

## My Word ... by Les Lofquist

IFCA International has a reach far beyond your own place of ministry. Here are a few reports...

Our thoughts and prayers this month have so often involved the catastrophe in Haiti. The reports have been horrifying to the degree that we in America can hardly comprehend it. But your hearts have been stirred and you responded by sending \$74,440 to the IFCA Haitian Earthquake Relief Fund. The IFCA Benevolence Committee is determining the wisest ways to assist Haiti with immediate food and medical assistance as well as long-range rebuilding of key ministry sites (churches, seminary buildings, etc.) Pray for Haiti!

IFCA National Youth Representative, Travis Huseby, just returned from a trip to Ukraine and Russia with SGA Vice President (and IFCA member) Eric Mock to meet with key Ukrainian and Russian Youth Ministry leaders and share the burden of IFCA to have truly Bible-based, church-centered youth ministries. Travis spoke at two conferences for young people and youth ministry leaders. It is also exciting that Russian Baptist National Youth Minister, Evgeny Bakhmutsky, is the featured speaker at the IFCA Youth Convention in Springfield, MO June 20-26. Evgeny was at the 2009 IFCA Adult Convention in Kalamazoo where he joined IFCA as an individual member.

There are many other things happening in IFCA:

- IFCA to Israel Study Trip leaves in a week (31 are going – want to go in 2012?)
- IFCA Sunday is scheduled for February 28 (have you received the materials?)
- IFCA Week of Prayer is scheduled for May 2-8 (is this on your church calendar?)
- Vision America continues to gain momentum (17 sponsors / 8 plants)
- Vision World continues to seek IFCA partners (is your church praying for 100 new missionaries?)

Keep praying! God is working in and through IFCA.



## So, You Want to Run, Do You?

by W.W. McEad

Some years ago I sat in a meeting where the speaker made the following statement: *"The Christian life is not a sprint; it is, rather, a long-distance race that requires supernatural endurance."*



Can you understand ... and more importantly ... can you identify with what the speaker was saying? I can and I know many of you reading this will nod your heads in agreement as you read these words.

Hebrews 12.1 certainly alerts us to the fact that the

Christian life requires the mentality of a marathon runner as opposed to that of a sprinter. The distinction between the two has often been called to the forefront of my mind in times of great stress and testing. My life, at times, seems to be a string of one challenge after another; like the waves of the sea upon the shore, or the freight cars of a long train that comes rumbling through my life.

I know that God is trying to teach me something about endurance and it does provide some small comfort that there are more than just a few friends of mine who are going through similar classes in this school of spiritual instruction.

Endurance is the key to so many facets of life ... particularly the spiritual life and the life of ministry. Have you ever wanted to throw in the towel? Have you ever experienced some trial or burden that just won't go away and it wears you down and beats you up to the point that you want to give up? If so, the Bible has some encouragement:

- *"run with endurance the race that is set before us", Heb. 12.1*
- *"be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord", 1 Cor. 15.58*
- *"Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary", Gal. 6.9*
- *"the one who endures to the end, he will be saved" Mk. 13.13*

I am learning, albeit slowly and reluctantly, that many of our trials and even the rigors of spiritual ministry can become burdens that don't go away quickly. Rather, they seem to clamp down on us like the jaws of a pit bull, refusing to let go. Though we may want to be released from their burden, often we can't be and must, therefore, learn to endure them patiently.

Have you ever considered what it is that creates within us that desire to just up and quit the race? What is it that causes the muscles to grow weary? What is it that steals away our breath and leaves us gasping for air? Oftentimes it is related to some sin in our life. Sins such as worry, fear, impatience, disobedience, lack of waiting on the Lord, and pride can be the ruin of endurance running. Like a bad diet they can rob our soul of the nourishment it needs to run our race well.

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**Moscow Bible Church**, Moscow ID (VA Plant) began regular Sunday morning services on January 3 under the leadership of **N.I.C.E.** Missionary Pastor, **Matt Hallson**. The work is sponsored by three Vision

America churches: **Southwick Bible Church**, Kendrick ID, **Deary Community Bible Church**, Deary ID, and **Albion Community Church**, Albion WA. Each of these VA churches is providing one man to serve on the beginning church board as well as musicians to assist in the services.

**Severance Community Church** in Severance, CO (VA Plant) shared a "Harvest Dinner" with over 30 people attending. **Les and Nancy Gwin** were thrilled with the response and praise the Lord for the opportunity to share the love of Christ in this way. SCC is also seeking a new meeting location. One possibility is the local school. Pray for wisdom as the steering committee works through this decision as it will significantly increase the weekly rental fees. Pray also for Les and Nancy's personal support to increase as they are serving radically under supported.

