come to church tomorrow. She looks scared all of a sudden, and she seems to shrink back into herself, head down, eyes dull. I tell her, "I know you want to come, but I have to ask them." She turns and disappears for a few minutes. When she returns, she says her mommy is asleep and won't wake up. Her daddy isn't here.

I step into the house; it is dim and hot. In a corner, in front of the television, is a big burly man in cut-off jeans without a shirt. Many empty beer cans are scattered around his chair. The tiny angel wraps her little arms tightly around my legs and hides her face in my skirt as I stand in front of him. I am not the least bit scared. I feel as though a host of angels are standing behind me, and I am facing a squatty, weak demon from the pits of hell. "Are you her dad?" I ask. He says no. His eyes are blood-shot, his pupils dilated.

I go through my whole invitation as quickly as possible, repeating myself several times, as he asks, "huh?"

"May she please go?" I ask.

Then he says the words that I was waiting for. "I don't care."

She and I quickly turn and go outside to the porch. She is so excited and asking so many questions! "Please, if I'm not outside, will you knock on the door in case they change their mind?" Of course we will.

As we hug and say goodbye and I turn to walk away, I take a deep breath. I can feel the Holy Ghost move in me and my eyes fill with tears. Thank you, God, for bringing me to this door. Thank you for giving me the strength to go inside even though it is heartbreaking to imagine what she must go through.

She could possibly be a Pastor's wife, like me...one day. All because I knocked.

It is worth every knock, every disappointment, every trial, to just reach one.

Then I realize: this is "OUR" Mission Field. Here, in Baton Rouge. Yes, we support missions, all over the world. We send money and we offer up prayers. While here, in our own city is a world, still untouched by the Christian witness. Go ye therefore means to go, but we do not have to travel very far to be missionaries. How can we neglect those that are hurting, dying, and lost, right here at home? We must work, we must COMMIT, and we must spend our money and our time in this mission field—our very own given to us by God. **T**



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Estirando El Campo:

Dios Avanzando las Misiones en America del Norte en la Comunidad Hispanohablante

INFORME ESPAÑOL

En el lenguaje del fútbol americano (perdonen la analogía), “Estirando el campo” no es una estrategia pasiva. Es una acción agresiva y coordinada tomada por el equipo que está a la ofensiva. Cuando el ataque abre el campo, envía a los receptores a posiciones profundas y amplias, lo que obliga a la defensa a cubrir campo imposible y, de este modo, crea vías o lugares abiertos que no existían antes de que se lanzara la jugada. El campo no coopera por sí solo. El campo no se expande por sí solo. Hay que estirarlo —deliberadamente, con compromiso y con la voluntad de ir a lugares a los que la defensa no espera que vaya.

Dios lleva siglos “estirando el campo.” Desde el momento en que llamó a un hombre llamado Abram para que saliera de Ur y prometió hacer de él una nación a través de la cual “todas las familias de la tierra serían bendecidas” (Génesis 12:3), la misión de Dios se ha caracterizado por su incesante expansión. Nunca se ha reducido. Nunca se ha estancado. Se ha movido —a través de patriarcas y profetas, a través del exilio e imperios, a través de una cruz romana y una tumba vacía, a través de un pequeño aposento alto en Jerusalén donde el Espíritu descendió como fuego— siempre hacia adelante, siempre más lejos, siempre hacia territorios que el enemigo controlaba y creía seguro. En este momento, Dios está estirando el campo de nuevo hacia una de las oportunidades más significativas para la cosecha en Norteamérica. Esta cosecha existe en pueblos y ciudades, donde la comunidad de habla hispana está lista para avivamiento.

Antes de adentrarnos en el momento presente, es fundamental comprender el carácter de Dios, ya que la forma en que interpretamos su naturaleza determina cómo respondemos a Sus movimientos. Este no es un Dios que pone en marcha una misión y luego espera a ver cuál será el resultado. Él no se sorprende por la oposición, no es frenado por la resistencia, ni desanimado por los retrasos. El profeta Isaías dejó constancia de su inequívoca declaración: “El Señor de los ejércitos ha jurado: “Como he planeado, así será, y como he propuesto,

así se cumplirá” (Isaías 14:24, ESV). No hay ambigüedad en ese lenguaje, no se añade un “si Dios quiere.” La voluntad de Dios ya está entretejida en la certeza de la promesa.

El apóstol Pablo, escribiendo desde el interior de una prisión romana con cadenas en las muñecas, todavía describió a un Dios que “... hace todas las cosas según el designio de su voluntad” (Efesios 1:11). Fíjese que dice “todas las cosas.” Cada persecución. Cada puerta cerrada. Cada siglo que a los ojos humanos parecía retroceso integrado en el avance de un plan divino que ninguna fuerza terrenal o demoníaca ha logrado descarrilar de forma permanente.

Dios da el primer paso. Él siempre se mueve primero. La Iglesia prospera cuando se alinea con Su misión en constante avance. La pregunta que Dios plantea a cada generación de creyentes no es “¿Van a empezar algo?” sino “¿Van a mantener el ritmo?”

