

My Word ... by Les Lofquist

The planning for our 2010 Convention is heating up! It's going to be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Springfield, Illinois June 28 through July 2. With the convention theme "Passion for Ministry" we urge you to come and get recharged! There's still room for you.

We have the Church Extension Conference hosted by Southern View Chapel and Pastor Gary Gilley before the convention. [Read about it here](#). This conference is from Saturday, June 26 through Monday, June 28. Then the convention Registration is from 1 to 5 pm on Monday, June 28. The Convention Schedule with room assignments may be [accessed here](#). The biographies of our General Session speakers may be [seen here](#). And a synopsis of each of the Seminars may be [seen here](#). All of this information will assist you in your planning.

Wednesday and Thursday afternoons will be free of scheduling, with several optional activities available. A Theological Roundtable Discussion will be led by Gary Gilley both afternoons for those interested. Also, the Lincoln Museum & Library and Historic District are wonderful destinations for either or both afternoons. On Thursday afternoon we will have the IFCA Golf Outing at Lincoln Green Golf Course (\$22 for 9 holes including electric cart). If you are interested in golfing, contact the Home Office at 800.347.1840 to reserve your tee time or email margie@ifca.org. We'll have prizes for Lowest Score, Longest Drive, and Closest to the Pin.

With the great speakers, seminars, concerts, networking opportunities, food, fellowship, and encouragement you don't want to miss this year's convention! And for those looking ahead, the 2011 IFCA Convention will be in Northern Kentucky / Southside of Cincinnati featuring Ken

Ham and The Creation Museum. Those dates are June 27-July 1, 2011. Mark your calendars now.



Thinking Regionally



Joseph P. Smith

I was called to my first parish in September of 1960. I had finished the Pastor's Course at Moody, but wasn't quite sure what came next. But two rural "Bible" churches in Wisconsin voted unanimously to call me, and I was sure God was in it. One was in a fellowship called the IFCA and the other wasn't. I had no idea what I was getting into, but someone told me they were like Baptist churches, and I thought that couldn't be too bad. But what that relationship meant, or the lack of one, was a mystery to me.

I understood that I needed to be ordained. But by whom? It seemed to me that if I were ordained by independent churches, no one would know by whom I got my credentials. I certainly didn't know, and was sure no one else would either. Everybody knew what Baptist was. And I was a five year old Christian who knew nothing else. So, six months into that ministry, I asked my home church, back in Ohio to hold a council and to ordain me.

It turned out to be a nightmare. There were twenty-four men asking questions, and it was soon apparent that they weren't sure they liked each other. It turned out that 10 of them were Landmarkians. This was an idea that began in a Baptist Church known as the Landmark Baptist Church. It said that a person was saved as soon as he trusted Christ, but he wasn't a member of the Body of Christ until he joined a Baptist Church. My examination became their quarrel, with me in the middle. I had never heard such stuff, and wondered when they were really going to get down to understanding my theology. After about three and a half hours of this nonsense, they turned to that issue. Their first real question was, "Are you super, sub, or infra lapsarian. Near tears, I shot back, "Anyone who thinks he knows what occurred first in the mind of God, even before creation, has committed the sin of pride!" It didn't endear me to them, but they finally voted to ordain me anyway. They were impressed with my skills as a personal evangelist, but not my theology.

My dear pastor encouraged me, and had a wonderful Ordination message. But as I went back to Dairyland, it was with deep distrust of associations. Wonderful, warm, IFCA men dropped in from time to time, and they always invited me to something called Regionals. Not being a member, I thought I had no duty to go, and couldn't imagine what good it would do. It was nearly 60 miles from my easternmost parishioner's home to the westernmost. Most of the driving was on narrow roads with no berm Two hospitals I visited were each 25 miles away in opposite directions. If anyone were really sick, he went 60 miles away. I tried to just bury myself in the work, serve the Lord with all my heart, and take no interest in what others did. No matter how much others kindly asked, I didn't go to Regionals.

But there was a growing body of unanswered questions, mostly about Pastoral Theology, that didn't seem to have sure answers. Everything seemed so black and white at Moody. But I was now