**Battle Ground Bible Church**, Lafayette IN is trusting the Lord that 2010 will be the year in which the launch of a new church for the Wea Township area of Lafayette will take place. The church is networking with Midwest Church Extension in an effort to locate and appoint a church planter to lead this new ministry.

**Cornerstone Community Bible Church**, Galveston IN (VA Plant) began ministry in September 2009. **Pastors Aaron Webb and Jeremy Jones** are leading this new work under the auspices of **Midwest Church Extension**. This new plant is in need of spiritual partners for prayer and fellowship; any takers to become a Vision America church?

**Dan and Aimee Reehoff** are hoping to sell their home in NE Illinois and locate in Waukesha, WI. They started the **Dayspring Baptist Church** in May 2009, and have enjoyed a high attendance of 48. Dan also requests prayer for employment opportunities in the area.

**River's Edge Bible Fellowship**, Pecatonica IL (VA Plant) has a new sponsor (VA Church)! **Grace Baptist Church** in Glidden IA has become a sponsoring church for this work. Currently the church in Pecatonica, under the leadership of **Pastor Eric Mock**, is asking the Lord's wisdom about a potential purchase of a vacant church facility. They currently meet in the local bank.

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**"The single most effective evangelistic methodology under heaven is planting new churches."** C.P.W. – "Church Planting For A Greater Harvest"

- ◆ A church older than 10 years, typically takes 89 attendees to reach one person for Christ per year.
- ◆ A church which is three to 10 years old, typically takes seven attendees to reach one person for Christ per year.
- ◆ A church which is zero to three years old typically takes three attendees to reach one person for Christ per year



**Vision World**  
IFCA International Church Planting

We rejoice over two more churches who have committed to being a Vision World Church. **Grace Bible Church**, Fair Oaks CA (Pastor Rick Gregory) and **Calvary Bible Church**, Hanover PA (Pastor Michael Osladil). Both congregations made a commitment to glorify God by becoming a sending church to meet the demand for missionaries to take the Gospel message to the utmost parts of the world. What a blessing to see the Lord at work in these bodies of believers. This brings the total Vision World churches to seven (7). Praise the Lord!

These pastors, like you, are very busy in their ministry. They have taken the time to evaluate their ministry and have determined they are either already meeting the requirements of being a Vision World church or are on the road to getting there. Maybe some of you are already there and don't realize it and haven't taken the time to register. Let's review the requirements with an eye towards your current state relative to the requirements outlined at [www.ifca.org](http://www.ifca.org).

#### TEACH

As the pastor, do you regularly preach and teach on the role of the local church as the only Biblical source from which missionaries are identified, trained up (using church based leadership training or Bible colleges)? What does "regularly" mean? That's up to you. Perhaps you've not done a series of messages on this topic for some time; now would be the time to make it happen and then keep the topic in front of the congregation. If you are already doing this or have plans to start doing so in the near future, you have the first requirement met to be a Vision World church.

#### PRAY

Do you and the congregation regularly pray for missionaries? There's that word "regularly" again. At one church there is a ladies' ministry called *Hold the Ropes* that meets to pray for missionaries at the same time as choir practice on Sunday evening. A formal time such as this is not necessary to meet this requirement for being a Vision World church but it does help. Other churches set aside one Wednesday night prayer meeting a month that focuses on praying for missionaries. If, in your judgment, you are regularly praying for missionaries, you have the second requirement for being a Vision World church met.

#### TRUST

Maybe you don't currently have someone in your congregation that God is calling to be a missionary. Are you praying "*the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into His harvest*" (Matthew 9:39) from your church? Are you trusting God to answer that prayer in His time and His way for Him to raise up someone from your congregation? If so, you have another requirement to become a Vision World church met.

#### MENTOR

Should the Lord raise up someone from your congregation are you willing to see that they are mentored during their development? The best person to mentor an emerging leader is another leader such as yourself. At the same time, there may another leader in your leadership team that would take this person on. If you are willing to be the person's mentor, the fourth requirement has been met to be a Vision World church.

How did you do in your self evaluation? If you meet these four requirements and haven't taken the time to enroll as a Vision World church, It would be a huge encouragement to the entire fellowship if would take the time NOW to do so. There are over 1000 churches in the IFAC fellowship. We're asking the Lord to use 1 out of 10 churches to be a Vision World church. Will you be one of those?

The writer to the Hebrews clearly exhorts us to “lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us.” Otherwise they become like sandbags tied to our feet that will impede our ability to run with endurance. Sin weights us down; it nails our feet to the floor and saps our energy. To run well requires that we cast off our sins.

And then we are to “fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith” (Heb. 12.2). It is a matter of re-directing our focus, of gaining a true perspective. Why look to Jesus? Because ...