Cada gran movimiento de Dios ha funcionado como un momento de estiramiento del campo - una jugada ofensiva que obliga a la defensa a dispersarse, abrir nuevas vías y avanzar el Reino hacia territorios que antes estaban en manos de las tinieblas.

Cuando el Evangelio pasó de las comunidades judías a la de los gentiles en el siglo 1, el campo se estiró de forma tan espectacular que la iglesia de Jerusalén convocó un concilio de emergencia solo para procesarlo (Hechos 15). El Espíritu ya se había movido; la iglesia tenía que ponerse al día. Este es un patrón constante. Dios se mueve y el campo se estira. Cuando la misión de la calle Azusa sacudió Los Ángeles, el campo se estiró de nuevo. Cada vez, Dios obligó a un reajuste: un reconocimiento de que el territorio de Su reino era más amplio, más profundo y más audaz de lo que nadie había trazado anteriormente.

La población hispanohablante de Estados Unidos y Canadá no es una simple nota demográfica al pie de una página. Es una de las comunidades de más rápido crecimiento,



Dr. Jesse Galindo
Durham, NC

joven, y con mayor sed espiritual del continente. Solo en Estados Unidos viven más de 65 millones de hispanos, a los que se suman otros cientos de miles en Canadá, y la trayectoria de crecimiento no muestra señales de reducción de la velocidad de ese crecimiento. Lo más importante es que se trata de una comunidad con profundas raíces en sed espiritual, valores familiares y un corazón abierto hacia Dios. Un genuino y acelerado avivamiento está en camino, y lleva las señas de identidad de un auténtico mover enviado del cielo: arrepentimiento, hambre de la Palabra, señales y prodigios, y un crecimiento explosivo que supera cualquier estrategia humana organizada. La pregunta ahora es si la Iglesia Apostólica Pentecostal, como administradora de la Verdad, reconocerá el poder de este momento y movimiento decisivo y se lanzará a él con todo lo que tiene.

La comunidad hispana de Norteamérica está siendo llamada. El hambre es innegable y el momento no puede ser más oportuno. Muchas denominaciones están tomando conciencia de ello y están tratando de alcanzar a las comunidades de habla hispana, pero avivamientos que carecen de la Verdad Apostólica han brillado con intensidad a lo largo de la historia, pero se han desvanecido rápidamente. Lo que este momento requiere es el consejo completo de Dios proclamado con claridad, convicción y compasión por la Iglesia Pentecostal Apostólica.

El estirar el campo de acción implica dedicar recursos: Empezando obras, ministerios, e iglesias Hispanas con urgencia y determinación, formando y capacitando a líderes hispanohablantes que puedan alcanzar sus comunidades con fluidez cultural; e invertir en herramientas de evangelismo, traducciones y herramientas para evangelizar en español. Significa que las iglesias apostólicas inglés hablantes se unan lado a lado con las iglesias hispanohablantes, no como benefactores, sino como compañeros de lucha en la misma batalla hacia adelante.

Defensas son rotas con acciones audaces. El terreno es reducido para los tímidos. Solo se amplía para aquellos dispuestos a avanzar sin concesiones, confiando en el plan y enviando lo mejor que tienen a donde la oportunidad es mayor. Dios no juega sobre seguro. Nunca lo ha hecho. Pentecostés demuestra el afán de

Dios por llevar a cabo movimientos audaces y agresivos. Y funcionó precisamente porque, desde cualquier punto de vista humano, parecía que no debería haber funcionado.

El avivamiento de la comunidad hispanohablante en Norteamérica no es una tendencia que debamos observar desde una distancia cautelosa. Es un momento decisivo que exige audacia e iniciativa apostólica. Dios se está moviendo. WPF Español, bajo el liderazgo del Consejo de Desarrollo de la Iglesia, está estirando nuevamente el campo de acción. Este año, mientras nos preparamos para Vamos Por Más 2026, nos esforzamos por llegar más lejos llevando a cabo DOS reuniones en lugar de una sola reunión centralizada. El tema es "Trae Aquí El Cielo." La primera reunión se llevará a cabo en Rialto, California, los días 15 y 16 de octubre de 2026. La segunda reunión será en Durham, Carolina del Norte, los días 12 y 13 de noviembre. Cada reunión consistirá en dos noches de ministerio dinámico para inspirar y fortalecer los corazones y las manos para la Obra Misionera y la Cosecha que nos espera. Habrá más información más adelante, pero haga planes desde ahora para asistir a la reunión más cercana a usted.