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31 VISION AMERICA CHURCHES

Grace Bible - Portage WI □ Edgewood Bible - Edgewood WA □ Lewis & Clark Bible - Astoria OR □ Helvetia Community - Hillsboro OR □ Byron Center Bible - Byron Center MI □ Grandville Bible - Grandville MI □ Quentin Road Bible Baptist - Lake Zurich IL ** □ Community Bible - Paris IL □ Portage Bible - Portage IN □ Grace Baptist - Glidden IA □ Grace Bible - Colorado Springs CO □ Fairmount Bible - Golden CO □ Mesa Hills Bible - Colorado Springs CO □ Southwick Bible - Kendrick ID □ Deary Community Bible - Deary ID □ Albion Community - Albion WA □ Belmont Bible - Downers Grove IL □ Calvary Bible - Osceola IA □ Bemidji Baptist - Bemidji MN □ Evangel Bible Church of Berkeley - Berkeley CA □ Curtiss Street Bible Fellowship - Mazomanie WI □ Calvary Bible - Fond du Lac WI □ Dalton Bible - Dalton WI □ Summit Bible - Summit IL □ Potosi Community Bible - Potosi WI □ Grace Bible - Adell WI □ Immanuel Bible - Sheboygan WI □ Oxford Bible - Oxford WI □ Crossroads Community Bible - Greenfield WI □ Grace Bible - Hanford CA

** Dual Sponsor

9 VISION AMERICA PLANTS

Faith Bible - Rio WI □ Antioch Bible - Beaverton OR □ Arabic Baptist - Oak Park MI □ Cape Baptist - Cape Coral FL □ Rivers Edge Bible Fellowship - Pecatonica IL □ Severance Community - Severance CO □ Moscow Bible - Moscow ID □ Dayspring Baptist - Waukesha WI □ Evangel Bible Church of Orange County - Irvine CA

Every IFCA church can be and ought to be involved in Vision America on some level. A church that commits to stay abreast of the needs and developments of, and to regularly pray for, an existing church plant; to encourage the church plant through regular contact and opportunities for joint fellowship; and to receive special offerings for the church plant to help underwrite special needs or projects can be a sponsoring **PROMISE CHURCH**.

A sponsoring **PARTNER CHURCH** networks with other established churches, each one contributing what it can in addition to Prayer and Encouragement, toward the establishment of the new IFCA church plant. The Partner Church may contribute personnel, periodic but regular offerings or budgeted funds, ministry teams and leadership to help cover the ministry bases as the new church plant gets established.

A sponsoring **PARENT CHURCH** gives birth to a church plant, supporting the new church plant in all of the ways previously mentioned and doing it on their own.

There are not many churches that can be Parent Churches. **Every one of our churches in IFCA International can be, and ought to be, a Promise Church.** Many of our churches could be Partner Churches. **What is YOUR church doing? We'd like to know! You can tell us by sending an e-mail to: vainfo@ifca.org**

9 VISION WORLD CHURCHES

Calvary Bible - Hanover PA □ Edgewood Bible - Edgewood WA □ Evergreen Bible - Vancouver WA □ Faith Bible of South Hill - Puyallup WA □ Grace Bible - Colorado Springs CO □ Grace Bible - Fair Oaks CA □ Jenison Bible - Hudsonville MI □ Mesa Hills Bible - Colorado Springs CO □ Ottawa Center Chapel - Coopersville MI

At the IFCA convention in June 2009, Vision World was presented by Dr. Les Lofquist as the vision for IFCA member churches to become actively involved in sending missionaries to the harvest fields of the world. Being supporting churches of the missionary enterprise is not enough. The New Testament words of our Lord compel us to send people who will carry the gospel message. The purpose of Vision World, as described on www.ifca.org, is that 100 churches would pray intentionally for the Lord to raise up 100 church planters within their midst.

To date there are nine churches that have stepped out in faith as a Vision World church. One of the most recent enrollees is Grace Bible Church, Fair Oaks CA, pastored by Dr. Rick Gregory. In describing why he enrolled his church in Vision World, Rick wrote:

It finally dawned on me! The IFCA Vision World is a heart attitude that I and my church embrace! When I realized that we already met all of the aspects that qualify a church to be a participant in the IFCA's Vision World cooperative effort, I wanted to encourage others by identifying our church as already participating. Very little changed - we continue to regularly preach on the role & importance of the local church in identifying and training missionaries; regularly pray that God will raise up missionaries from our congregation; seek to identify by June 2011 a likely missionary candidate; and when (and if) we do so, commit to assisting that missionary to the field as much as God will enable us to do. I have to believe that there are MANY more Vision World churches within the IFCA than what have stepped forward to sign up. Let's encourage one another as we serve in this confederation of Gospel-preaching, disciple-making, missions-impassioned, Christ-honoring churches! Let your passion for missions be known!"

What an encouraging note. Rick's observation that "I have to believe that there are MANY more Vision World churches within IFCA..." is one to ponder. Does that describe your church? If so, what is keeping you from being a source of encouragement to other churches by enrolling as a Vision World church today? **Enroll on-line today!**

facing things I had never imagined. So, when I was invited to a Regional in Waukesha, I went, hoping there was someone there who would hear my questions without shouting, "You dummy, you!"

