

# Connections

LINKING RHEMA GRADUATES AROUND THE WORLD

inside:

4

// Navigating  
Through  
Tough Times

10

// TIPS: Five Steps  
Toward Progress

14

// Should Ministers  
Work a Secular Job?

18

// 11 Questions to  
Ask Yourself if  
You're Going  
Through  
Tough Times

20

// Where Are  
They Now?

Navigating Through  
Tough Times

spring/summer 2011



KENNETH HAGIN MINISTRIES'

# CAMPMEETING

## 7.24-30.2011

ON THE RHEMA USA CAMPUS

[WWW.RHEMA.ORG/CM](http://WWW.RHEMA.ORG/CM)

1-866-312-0972

**MINISTRY FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY:**

ADULT SERVICES / SUMMER BLITZ (YOUTH SERVICES) / RHEMA Kids  
(CHILDREN'S SERVICES—AGES 3 AND UP)

**SERVICE TIMES:**

SUN. 7:00 PM. / MON.—SAT. 10:00 A.M.,  
2:30 PM. & 7:30 PM.

IT'S AMAZING WHAT GOD CAN DO IF YOU'LL  
**JUST GET HERE.**



# The Bottom Line

## Applying Knowledge Decreases Difficulty

DOUG JONES | RMAI/RAA National Director

When one considers the life of the Apostle Paul, so many facets of his life and ministerial influence come to mind. In relation to the message he carried throughout his world, he was definitely a voice and not an echo. In relation to fellow believers, churches, and ministers, he was not timid. He encouraged, warned, and charged to ensure that they ran with patience the race that was set before them.

From the beginning of Paul's ministry until the end, it seems only respectful to conclude that Paul functioned much like a sentinel. A sentinel is one who stands guard—a watchman if you will.

But in the medical world, a sentinel is something that indicates the presence of disease. If there is one thing we know about disease, it is this: disease hinders us and keeps us from functioning at our full potential. Disease increases the degree of difficulty exponentially.

Throughout his epistles Paul addressed issues that, if left unattended, would eventually lead to an increased degree of difficulty. This difficulty would be not only within our personal lives but also within our marriages, families, and jobs; our fellowship with others; and the administration, development, and outreach of the Church.

Within Paul's writings he admonished us to understand:

- That we are parts of a body. Therefore, acting independently of one another will increase the degree of difficulty for us (1 Cor. 12:12–31).
- That how we behave in our private life can increase the degree of difficulty within our public life and in some instances disqualify us completely from ministry (1 Tim. 3:1–16).
- That we must monitor how we interact with others if we intend to decrease the degree of difficulty we experience in this life (Eph. 4:21–32).
- That we are righteous. Failure to understand who we are in relationship with God, how to act upon that understanding, and what our responsibility is in walking worthy of this position will definitely increase the difficulty level within our life (Romans chapter 5, Galatians, and Eph. 4:1–32).
- That false doctrine is a formidable entity that must be identified and repudiated. Failure to follow Paul's wisdom in this area will increase the degree of difficulty within our life and the lives of those who hear us (1 Tim. 4:16; Acts 20:28–31).

Throughout his epistles, Paul encourages us, warns us, and charges us about many issues. The list could go on and on. Thank God for the Pauline epistles!

But wait a moment—apparently the Holy Spirit knew that the Pauline epistles could not contain all of the encouragement, warnings, and charges that we must embrace in order to be all we can be. So He chose people like Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. He chose Peter, James, and Jude, and allowed us to hear from their perspective. Paul's letters do not contain all the encouragement, warnings, and charges that we should embrace in order to avoid adding difficulty to our lives.

**Which brings me to my point:** Whether we are addressing spiritual issues, life issues, or church growth issues, no one person, ministry, book, or seminar can provide everything we will need in order to be successful. Likewise, not *one* of the contributors in this edition of *Connections* has *the* definitive answer. Each of them addresses the same problems from different perspectives. It's our hope that by gleaning from *all* of them, you can come up with balanced solutions for your own specific needs.