Isaías 54 comienza con una orden a la mujer estéril de que cante en voz alta. A continuación, la profecía le ordena: "Ensancha el sitio de tu tienda, y las cortinas de tus habitaciones sean extendidas; no seas escasa; alarga tus cuerdas, y refuerza tus estacas." ¿Por qué hacer esto? Porque Dios estaba preparando a la mujer estéril para lo que sin duda iba a suceder. El versículo tres aporta claridad, promesa y una afirmación rotunda. "Porque te extenderás a la mano derecha y a la mano izquierda; y tu descendencia heredará naciones, y habitará las ciudades solitarias. En otras palabras, Dios estaba a punto de dar un paso audaz e inesperado. El campo estaba a punto de ser estirado de nuevo. De ese movimiento vendrían crecimiento y bendición sin medida. La promesa de un avivamiento en la comunidad hispanohablante no es un "qué pasaría si," sino un "cuándo." Dios está, una vez más, estirando el campo. Es hora de verlo, prepararse para ello y participar en ello. [1]

**Pentecostés
demuestra el afán
de Dios por llevar a
cabo movimientos
audaces y agresivos.**

Stretching the Field:

God's Advancing Mission in Spanish-Speaking North America

In the language of American football (pardon the analogy), “stretching the field” is not a passive strategy. It is an aggressive, coordinated action taken by a team on the offense. When an offense stretches the field, it sends receivers deep and wide, forcing the defense to cover impossible ground, thus creating lanes that did not exist before the play was called. The field does not cooperate on its own. The field does not expand on its own. It has to be stretched — deliberately, with commitment, and with the willingness to go places the defense does not expect you to go.

God has been “stretching the field” for ages. From the moment He called one man named Abram out of Ur and promised to make of him a nation through which “all families of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 12:3), the mission of God has been defined by its relentless expansion. It has never contracted. It has never stalled. It has moved — through patriarchs and prophets, through exile and empire, through a Roman cross and an empty tomb, through a small upper room in Jerusalem where the Spirit fell like fire — always forward, always further, always into territory the enemy held and thought was secure. Right now, God is stretching the field again into one of the most significant opportunities for harvest in North America. This harvest exists in towns and cities as the Spanish-speaking community is ripe for revival.

Before engaging the present moment, it is crucial to understand the character of God because how we comprehend His nature determines how we respond to His movements. This is not a God who launches a mission and then waits to see how it turns out. He is not taken aback by opposition, slowed by resistance, or discouraged by delay. The prophet Isaiah recorded His own unmistakable pronouncement: “The Lord of hosts has sworn: “As I have planned, so

shall it be, and as I have purposed, so shall it stand,” (Isaiah 14:24, ESV). There is no hedging in that language — no “Lord willing” added as a qualifier. The will of God is already interwoven into the certainty of the promise.

The Apostle Paul, writing from the inside of a Roman prison with chains on his wrists, still described a God who “...worketh all things after the counsel of his own will” (Ephesians 1:11, KJV). Note it reads, “all things.” Every persecution. Every closed door. Every century that looked to human eyes like retreat folded into the forward movement of a divine plan that no earthly or demonic force has ever succeeded in permanently derailing.

God moves first. He has always moved first. The Church does well when it aligns itself with His advancing mission. The question God poses to every generation of believers is not “*Will you start something?*” but “*Will you keep up?*” Every great movement of God has functioned as a field-stretching moment — an offensive play that forced coverage to spread, open new lanes, and advance the Kingdom into territory previously held by darkness.

When the Gospel leapt from Jewish communities to Gentile ones in the first century, the field stretched so dramatically that the Jerusalem church convened an emergency council just to process it (Acts 15). The Spirit had already moved; the church had to catch up. This is a consistent pattern. God moves and the field is stretched. When the Azusa Street mission shook Los Angeles, the field stretched again. Each time, God forced a recalibration — a recognition that the territory of His kingdom was wider, deeper, and more audacious than anyone had previously mapped.

The Spanish-speaking population of the United States and Canada is not a demographic footnote. It is one of the fastest-growing, youngest, and most spiritually



Dr. Jesse Galindo
Durham, NC

hungry communities on the continent. Over 65 million Hispanics live in the United States alone, with hundreds of thousands more across Canada, and the growth trajectory shows no signs of slowing. Crucially, this is a community with deep roots in spiritual hunger, familial values, and a natural openness to God. A genuine, accelerating revival is underway — and it carries the hallmarks of authentic, heaven-sent stirring: repentance, hunger for the Word, signs and wonders, and explosive growth that outpaces any human organizational strategy. The question now is whether the Apostolic Pentecostal Church, as stewards of Truth, will recognize the power of this decisive moment and movement and step into it with everything it has.

The Hispanic community in North America is being called. The hunger is undeniable, and the timing is unmistakable. Many denominations are recognizing and reaching into Spanish-speaking communities, but revival without Apostolic Truth has historically burned bright but faded fast. What this moment requires is the full counsel of God proclaimed with clarity, conviction, and compassion by the Apostolic Pentecostal Church.

To stretch the field means committing resources — planting Spanish-language works, ministries, and churches with urgency and intentionality, raising up and empowering Spanish-speaking leaders who can reach their communities with cultural fluency, and investing in Spanish outreach, translation, and evangelism tools. It means the English-speaking Apostolic churches coming alongside their Spanish-speaking counterparts not as benefactors, but as fellow soldiers in the same advance.

