

# PENTECOST:



## INTERNATIONAL REPORT

A Communications Service of the International Pentecostal Press Association

### Catching God's vision for His church ... for all people

#### Demographic changes are a reminder of the divine blueprint for the Body of Christ

Leonard Sweet in *FaithQuakes* writes the following description of the cultural changes occurring in America today:

Whatever the future, it isn't white.

Whatever the future, it isn't Western.

Whatever the future, it isn't European.

Whatever the future, it isn't business as usual.

In the United States today, over 90 million people identify themselves as "ethnic." America

***The United States receives more immigrants than any other country of the world. Immigration already contributes one third of our population growth.***

is the most culturally diverse country in the world. More Jewish people live here than in the nation of Israel; more black people than in any other country of the world except Nigeria; more Samoans than in Samoa; and more Hispanics than in any other nation except for Spain and Mexico. Miami is the second largest Cuban city in the world. Only

Warsaw has more Polish people than Chicago. African-Americans are the majority group in Atlanta and Augusta, Georgia, and in Oakland, California. Los Angeles is the second largest Mexican, Armenian, Filipino, Korean, and Salvadoran city in the world.

Demographers predict even greater cultural diversity in the future due to increasing immigration and higher ethnic birth rates. The United States receives more immigrants than any other country of the world. Immigration already contributes one-third of our population growth. Ethnicities now constitute a majority in California; they will do so in New Mexico and Texas by 2015 and in New York by 2020. Chicago is 61 percent ethnic, New York City is 73 percent ethnic, and Los Angeles is 78 percent ethnic. Immigration patterns are making the U.S. the first universal nation in history, a nation more complex than most foreign fields.

This cultural phenomenon is presenting a tremendous challenge to politicians, social planners, educators, health providers, industry and other facets of American society. It also challenges the International Pentecostal Holiness Church to exemplify

the timeless truths of Christian brotherhood and the unity of the Church while exhausting every conceivable means of evangeliz-

***"I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb."***

— Revelation 7:9

ing this ripened harvest for the glory of our Christ.

Remember, God's plan for perfecting and finalizing redemption is found in Revelation 7:9: "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." God's perfect, glorified church will be a "colorful" one indeed.

**Dr. Ronald W. Carpenter Sr. is vice chairman of the IPHC and serves as executive director of Evangelism USA. He and his wife, Nan, live in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.**

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## Great Commission headlines: Missions news from around the world

### Church of God, Cleveland, Tenn.

**Ukraine:** Missionaries Tom and Claudia Rosson recently attended the Eastern European / Eurasian Leadership Conference and the Ukrainian Church of God National Assembly, both of which were held in Nova Kakhovka, Ukraine.

Invited to the Leadership Conference were the overseers and educational leaders of our denominations from most of the countries represented in the Church of God.

The Ukrainian National Assembly was also a celebration of its 15th anniversary in the Church of God. The Ukrainian church now has 85 congregations with a membership nearing 10,000. Among the various guest speakers were Dieter Knospe, field director, and Douglas Leroy, general director.

**Philippines:** This year alone we have had over six crusades ranging from children's crusades to youth crusades to adult crusades and all of them have been more than successful. Our most recent crusades have resulted in almost 3,000 people responding to our altar calls.

We want to win the lost, disciple the ones we win, make disciple-makers of them and go into the harvest fields where Christ has not been known before. Our min-

istry can be described as exciting, explosive and life changing. We are always developing new programs and involving more people in them.

Our latest program provides room for our classes, dormitories for our people and opportunities for service. Many of our smaller islands in the Visayan region have no positive Pentecostal message; a few have a strong evangelical message. That means that we can do unreached people group ministry without leaving our region.

*“Our Lord has been very gracious in refilling our pastors with His Holy Spirit for the past few years. ... I believe when we preach and teach on the Spirit, people are filled.”*

— Martin Lee Studdard

We currently have a large number of Bible studies where we do what we can to be sure new converts are truly converted and that they will grow in the Lord all the way through to being baptized with the Holy Spirit.

We have had around 2,600 people respond to our altar calls and our venues stay small. We usually have room for around 150 to 175 people and we get names and numbers of most of the people who respond. Our ministry is primarily evangelistic. We know the difference between revivals

and evangelism. Our people are for the most part revived or we make sure the help and grace of God revives them.

Our Lord has been very gracious in refilling our pastors with His Holy Spirit for the past few years. I have heard about pastors in many different areas of the world where that is not true. I believe when we preach and teach on the Spirit, people are filled more than when we do not.

We also pray for a powerful anointing to rest on each and every one of our church workers and pastors. We have seen this prayer answered repeatedly. What a blessing it is to see them pray for people at the altars and see the results of people leaving the altars changed by the power of the Spirit. We never allow our workers and pastors to push people down and discourage the practice. If God does it then we are all for it, but we never help Him out. We do encourage people yielding to the Spirit by allowing the gifts of the Spirit to work in our services. However, we remind them that even a donkey was used to speak to a prophet.

In the future we will deal with leadership, discipleship, church planting and other training.

Martin Lee Studdard

### Foursquare Missions International

**Southeast Asia:** In October more than 300 delegates from

30 nations in Asia Pacific and the South Pacific gathered in Medan, Indonesia, for the Eastern Council of Foursquare Churches Conference (ECFC).

Jonathan Hall applauded the unity and leadership while exhorting those present to continue to focus on ministering to the unreached people groups, of which there are many in Asia. He spoke of the fact that the number of unreached peoples in 1900 was 800 million, and today this group is estimated to include 1.85 billion people. Jonathan Hall affirmed that The Foursquare Church's historic aim to reach the unreached will continue.