So, as you read the pages that follow, keep in mind all that is written here is not the sum and total of all that needs to be said about *Navigating Through Tough Times*. But it's written for the purpose of stirring us to consider our ways. Our hope is that just maybe one idea or paragraph may give you an ember that, when fanned into a flame, will assist you in emerging from the difficulties you may currently be facing within your ministry.

Knowledge applied decreases difficulty . . . always!

Serving you as you serve Him,

Douglas E. Jones  
RMAI /RAA National Director



**Alumni Office**

**Front Row** (left to right): Ann Graves, Laura McKown, Karen Jensen, Ryann Weaver  
**Back Row:** Doug Jones, Joe Duinick

**RMAI/RAA Staff** Rev. Douglas E. Jones, RMAI/RAA National Director; Rev. Joe Duinick, Missions Director/Staff Minister; Rev. Karen Jensen, *Connections* Editor/Staff Minister; Ryann Weaver, RAA/Missions Secretary; Ann Graves, RMAI Secretary/Assistant to National Director; Laura McKown, Receptionist/Office Coordinator **Graphic Artists** Kristen Cook, Lydia Galaz, Jeanne Hoover, Amanda King, Amber Warner, Rose Wenning **Editorial Staff** Jeff Bardel, Kimberly Hennenfent, Karen Jensen, Bob Murphy, Peggy Rice, Janet Wagner **Photographer** Phil Anglin **Project Managers** Christi Finley, Debra Leedy, Elisabeth Rogers, Casey Shirley, Kris Taylor

## Connections | spring/summer 2011, vol. XXXVI, no. 1

*Connections* is published biannually by RHEMA Bible Church, AKA Kenneth Hagin Ministries, a nonprofit corporation, in association with the RHEMA Bible Training Center Alumni Association. Editorial offices: 1025 W. Kenosha • Broken Arrow, Oklahoma

© 2011 RHEMA Bible Church, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or part without written permission is prohibited. Printed in the U.S.A. Send all U.S. mail to: *Connections* • P.O. Box 50126 • Tulsa, Oklahoma 74150-0126

**Address Corrections Requested:** Did you know that every time *Connections* is mailed, hundreds of copies are returned to us? Those undelivered copies represent all the alumni who won't receive their copy of *Connections* because they haven't notified us of an address change! Each returned copy of *Connections* costs this ministry approximately \$1.50 in postage and handling. So please—write or call us when you have an address change, and help us curb waste and unnecessary expense! Thank you for your help!

# Navigating Through Tough Times

*Ministries go through tough times.*

*Here are some solutions your fellow grads have found.*

## Take Steps Toward Change

**Tony Umber ('96, '97)**

*Tony Umber and his wife, Kelly ('97, '98), pastor Genesee Valley Church in Flint, Michigan.*

[www.gvchurch.tv](http://www.gvchurch.tv)

After eight years of pastoring, Tony Umber says he finally came to the end of his rope.

"I knew what God had spoken to my heart about our church being an influence in Flint," he says, "but when I looked around, it wasn't happening. I felt frustrated and defeated. Something had to change."

Tony says he began dissecting *everything*, from the parking lot to the pulpit. "We asked, 'Why do we do church this way?' And we found that sometimes we were just doing things the way we had seen church done."

"I believe one of the biggest pitfalls for a pastor is to think, 'If we build it, they will come,'" says Tony. "Second is to think, 'If we pray long and hard enough for revival, God will just bring the increase.' But if we're not seeing what we want, then doing more of the same won't produce a different result."

Tony reports that within 16 months of making changes, his church quadrupled in size and they're now having multiple Sunday morning services. "We gained new momentum," he says.



### What Tony's been reading:

- *Blue Ocean Strategy* by W. Chan Kim & Renée Mauborgne
- *First Impressions* by Mark L. Waltz
- *Fusion* by Nelson Searcy
- *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team* by Patrick Lencioni
- *Good to Great* by Jim Collins
- *Launch* by Nelson Searcy & Kerrick Thomas
- *No Perfect People Allowed* by John Burke

## TIPS FOR MAKING SOME CHANGES

**Start with yourself.** "I had to look in the mirror and admit the common denominator was *me*. Before, I only prayed and studied for sermons and ministry, not for personal growth or development. And because the church wasn't succeeding, it sucked the life out of me. Then it was easier to be discouraged and go to bed early than it was to stay up and pray.