Defenses are broken by bold action. The field shrinks for the timid. It stretches only for those willing to uncompromisingly push, trust the plan, and send their best where the opportunity is greatest. God is not playing it safe. He never has. Pentecost demonstrates God's appetite to make bold, aggressive moves. And it worked precisely because it looked, from every human angle, like it shouldn't have.

The Spanish-speaking revival in North America is not a trend to monitor from a safe distance. It is a field-stretching moment that demands Apostolic boldness and initiative. God is moving. WPF Español, under the leadership of the Church Development Council, is again stretching the field. This year, as we prepare for **Vamos Por Más 2026**, we are endeavoring to reach further by holding TWO meetings instead of a single centralized meeting. The theme is "Trae Aqui El Cielo" or "Bring Heaven Here". The first meeting will be in Rialto, CA, on October 15-16, 2026. The second meeting will be in Durham, NC, on November 12-13. Each meeting will be two nights of dynamic ministry to inspire and strengthen hearts and hands for the Mission and the Harvest that awaits. More information is forthcoming but make plans now to attend the meeting nearest you.

Isaiah 54 begins with a command for the barren woman to sing aloud. Then the prophecy commands her to, "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes." Why would this be? Because God was preparing the barren woman for what was assured to come. Verse three brings clarity, promise, and resounding affirmation. "For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles and make the desolate cities to be inhabited." In other words, God was about to make a bold and unexpected move. The field was about to be stretched again. From that movement would come immeasurable growth and blessing. The promise of revival in the Spanish-speaking community is not a "what if" but "when". God is once again, stretching the field. It's time to see it, prepare for it, and engage in it. ¹

**Pentecost
demonstrates God's
appetite to make
bold, aggressive
moves.**



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New four-course certificate equips professionals to integrate faith, vocation, and kingdom impact in the marketplace



Elk Grove, CA — Wilson University is proud to announce the launch of its new Business as Mission (BAM) Certificate program, a transformative academic journey designed to equip professionals, entrepreneurs, and ministry leaders to discover the profound connection between their vocation and their divine calling. Enrollment opens May 1 with the first cohort session launching August 17.

The BAM Certificate consists of four sequential courses, each spanning six weeks, offered fully online. The curriculum blends theological grounding with practical business application, preparing graduates to operate with integrity, intentionality, and lasting impact in the global marketplace.

"Business as Mission is not simply a strategy, it is a calling. This program was built to help professionals understand that their work in the marketplace is a powerful vehicle for fueling God's mission," said Anna Ballinger, VP for Academic Affairs, Wilson University.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The BAM Certificate takes students on a structured journey through four core courses:

- **Theology of Blessing** – Establishing the biblical foundation for business as a force for God's blessing in the world.
- **Business as Mission** – Exploring the leading frameworks, models, and thought leaders shaping the global BAM movement.
- **BAM: From Theory to Action** – Applying BAM principles through real-world case studies and hands-on practicums.
- **Stewarding the Mission** – Equipping graduates to sustain, scale, and faithfully steward their business mission long-term.

Each course features lectures by leading experts in the field, curated readings, in-depth case studies, and real-life practicums, ensuring graduates leave with both a solid theoretical foundation and the practical tools needed to implement BAM principles from day one.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of the program, graduates will:

- Possess a comprehensive understanding of Business as Mission theology and practice grounded in biblical principles and ethical leadership.
- Demonstrate a growing awareness of Christ's presence, integrating faith with professional calling and personal formation.
- Engage communities locally and globally by serving real needs and advancing the mission of Christ through business.
- Be equipped to launch, lead, or transform businesses with Kingdom intentionality as part of a growing community of BAM practitioners.

ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

Enrollment Opens: May 1, 2026

First Session Begins: August 17, 2026

Format: Fully online; four courses, six weeks per course

Credits: 12 total credits (3 credits per course)

For more information, visit Info.WilsonU.edu or contact Admissions at (916) 234-0612 or (916) 234-3464. To apply, visit Apply.WilsonU.edu. 

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MISSIONARIES

Raul & Janice Alvear

BRAZIL

I have never lost the wonder that He called me to be a missionary!

The Mission field has been our life...For me (Sister Alvear) I have been in Brazil as a missionary for 58 years, and Brother Alvear was born on the mission field. For those that do not know, I (Sister Alvear), had a visitation from the Lord as a very small child. I woke up in the middle of the night and Jesus was standing by my bedside. He told me I would grow up to be a missionary to Brazil. We raised our children on the mission field and several follow in our footsteps. This is our greatest joy.

Missionary life is often a life of hardship, responsibility, and constant self-denial. However, if we persist, fruits spring up. It took years to build a strong foundation, but once it was in order, churches began to go

up all over Brazil. Today there are thousands of people following Christ who were once in the depths of idolatry. Scores of churches have been built from the north to the south, from the east to the west, and we keep building! That does not happen alone. It is a joint effort between the homeland supporters and the missionary.