1) **He is the author and perfecter of our faith.** He can increase our faith and sanctify it so that it can endure any and all trials. Look to Him, asking for more and stronger faith to run the race.

2) **He is our example.** “Who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb. 12.2).

Our Savior endured the cross, He bore the shame, and now He is exalted in glory. We are told to “consider Him, who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart” (Heb. 12.3). By looking to Jesus, and considering His sufferings, we will gain strength for our battles. As He endured, so by His grace shall we.

3) **He is our great reward.** Being with Christ is our goal, our finish line, our reward. We run not for perishable trophies and reward, but for an imperishable one (1 Cor. 9.25). We are not to focus on the temporal, but on that which is eternal, knowing that there waits beyond our present sufferings and burdens an eternal weight of glory with Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 4.16-18). The reward for all who love the Savior is that we “will see His face” (Rev. 22.4). Let this blessed hope fill you with joy while in the midst of your grueling race.

Frankly, I am not happy about the fact that there are still many hurdles to jump, many gaping pits to avoid, many turbulent waters to cross, and the length of the race is usually longer rather than shorter. There will probably still be times when I will grow tired and weary, discouraged and depressed. I suspect that there may still be times when I will be tempted to think of quitting and walking off the course. The future holds the same for you, my dear friend, if you are going to run the race as you ought. When those temptations come, may we be found to persevere and endure by looking to the Lord and waiting for His grace.

He is with you and has promised never to abandon you. Go to God, wait on Him and He will empower you with new strength, for He is the God of the second-wind. Remember His words, “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest”. And again the promise, “Yet they who wait for the Lord will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary.” Oh God! ... grant to us Thy strength to run with endurance!

## Membership Renewal

Did you know that you can **renew** your IFCA International membership on line? Go to [www.ifca.org/renew](http://www.ifca.org/renew) and fill out the form in just a few minutes. THEN go to [www.ifca.org/donations](http://www.ifca.org/donations) and pay on line by choosing the option for membership renewal. Remember to do BOTH steps and you are all set for another year! Thanks for allowing us to serve you in this way!

## Financial Report

We praise the Lord for the financial provision He has made for this Fellowship. The 2009 books were closed last Friday with the ledger showing that last year's income exceeded our expenses by an amount of \$749.25. As you rejoice with us, please pray for continued provision in the year ahead.



## Web-links

These links are given as potential resources for your use and edification. Inclusion here does not in any way imply that everything they may contain has the endorsement of IFCA International

[Streaming Radio Guide](#)  
[Pictures of Israel](#)  
[Today's Children's Ministry](#)  
[Praise Charts Praise & Worship Music](#)

## Unique Ministry Opportunity

*Changing lives two at a time*

**Ruth Harbor** is a Christ-centered home, in Des Moines IA, for young women experiencing an unplanned pregnancy. They are seeking a couple with compassion and a heart to care for young women who also are willing to lovingly speak truth into their lives. This full-time position is for a couple not currently parenting, but parenting experience is certainly a plus.

The House Parent Assistant position, suited for a single female, will also be available this fall.

To learn more about Ruth Harbor or the house parent positions, please visit [this link](#). OR: See “Employment” at [www.RuthHarbor.org](http://www.RuthHarbor.org).

If you know of someone who may be interested and qualified for either of these positions, please encourage them to seek more information regarding these ministry opportunities by referring them to the links cited above

“The Great Commission is not an option to be considered; it is a command to be obeyed” — *Hudson Taylor*



## 2010 Convention Springfield, Illinois

June 28 - July 2, 2010

Featuring: *Dr. Charles Pettit, Alex Montoya, Bobby Scott, and Gary Gilley*  
For complete information click on the link displayed on the [IFCA Home Page](#). Registrations are being taken now!

### Convention Web Links

[Convention 2010 Web Page](#)  
[Download Registration Form & Info](#)  
[Register On Line](#)  
[Women's Conference Info](#)

“Any church that is not seriously involved in helping fulfill the Great Commission has forfeited its biblical right to exist.” — *Oswald J. Smith*

## PRAYER PROMPTERS

### VISION AMERICA

- for additional church plants and for existing churches to sponsor them and become VISION AMERICA churches.

### VISION WORLD

- for churches that will preach, pray, identify and send church planting missionaries to the foreign field.

### HAITI

- for fruitful opportunities to minister the Gospel, as well as temporal needs, in the midst of this national crisis.

### IFCA FINANCES

- continued provision of the needs of our Fellowship in order that we might carry on the ministry we have been entrusted with.

### CONVENTION 2010

- for all of those working behind the scenes to put all the details together in planning and other arrangements.

### ISRAEL 2010 TRIP

- for safety in travel and during the tour; for blessing in fellowship and in the entire experience for each member of the group.