"If you want to see something different, you have to *do* something different. I always understood the vitality of what prayer offered; I just didn't do it. Now I prioritize, and I *make* the time to maintain my relationship with God. Here's the reality: If I pray, I'll succeed. If I don't pray, I'll fail."

**Examine your services.** "We asked our core volunteers, 'Is our church a place you want to bring a visitor?' The answer was a startling *no*. The biggest reason was, they didn't know what would take place in a service, or how long it would go. I thought everyone was hungry for the Word, so I'd preach up to an hour, really ministering to believers only. But the truth is, church needs to develop and disciple believers *as well as reach the lost*.

"So we became intentional about growing church, instead of just letting church happen. Now on Sunday mornings, we're reaching out to the unbeliever *and* ministering to the saints. We do more discipling through our Life Group meetings during the week. Rather than saying, 'We're just gonna preach the Word,' we put more time into planning services. We've taken the fluff out."

**Lead on purpose.** "Probably the greatest thing that has changed the course of our church is that I became *a student of leadership*," says Tony. "Before, I didn't do anything to develop as a leader. Now I observe ministers who are successful. How and why do they do what they do? I read books, listen to CDs, and go to conferences. I eat the hay and leave the sticks, using the principles that apply to us, both spiritual and natural."

"In the past I pastored from week to week. *Maybe* I would prepare two weeks ahead. Now I say, 'Holy Spirit, You can help me prepare months and even years ahead,' and it's just as much inspired by the Holy Spirit as being up late Saturday night preparing a dynamic word. Now I let the Holy Spirit help me plan out my year. The further ahead I prepare, the more we can *plan* and make it a success from the natural side."

## Adapt Your Style, Expand Your Influence

**Joe Cameneti ('82, '83)**

*Joe Cameneti and his wife, Gina ('82, '83), have pastored Believers Christian Fellowship in Warren, Ohio, for 27 years. [www.PastorJoe.com](http://www.PastorJoe.com)*



When Joe Cameneti's church first started, it grew. But when growth began to plateau, Joe had to ask why. "God began to challenge my thinking and pushed me out of my comfort zone so we could expand our influence," he says.

"In my community there were only so many people looking for a doctrine-based teaching style," says Joe. "I had already pulled those in, and then the church stopped growing. **When growth stops happening, it's time to start questioning.**"

Joe discovered that his preaching style and message length were no longer culturally relevant. So he started listening to ministers who taught the Bible from a life-experience perspective.

*Connections says: Kenneth E. Hagin was a master at using life experiences in his teaching. He constantly used real-life stories to illustrate his points, which helped listeners apply the principles to everyday life.*

"It was difficult to imagine teaching with that style," Joe says, "but I knew God was opening my heart to the much-needed shift. He helped me see that the *message* was never to change, but the *method* had to be constantly evolving."

Joe put a team together to help him make the changes, and the results have been good (see TIPS box below). "We now average 200 people a year going through membership classes," he says. "We're drawing people into our services and turning them toward God. That's what we're after!"

"Taking steps toward change can be a difficult, uncomfortable, and downright painful process," says Joe. "But it's worth it!"

✓ **Joe says:**

- **I actually pray and research now more than ever. Incorporating life-experience illustrations has probably doubled or tripled my study time.** It's challenged me to trim the fat and get to the point as I present an uncompromised message.
- No matter what we do to enhance the service, without the power of the Holy Spirit and the life of God in a service, there will be no life changes in the people.
- Now that I've seen the results, I can't imagine teaching any other way.

### 🔗 TIPS FOR RELEVANT MESSAGES

**Get creative help.** "I assembled a creative team (most in their early 20s, and none with much ministry experience) to help me prepare my messages. Talk about awkward! It felt so weird to sit there as they helped me decide on message titles, illustrations, and anything else that would enhance the experience. I was humbled, but it made a huge difference! I was amazed at the wisdom and ideas that poured out from these people—the majority of whom were volunteers."