There has been the joy of winning whole trinity churches to the oneness message and baptizing them in the saving name of Jesus. The joy of winning witchdoctors and seeing them become preachers, the joy of winning both the educated and uneducated, and seeing them unite for the purpose of winning Brazil for Christ!

Missionary life is a paradox. Baptismal services have been conducted in beautiful crystal-clear lakes and in alligator-infested streams in the jungles. I have slept in the finest beds, and also slept on corn shuck mattresses in the backlands! It has been an exciting life, and if we could choose again, we both would choose to be missionaries!

We have not built on another man's foundation nor split someone's work to make it all ours. We started from scratch and have built on our own spiritual children by guiding them and teaching the indigenous peoples to follow our example. We have taught them to go to the unreached and bring the gospel to where Christ is not known.

Today a host of men and women march through the country of Brazil, who willingly gave their lives to Christ and dedicate all their days to living for Him. If need be, they are willing to die for Him. Their lives are seeds that went into the ground, multiplying, and bearing much fruit

As many as five generations of the saved wave their hands to our Lord thanking Him for those who came to their land and brought the story of Jesus. We are eternally indebted to our homeland supporters. One day they will reap with us seeing the multitude of the saved from Brazil.

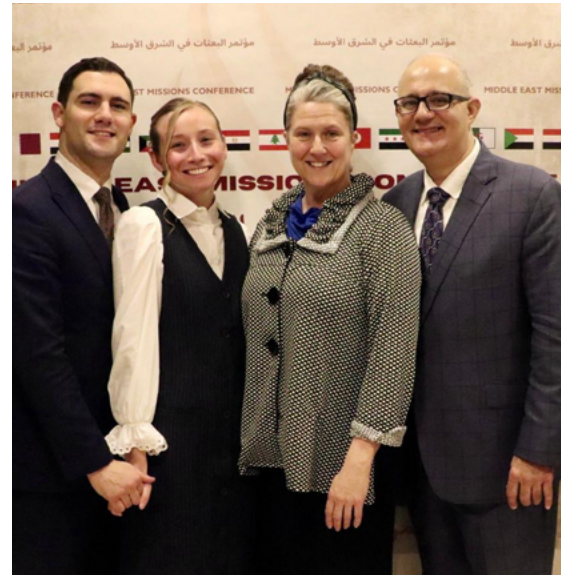
MISSIONARIES

Toufic & April Azar

Jacob & Haley Azar

LEBANON

Brother and Sister Azar began missionary work in the Middle East after years of burden and outreach to the region. In the fall of 2013, they, along with four of their children, moved to Beirut, Lebanon, to establish a new church work. In 2014, the Apostolic Church of Beirut was founded and became a light to the Arabic-speaking world, impacting individuals from Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Jordan, and Iraq through baptism in Jesus' Name and the infilling of the Holy Ghost.



As the work continued to grow, God opened doors throughout the Middle East. In 2021, after numerous trips to Egypt, a church was planted in the suburbs of Cairo where many Egyptians have since been baptized in Jesus' Name and filled with the Holy Ghost. In 2022, the Azars sent their first missionary from Lebanon to Iraq, establishing the Foundation Church where several families have come to truth.

In 2024, missionaries were sent to Tunisia and Morocco, where the Gospel continues to spread despite difficult circumstances. In 2025, following political changes in Syria and much prayer, a missionary from Beirut began work in Damascus. Since then, souls have already been baptized and filled with the Holy Ghost.

Today, the Azars oversee seven mission works across the Middle East, including Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco. Their vision remains focused on winning souls, training nationals, and planting churches throughout the region.

By the grace of God, the second Middle East Mission Conference was held in Beirut this past February. Eight national pastors and missionaries, along with their wives, gathered for a week of discipleship, doctrine, holiness teaching, and fellowship. The conference strengthened and encouraged these leaders as they continue ministering in spiritually and politically challenging environments.

Despite ongoing conflict in the region, the mission works continue moving forward. In Lebanon, the church remains faithful while tensions and bombings persist in parts of the country. In Egypt, the church is experiencing continued growth and recent baptisms. In Iraq, believers continue gathering despite nearby conflict. Bible studies and weekly meetings are steadily advancing in Syria, where the harvest is proving ripe.

God is also moving powerfully in North Africa. In Algeria, two former Muslims were recently baptized in Jesus' Name, even while believers face severe persecution for their faith. In Tunisia, over twenty individuals are preparing to be baptized in secret, and in Morocco, Bible studies and underground church services continue with new baptisms scheduled.

One of the greatest miracles has been God's provision of property in Lebanon for the future home of Apostolics of Beirut and the Middle East Headquarters. Plans are currently being finalized for a campus that will include a 400-seat sanctuary, Bible school, and Cedars of Hope Academy, a licensed Apostolic school in Lebanon.