ECFC Chairman Leslie Keegel encouraged the local pastors and leaders to press into the Holy Spirit and long for Him to move within their community and in their lives. Those present received great refreshment and felt motivated to return to the ministry.

**Costa Rica:** Foursquare missionaries Bill and Debbie Boling were happy to receive a youth team from Church on the Way in Van Nuys, Calif. The team was a great blessing to the Bolings and to the three churches in Puntarenas and Quepos they ministered in. It has been many years since a mission team has traveled to this particular locale and the church members were overjoyed that they came, greeting them with shouts and waving the Costa Rican, U.S. and Foursquare flags.

The team of youth shared the love of Jesus on their trip and testified to how He has affected their lives.

**Europe:** The European missionary retreat was held in Madrid, Spain, the first week of October 2008. Nearly every European missionary was represented during the three-day gathering, which was led by Regional Representative to Europe Jeff Roper and hosted by local missionaries Stan and Molly along with their team.

***ECFC Chairman Leslie Keegel encouraged the local pastors and leaders to press into the Holy Spirit and long for Him to move within their community and in their lives.***

The missionaries enjoyed open dialogue during the sessions, great food, relaxing times, fun activities and games together, which served to make meaningful connections. In an effort to become better acquainted with each missionary, they were all given an opportunity to share about themselves and the country where they serve. On the last afternoon, communion was shared by everyone along with a time of prayer for each individual and their nations.

## **Assemblies of God Nigeria**

**Evangel University Partners:** Assemblies of God Nigeria is mobilizing about 100,000 persons as partners to support the effort towards establishing a university before the year 2010. A partner is expected to support the project with N10,000 per annum for five years. In total, the Church hopes to raise N5 billion in the next few years. Already, the University Committee has set plans in motion for the realization of the vision. More than 10,000 persons have indicated their commitment to the project.

**Operation 7575:** The Church is about to experience an unprecedented revival in the baptism in the Holy Spirit. This was the focus of the just concluded National Pastors Conference held throughout the country recently. Under Operation 7575, the Church is expected to monitor a spiritual growth phenomenon that will result in 3 out of every 4 persons, or 75 percent of its membership, being baptized in the Holy Spirit by 2009, when the Church will celebrate its 75th anniversary. Director of Corporate Planning Uche Ama gave a detailed explanation of new plan to the leadership conference recently.

The focus on the baptism of the Holy Spirit is more critical to the Church than ever, in facing the challenges of the 21st century.

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## Overcoming anxiety and worry: Trusting God during the current financial crisis

**W**ith recent financial setbacks, perhaps you personally are facing financial difficulty. You have watched your retirement funds diminish or disappear. Your debt load may be more than you can handle. You may have lost your job, or are in danger of losing it. Perhaps, you are facing a health crisis in your family or with you personally.

Jesus has help for us when we are worried and stressed regarding our finances. Let me share some thoughts with you from Matthew 6:19-34.

Throughout Matthew 6, Jesus deals with our relationship to the Father. In the first half of the chapter (verses 1-18), He tells us to live out our spiritual disciplines in the presence of the Father, and not before men. In the second half of the chapter (verses 19-34), He gives us four major principles of practicing His presence and thereby overcoming worry and anxiety.

First, Jesus teaches us to hold lightly earthly things and hold tightly eternal things (6:19-21). How tightly are you holding on to things you can never take into eternity? How about easing up your grip and letting go?

Second, we must keep a clear outlook on life (6:22-23). Anyone who wears glasses knows that you must keep them clean if you are to see clearly. Jesus says the eye is the light of the whole body and if you

have the wrong outlook on life you will be full of darkness. If your goal is to only have your own needs met, then within you is psychological and spiritual darkness. Keep a generous outlook on life, on others!

Third, we must not let money get in the driver's seat of our life (6:24). Jesus tells us we cannot be a slave to God and money. God is really only concerned with two things about you and money: how you get it and what you do with it. If you don't get it honestly, you then serve it rather than God. If you don't spend it by letting Him be Lord of it, you serve it rather than Him.

Fourth, our emotions must be taught to obey what Jesus teaches (6:25-34). The strong presence of anxiety and worry in our life indicate that negative and harmful feelings have taken the governing role.

Jesus gives us some logical steps to take in reordering our thought processes. Here are seven steps the Lord gives in putting the mind in charge of the feelings as a key to overcoming worry and anxiety.

First, He teaches that life itself is more important than the things needed to sustain it: food and clothing (or whatever else).

Second, He points us to the example of the birds. If God ensures the lesser things of His creation are fed, has He not also provided a process whereby we may be cared for as well?

Third, Jesus shows us the complete futility of worry, "Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?" Worry serves no positive purpose.

Fourth, our Lord points us to the flowers of the field. If God would take such intricate care to make sure that a flower which blooms for only a day is clothed with tremendous beauty; how much more is God concerned to clothe us with beauty?

Fifth, it is the pagans (those who do not know God) who worry. We are children of the Father. He knows our needs, and we must trust Him to provide.

Sixth, we must seek first His kingdom. When your attention is absorbed in your own welfare rather than centering first upon God's concerns, things get out of balance. Seek God first and He will take care of all essential things.

Seventh, live one day at a time: "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

Are you anxious and burdened with worry? Take these words from the Lord and ask Him to use them to renew your mind. Cast all your care upon Him, for He cares for you!

**George O. Wood, general superintendent of the U.S. Assemblies of God, shares this message in its entirety at [www.ag.org](http://www.ag.org).**

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