**Make a plan.** "We asked, 'What does the church need to hear?' I would give the group a baseline to run on, and they would share their thoughts on each idea. This helped us set up the year in a very precise way. We knew where we were going! To develop a series I would bring the team a subject with bullet points of what I wanted to cover. Then the madness would begin! **I would never compromise Scripture or content, but I always opened myself up to different ways to present the Scripture and content.**"

**An example.** "One year I designed an eight-week series on evangelism to culminate in a 'Big Day'—its purpose was to mobilize our congregation to reach their friends and family. I brought the team my message outline, which had the super-edgy title 'How to Witness,' with lesson titles like intercession, lifestyle evangelism, Holy Spirit conviction, etc. My creativity astounded them (not!). We began to overhaul the name and titles, creating a graphic feel, and the series took on a life of its own! The title was changed to 'Go! A Simple Way to Share Your Faith.' The lesson titles were changed to Catch, Go, Pray, Power, Be, You, Tell, and Family. These titles gave me a great structure to build content for the series. My video team created an incredible intro for the series and several videos to drive home the main points. "Go!" led perfectly into our Big Day, and our church brought 500 first-time visitors, with 180 responding to the altar call. The series was so powerful that it inspired a book with the same title and content (see page 19)."

## Use a System

### Jim Dumont ('80, '81)

*Jim Dumont and his wife, Pam, pastor Erie Christian Fellowship in Erie, Pennsylvania.*  
[www.ecfchurch.org](http://www.ecfchurch.org)



When Jim Dumont's church wasn't going the way he wanted, he decided to hire an outside consultant.

When you ask him why, his answer is simple. "Pain!" he says, laughing. "We finally came to the point where we realized we needed help. **Most of us keep going through the same cycles until we realize there's got to be a better way to do things.**"

It started when a pastor friend of Jim's hired a consultant. "This pastor told us that if he hadn't gotten help, he would have run his church into the ground," he says. "So he let me and my team sit in on one of the meetings, and it's the best thing we ever did."

According to Jim, the most important thing it did for his church was give them a system to follow.

"A lot of times as ministers, we're just shooting from the hip and chasing after good ideas," says Jim. "But not every idea is something that needs to be turned into a goal for your particular church. If you don't establish your own focus, plan, and process to get there, you can waste a lot of time going down rabbit trails that steal time, energy, and momentum."

The system they put in place addresses these points: Direction, Organization, Cash, Tracking, Overview, and Refinement. "It impacts everything," says Jim. "How we hire, what we spend money on, what events we have. Now everybody's on the same page, we all know the process, and there are no surprises."

### ▶ TIPS: BENEFITS OF A SYSTEM

- **Empowerment.** "This system allows other people to be involved in the process. Before we hired a consultant, I was too involved in the day-to-day operation of our church. My focus now is to lead our organization, raise other leaders, and preach well. It's given my administrative assistant more leeway to take the reins in organizing everything. It empowers people. We all know how to make better choices."
- **Momentum.** "It's allowed us to have momentum. When you have momentum you can feel it, and you know things are going in the right direction. You still have issues, but you know you're making forward progress. That's what we're feeling now."
- **Unity.** "There's a spirit of camaraderie, more peace. Now we plan things at least a year in advance, almost two. That's so helpful for all your helps ministry teams. We don't conflict when we schedule things, our events build upon each other, and we collaborate. Now everyone's playing from the same sheet of music."

## Review Church Finances

**Tony McKinnon ('88, '89)**

*Tony McKinnon and his wife, Kimberly, pastor Family Worship Center in Williamstown, Kentucky.*

[www.fwcgc.com](http://www.fwcgc.com)



According to Tony McKinnon, most pastors enter the ministry because they love God, love people, and love to preach and teach. But that's not all there is to running a church.

"Part of the skill set necessary to pastor successfully is the ability to steward resources well," says Tony, "especially in challenging economic times."