The Azar family humbly asks for continued prayer for safety, open doors, and financial support as these mission works continue across the Middle East. Thank you for your faithful prayers and monthly support that make this ministry possible.





MISSIONARIES

James & Jessica Bowen

ROMANIA

Several years ago, God began stirring our hearts toward missions and placing within us a burden that continued to grow. In September 2023, that calling became clear when God specifically directed us to Romania. After a season of prayer, preparation, and confirmation, we stepped out in faith and arrived on the field in January 2026.

From the moment we landed in Bucharest, we felt the peace and confirmation of God's hand upon this journey. Our first Sunday in Romania was spent worshiping with the Zabou's, Pattersons, and the Viața Nouă (New Life) Bucharest church family—a powerful reminder that the body of Christ reaches across every culture and distance. A few days later, we traveled nearly seven hours across snow-covered mountains to Timișoara, the city

where God has called us to serve.

Shortly after arriving, we held our first prayer meeting and midweek service in Timișoara. Though simple, those gatherings were filled with faith, gratitude, and a growing hunger for God that continues to deepen with every service.

In February 2026, we were officially installed as pastors of Viața Nouă Timișoara. Since then, we have worked alongside the Tiponut family to strengthen and build the local church while also connecting with other Apostolic works throughout Romania. Opportunities to minister and fellowship in cities such as Cluj and Florești have strengthened relationships and expanded the vision for what God is doing across this nation.

Throughout this journey, the Lord has faithfully provided for our family in both spiritual and practical ways. One of the earliest reminders came when a specific prayer request—a drum set for our son Jensen—was answered during our very first Sunday in Bucharest. It was a meaningful confirmation that God sees every detail of this calling.

As we settled into life and ministry in Europe, we navigated many practical challenges, including securing housing, transportation, and visas. One of our greatest breakthroughs came with the remarkably quick approval of our one-year volunteer visas, providing stability and opening doors for continued ministry and growth.

In March, we were blessed to welcome our first guest from the United States, Ciara Johnson, who was a tremendous encouragement to both our family and the church, especially to the music department. In April, we were honored to host our pastor, Rev. Johnathan Howell, who ministered in both Timișoara and Florești. His visit strengthened and encouraged not only our church, but also pastors and believers across Romania.

Our family has embraced this season wholeheartedly and remains actively involved in the work. Joelle is playing piano and teaching Sunday school, Jewel faithfully runs media and assists in children's ministry, and Jensen is learning the drums and has already begun opening services. Watching our children step into ministry here has been one of the greatest blessings of this journey.

Above all, we are witnessing a powerful move of God overcoming cultural and religious strongholds. There is a growing sense of hunger and expectation in our services, and we are continually reminded that this work belongs to Him. We truly believe revival is beginning to take root in Timișoara.

As we look ahead, we remain focused on building a strong, Spirit-led church. While there are still ongoing needs, including reliable transportation and long-term visa direction, we are confident that the God who called us will continue to provide.

We are deeply grateful for every prayer and every supporter who stands with us. This journey is not ours alone—it is shared with every person who has partnered with us in this calling. We truly believe this is only the beginning.



MISSIONARIES

Dayton & London Bradford

ROSARITO, BAJA CALIFORNIA, MEXICO

God has been doing incredible things in the city of Rosarito. We have seen continued revival, transformations not only in individuals but in entire families, growth and development in our members, and countless people receiving the Holy Ghost and being baptized in the name of Jesus. Recently, we have seen God continue to impact people by His Spirit. Two individuals have received the Holy Ghost in the last ten days, and we are currently teaching a Bible study with a family that has been learning the importance of baptism. The entire family has made the decision to be baptized in the name of Jesus!

Our primary evangelistic effort continues to be our small groups, locally called "Casas de Vida". These are Bible studies hosted in the homes of our church leaders, where families and guests are invited to gather for fellowship and the teaching of the Word of God. This has become one of the most effective ways for us to reach people personally, build relationships, and develop leaders who are firm in their understanding of the Apostolic doctrine.

The Rock Iglesia has reached a point where we have outgrown our current church facility. We are actively looking for an alternative space that will allow us to continue growing, but in the meantime, we are adjusting our Sunday schedule to better serve the congregation. Beginning the Sunday after Mother's Day, we will be adding a second morning service, with services at 9:00 AM and 11:30 AM. Our prayer is that this will not only create room for continued growth, but also help develop more leaders, strengthen our core, and expand the involvement of the church body.

We are believing God for direction and provision as we pursue a new facility. Additionally, we have established a weekly preaching point in Tijuana (a city of 2.5 million people), and we are asking the body of Christ to pray that this bible study would grow and develop into a separate campus, giving us a foothold in the city.

On a personal note, our family has also experienced meaningful milestones. Sunday Jack celebrated his first birthday at the end of April, and we are thankful for the messages and phone calls we received to celebrate him. We are also excited to share that we are expecting another baby in September! We are grateful for God's continued blessings upon our family as we remain committed to the work He has called us to.