It started with a prayer time, which was nice, but when we went into the first session I couldn't believe what I was hearing. The speaker's strategy for church growth was to introduce irrelevant controversy to the community, and then harvest the people who agreed with him! A direct quote was, "A little rabble-rousing is good for the church."

Little did I know that most of the Pastors there, didn't agree with him. He had been asked to speak because his church was growing. I was becoming more and more frightened about sharing my ignorance with any of these men. At lunch I sat across from a small milktoast looking guy, with short balding and graying hair and little round glasses. He didn't look threatening. So I decided to give him a real poser, one that probably didn't have an answer. It was a real problem for me, and one I was sure would not make me look stupid for not being sure of the answer. He listened intently, and then said, "I never had a problem exactly like that, but here's one that comes close."

He described the differences between his problem and mine, and then went into a detailed chronological description of how he handled it. After what seemed like ten minutes, he paused, looked straight at me and said, "Joe, don't ever do that! It's probably the dumbest thing I ever did!" Then he proceeded to tell me what he *should* have done, complete with arguments and Scripture.

My reaction? All I could think of was, "I've found a totally honest pastor!" His name was Bill Pederson. He was the pastor of the Waukesha Bible Church, and he became my mentor. I rose from the table and found an application to join the IFCA before I went home.

Men shouldn't go to Regionals just because there might be some help there for them. There might be a confused young pastor there that you can help. Let's plan Regional meetings with ample time built into the schedule to allow for us to intentionally identify with one another in this difficult task of ministry. Let's go to Regional meetings looking for a hurting heart that we can humbly help! Let's all look for creative ways to encourage and provide for this kind of ministry!

Joe Smith is a longtime IFCA member, pastor, church planting pioneer, Bible Institute professor, and pastor to pastors. He currently serves as the Minnesota Regional President and serves on the executive committee of the Council of Regional Presidents for IFCA International.

PRAYER PROMPTERS

- VISION AMERICA
- VISION WORLD
- IFCA FINANCES
- CONVENTION 2010
 - Safety in Travel
 - God's Blessing on Speakers
 - Continuing Results
 - Final Details and Planning
- YOUTH CONVENTION
 - Salvation/Commitment Decisions
 - Convention Staff
- SUMMER MISSION TRIPS
- SUMMER OUTREACH PLANS

2010 Convention

Springfield, Illinois

June 28 - July 2, 2010

Featuring: Dr. Charles Petitt, 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](#)

How to Engage In Great Commission Praying

How to Pray for Believers

It is interesting to note that much of the praying that was done in the New Testament was done on behalf of believers. Jesus certainly modeled this pattern with His prayer in John 17. Paul likewise models and teaches this practice throughout his epistles (Eph. 1.15-19; 3.14-19; Col. 1.9-11; 1 Thess. 3.11-13).

As Christians we should lift one another to the throne of grace daily. One writer said it well, "More believers on their knees praying will result in more Christians on their feet evangelizing." Prayer for believers that focuses on the fulfillment of the Great Commission should be at the heart of every Christian's prayer life. The following prayer suggestions can help believers pray with a view toward the Great Commission.

Using Matt. 9.37-38, John 17.11-24, and Col. 1.9-11 as a guide, pray for.

- Christ to send believers into His harvest fields (Matt. 9.38)
- Christ to keep Christians in His name and character (John 17.11)
- Christians to have Christ's joy made full in themselves (John 17.13)
- Christ to guard and protect believers from the evil one (John 17.15)
- Christ to sanctify (set apart) believers in the truth of God (John 17.17)
- Christians to be unified in one mission, purpose and spirit even as the Father and Son are one (John 17.21-22)
- Christians to be where Christ is and join His work (John 17.24)
- Christians to be filled with spiritual wisdom, pleasing in all ways to Christ, strengthened spiritually, mentally, physically, and emotionally, and bearing fruit in every good work (Col. 1.10-11)

How to Pray for Unbelievers

Evangelistic praying should include prayer for believers, evangelism events, and unbelievers. Prayer on behalf of lost people is clearly mandated by Christ in Matthew 6.9-10. The Apostle Paul models and exhorts believers concerning prayer for the lost (see Romans 10.1-2; 1 Timothy 2.1-4). R.A. Torrey, one of America's great evangelists, pointed out that throughout history some of the greatest enemies of the gospel have become its most valiant defenders.

What might a believer pray for someone that is without Christ?

- Pray for receptive and repentant Hearts (Luke 8.5-12)
- Pray for their spiritual eyes and ears to be opened to the truth of Christ (2 Cor. 4.3-4; Matt. 13.15)
- Pray for them to have God's attitude toward sin (John 16.8)
- Pray for the person to be released to believe (2 Cor. 10.3-4; 2 Timothy 2.25-26)
- Pray for God to save them and then send them into his harvest field (Matthew 9.35-38)