Finances are the one constant need in ministry. "Even though God is our supply, it's our faith, vision, and drive that will often keep us on the edge financially," he says. "Faith can never be a substitute for wisdom. Wisdom says if we have \$1.00, we don't spend \$1.10. **To a large degree we can't control what comes in, but we can absolutely control what we spend.**"

Sometimes when times are good, churches can overspend. Tony's years as a farmer taught him that there are always going to be seasons of plenty and seasons of scarcity.

"It's important to apply wisdom when there's plenty," he says. "During good times we should put money away for the inevitable rainy day and pay down debt. For example, our church experienced five years of steady increase until recently. So we aggressively paid down debt, including paying off the mortgage on our building 10 years early. That immediately freed up monthly cash and saved us interest down the road. So as things have tightened up a bit, we're already better prepared to weather the season."

### ▶ TIPS FOR EXAMINING CHURCH FINANCES

- Look at regular expenses such as phone, Internet, and insurance. Are there any better rate plans, etc., that would cut costs?
- Do simple things like turn off the lights, adjust thermostats, and turn off computers to save on the electric bill.
- Take on no new debt for the short term.
- Work to pay down remaining debt as soon as possible.
- Cut back on convenience/luxury expenditures such as meals and refreshments for staff meetings, small groups, and other gatherings.
- Cut back on travel to conferences and so forth. Choose only what feeds and refreshes you best.
- Major purchases: Is it absolutely necessary? Can an item be repaired rather than replaced?
- Return on investment: Where are we getting the most bang for our buck with outreaches, events, and advertisement? Cut out or trim low-return areas.
- Examine building usage. It costs every time you open the doors. Are office hours optimal? Can events and/or services be combined so that multiple things are going on at once? (This also helps your people maximize their fuel spending.)
- Each department should examine its own spending requests. Is it necessary? Can we be more creative with what we have instead of purchasing something new?
- Depending on the degree to which income is down, missions, benevolences, and so forth have to be examined. You can't give beyond your ability, and you can sow yourself into the poorhouse if you don't use wisdom.
- Trim anything that doesn't affect the quality of ministry provided. Salaries would be one of the next items, beginning with mine. As pastor I will always take the first hit.

#### ✓ Tony says:

- Trim anything that doesn't affect the quality of ministry provided. Salaries would be one of the next items, beginning with mine. As pastor I will always take the first hit.

## Help People Become Who They're Supposed to Be

### John Grunewald ('80)

John Grunewald and his wife, Michelle ('80), pastor RHEMA Bible Church in Bonn, Germany. They are directors of RHEMA Bible Training Center Germany and International Directors of RMAI. [www.grunewald.org](http://www.grunewald.org)



John Grunewald says that for many years in the ministry, he wasn't happy with what he saw in the church. "I came into Christianity from a dysfunctional family, and I didn't like seeing the church dysfunctional also," he says. "I saw leaders hurting and quitting, I saw people leaving churches, and I had to ask, 'Why?'"

He came to the conclusion that most of the problem was with the leaders. "**So I had to be courageous enough to evaluate my own spiritual leadership,**" John says. "I had to ask, 'What would it take for my light to shine as a leader? How do I do my job so I'm not hurting people but helping them become who they're supposed to be?' I felt very inadequate."

It took him quite a few years, but John says he finally got a clear picture of his job description as a spiritual leader (see TIPS box below) and his main goal: to make disciples (Matt. 28:19–20).

### Making Disciples

"I used to think I knew something about discipleship, but I didn't," says John, "and it's the *job* of the Church! I think Ephesians 4:11–16 is an outline of the discipleship process: 'The equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry, to the building up of the Body of Christ,' and so on.

"So how do we do that? Is it just a class called Discipleship? Is there a systematic way to help people become disciples? Yes.

But if we as spiritual leaders don't know that's our job, then we're in trouble."

John says many Christians sit in church and think, 'What am I called to do?' But rather than emphasizing their 'calling,' now he focuses more on plugging them into the Body of Christ so they can be disciplined.

"How about if we're all just 'called' to help build the church, no matter what our function is in the body?" he says. "We've had a lot of teaching on gifts and callings—and there's a time for that—but it's not early on in a Christian's life. That comes later."