Thank you again for your prayers and encouragement. We are honored to labor together in the harvest and believe the best days are still ahead.



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Jesus & the Eschatological Jubilee

Part 1

Introduction

The closing line of Jesus' reading out of the Isaiah scroll was this: "to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor (Lk 4:19, ESV)." Jesus does more than read from Isaiah; he then declares to those present that this prophecy was fulfilled from that point forward. Those in the synagogue marveled at his words and for good reason. Jesus was asserting that the Year of Jubilee had been initiated. Jesus is harkening back to something ancient, even for his time, and certainly for the modern reader. What exactly is the year of Jubilee that Isaiah references in his prophecy, and why did it create such a stir when Jesus read it in his hometown? To gain a sound grasp of the concept of the Jubilee commandment, there are a few questions to answer. What did the Jubilee commandment look like in its initial legislation? How was the Jubilee command observed in the O.T. text? How did early Judaism interpret the commandment? Finally, how should Christians embrace and apply the Jubilee commandment in its N.T. fulfillment? This treatment aims to answer these questions by examining terminological links, contextual observations, developed thought from Jewish literature, and N.T. fulfillment. The first consideration is the initiation of the Jubilee and its nature.

Biblical Understanding of Jubilee

While the term "Jubilee" itself does not occur until its primary discussion in Leviticus 25, there are prerequisite discussions in the Torah that serve as the foundation for the concept. For example, Jubilee cannot be fully understood without grasping Yahweh's feelings about the oppression of the poor and the stranger, as well as the overuse of the land itself. "For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield, but the seventh year you shall let it rest... that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave the beasts of the field may eat. ...Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; ...the son of your servant woman, and the alien, may be refreshed (Ex 23:10-12, ESV)." This is a sabbatical pattern; the foundational theme of the Jubilee is, at the very least, rest and refreshing. In the story of the Exodus from Egypt, the children of Israel are liberated from their bondage by astounding acts of God. These acts of God came in the form of plagues that decimated the land of Egypt. The destruction of crops, the tainting of the Nile, invasions of lice and frogs, and ultimately the death of all the firstborn, compelled Pharaoh to release Israel to return to their ancestral land. The liberation of Israel from slavery in Egypt is the highlight of the Exodus narrative. In the

flow of that narrative, another element of the Jubilee command is introduced. Freedom is the grand point of Exodus, and not merely for Israel's sake, but that Yahweh should be seen as the great emancipator. If Yahweh is a liberator, then the newly liberated people of Israel are not to enslave one another but are to view themselves as servants of Yahweh alone. All of Israel belongs to God and is therefore to grant liberty as he did. This theme will unfold throughout the narrative of Scripture. One example where the theme of freedom is highlighted is in Ezekiel 46:17, where the prophet references the year of Jubilee, calling it the "year of liberty." Bergsma points out that later in the N.T., the apostle James will also reference the "perfect law of liberty" using language that the LXX uses to translate Jubilee language. This is the initial understanding of the term 'Jubilee' that Scripture presents.

A Reflection of the Nature of Yahweh: Theological Themes Associated with Jubilee

For the nation of Israel, Leviticus is something of an invitation to yield their nature to the precepts of God's nature. Thus, the correct concept for Israel is to embrace and emulate Yahweh's nature by obeying his commandments. The implications of this concept inform the reader's understanding of the entire book of Leviticus, and particularly the Year of Jubilee. The Jubilee commandment reflects Yahweh's nature as a liberator. Yahweh himself displays jubilee principles in his liberation of Israel from Egyptian bondage. This is made plain in the initial Jubilee command in Lev 25. Concerning fellow Israelites who have, of necessity, sold themselves into servitude to pay off debts, Yahweh commands that they are to serve as sojourners until the Jubilee. Yahweh gives his reasons for the commandment. "For they are my servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves. You shall not rule over him ruthlessly but shall fear your God (Lev 25:42-43, emphasis mine)." This type of language links Leviticus 25 to Exodus 20. "And God spoke all these words, saying, 'I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery (Ex 20:1-2, emphasis mine).'" The Leviticus 25 commandment implies that Israel is supposed to set their servants free, not merely for the sake of goodwill, nor even for the sake of national interest, but because it is the nature of Yahweh to set slaves free. Later in chapter 25, Yahweh further explains his feelings concerning this subject. "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to give you the land of Canaan, and to be your God.



Jeremy Wilbanks
Elk Grove, CA

THEOLOGY

‘If your brother becomes poor beside you and sells himself to you, you shall not make him serve as a slave: he shall be with you as a hired worker and as a sojourner. He shall serve with you until the year of the jubilee (Lev 25:38-40, emphasis mine).’ Thus, Jubilee is founded upon the notion that Yahweh is God and that he delivered Israel out of bondage in Egypt and into freedom. Freedom is to be granted from brother to brother, because it was first granted from Yahweh himself.

Isaiah 62: The Year of the Lord’s Favor

As mentioned previously, the idea of redemption is a significant component of the Jubilee. One of the emphasized elements of the book of Isaiah is Yahweh as the redeemer of Israel. This is particularly true of Is 40-66. In this span of prophetic writing, there are a few places where the Jubilee commandment comes to the surface. One such is Yahweh speaking to Israel through Isaiah in this manner: “For I, the LORD your God, hold your right hand; it is I who says to you, ‘Fear not, I am the one who helps you.’ Fear not, you worm Jacob, you men of Israel! I am the one who helps you, declares the LORD; your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel (Is 41:13-14).” That Yahweh would emphasize that he is the one who “helps” Israel, linked to the idea of being Israel’s redeemer, points to the understanding that a redeemer could emancipate Jacob’s land and kindred from servitude. The following twenty-six chapters of Isaiah’s writing are centered around the work of Yahweh, the God of Israel, as father and redeemer. The Isaiah scriptures from chapters 40-66 can hardly be read and grasped without understanding Jubilee in Lev 25 and 27, where the concept of redemption is referenced no fewer than twenty times.

While much discussion could be given to the above point of redemption in Isaiah, perhaps the best example of the implied use of the Jubilee commandment in Isaiah is Isaiah 61. “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; ... (Is 61:1-2, emphasis mine).” The two phrases “proclaim liberty” and “acceptable year” are founded in the Jubilee commandment.

“Isaiah anticipates a ‘release.’ In Isaiah 61:1-4 the prophet foresees a mediatorial figure, anointed by the Spirit and tasked with proclaiming the ‘good news’ of ‘release’ (dĕrôr), or ‘forgiveness’ (LXX: aphasis), for the captives. These same captives are set in parallel

with the ‘poor’ and the ‘broken-hearted’; they are the disenfranchised of the remnant community and the chief beneficiaries of the eschatological promises of restoration. For Isaiah, concerns of landlessness and debt cannot be separated from forgiveness.”

Motyer makes this assertion concerning the idea of proclaiming liberty: “Freedom: specifically manumission of slaves... the ministry of the Anointed One and the Year of Jubilee.” Childs adds the following; “To suggest that the application of Isaiah 61 is limited only to Jesus’ preaching and healing activity is to miss the larger context of the Old Testament promise, which is claimed by Christ as scripture’s foreshadowing of his entire earthly ministry...” As mentioned in the introduction of this work, Isaiah 61:1-2 will be read by Jesus at the beginning of his ministry (Lk 4) with clear implications that Jesus’ ministry is to be understood, as a fulfillment of Jubilee. Further, the implications of the two portions (vs.2) “year of the Lord’s favor” and “the day of vengeance” being linked together, in the ministry of the coming messiah, are significant. “The year of the Lord’s favor” is a direct reference to the year of Jubilee. “The day of vengeance of our God” is a direct reference to the eschatological day of the Lord. The implication is that Jubilee has far greater purpose than the liberation of slaves and the cancellation of debts. Jubilee has eschatological significance. *To be continued.* T

ENDNOTES

1. “But if he makes a gift out of his inheritance to one of his servants, it shall be his to the year of liberty. Then it shall revert to the prince; surely it is his inheritance—it shall belong to his sons (Ez 46:17).”
2. “But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing (Jam 1:25).”
3. John S. Bergsma. Jesus and the Jubilee: The Biblical Roots of the Year of God’s Favor. Emmaus Road Publishing, n.d., 111.
4. Lang gives this example: “Chaps. 61 and 62 correspond to the year of grace, chap. 63 to the day of vengeance. In regard to the expression אָנָּה... [It is manifestly with allusion to the year of jubilee that the time of grace here predicted is called an acceptable year of the LORD, i.e., a year of favor or of grace. The time of grace is elsewhere spoken of as a day; “In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee,” ...” John Peter Lange et al., A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Isaiah (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2008), 659.
5. The highest concentrations of redeemer/redemption language in the OT are in Lev 25, 27 and Is 40-66.
6. Lev 25:25,26,29,30,31,32,38,48,49,54; Lev 27:13,15,19,20,27,28,29,31,33.
7. “Proclaim liberty—(Jn 8:31–36). Language drawn from the deliverance of the Babylonian captives, to describe the deliverance from sin and death (Heb 2:15); also from the “liberty proclaimed” to all bond-servants in the year of jubilee (Is 61:2; Le 25:10; Je 34:8, 9).” “Acceptable year—the year of jubilee on which “liberty was proclaimed to the captives” (Is 61:1 2 Co 6:2).” Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible, vol. 1 (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), 499.
8. J. B. Green and N. Perrin, “Jubilee,” in Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels, Second Edition, ed. Joel B. Green, Jeannine K. Brown, and Nicholas Perrin (Downers Grove, IL; Nottingham, England: IVP Academic; IVP, 2013), 450.
9. J. Alec Motyer, Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary, vol. 20, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 426.



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