So John tells people as part of their discipleship training to find a place to plug in. "Or just ask me!" he says. "We'll find you a place where you can plug in and be faithful, and we'll even move you around some so you can become more knowledgeable and well-rounded. Then the day will come when your specific gifts and callings can help you get into the right place."

John wants to pass on what has taken him years to learn. "As a leader I want young Christians to experience things much earlier than I did. *With my help*, and with other people's help, we can watch them and train them."

### ✦ TIPS—JOHN'S 'JOB DESCRIPTION FOR A SPIRITUAL LEADER'

- 1) **Provide direction.** Sometimes we say this is "vision." I'm talking about "here's where this project needs to go" or "this is the mandate that God has given us."
- 2) **Assign and ask.** Once I provide clear, concise direction, then I say to my leaders, "You go to your teams and bring me back the plan of how we're going to fulfill this." **I'd always thought that because I was the leader, I had to answer all the questions—but I found out I'm supposed to be asking the questions, not answering them.** So I started asking questions that make people think and help them discover what they're supposed to do—who they are. Now answers filter their way up through the teams to my team leaders, and then they present those back to me. And almost every time I'm astounded, because it's way better than I could have come up with on my own. If there's any tweaking needed, we talk about it, or move on to step three.
- 3) **Approve, disapprove, or redirect.** When a leader brings me back ideas, I do one of these three things. Then I don't think about it again. It's a fun process for me now. I have more free time, and more *fun*, than ever before.
- 4) **Provide success.** When my team members bring something to me, I want to help them succeed. So whatever amount of coaching, training, teaching, or mentoring they need, I give. That's one of the biggest parts of my job.
- 5) **Evaluate.** We constantly evaluate performance *and* behavior. We don't kick people off the team if they don't measure up—it's our job to help them grow. It's a team process, not a "me" process. We've had to introduce a different culture—we are always honest with each other and committed to each other. From Michelle and me on down, we don't let things go if we see a problem. It's made us all closer and more secure. They know it's not just *my* job to accomplish the vision—it's the responsibility of all of us.

## Evaluate to Grow

### Mike Kalstrup ('78)

Mike Kalstrup and his wife, Joan, pastor Fellowship of Faith Christian Center in Oakland, Iowa.

[www.FellowshipOfFaith.cc](http://www.FellowshipOfFaith.cc)

Mike Kalstrup encourages leaders to make changes in good times *and* bad.

“We should *choose* to reevaluate our practices and procedures,” says Mike. “Adjustments are normal on the way to a particular destination. We’re always going to have to reevaluate, and make changes as we go.”

According to Mike, if we aren’t purposefully rethinking and changing things, we often don’t grow. “Sometimes the price for change becomes too high,” he says, “so we settle into a practice that suits us, thinking that things will change without any effort on our part. Nothing could be further from the truth. **Growing always costs you something.**”

Mike says change requires discipline and work, which often doesn’t happen until we’re forced to those things by external circumstances. But it doesn’t have to be that way, he says. “We can begin to reevaluate our practices for the right reasons by asking ourselves several important questions” (see TIPS box).

In 2009 Mike’s church began a process of reevaluating everything they were doing. “We weren’t driven by survival, economics, or competition,” he says. “We just wanted to do a better job. So we asked some simple questions: How can we do ministry better? What can we do to improve our efforts? How can I improve myself?”

They enlisted the help of their congregation to create task forces that evaluated the following areas:

- Assimilation (what happened when people came through the door)
- Caregiving (visitation, hospital care, and so forth, practiced toward the congregation)
- Events (how and why they were done)
- Missions outreaches
- Retention percentages (how to close the back door)
- Prayer
- Helps (how people served within the congregation)
- Spiritual growth (of the people)
- Relational connections (how people were or were not connecting within the church)

All that evaluating wasn’t easy. “It was a lot of work!” says Mike. “In the end we observed things we were doing well and things we could change and did change. It has made for a healthier church.”

Mike acknowledges that evaluation is not an exact science. “Everyone’s situation is different,” he says. “But reviewing and reevaluating the way you do ministry is important. Regardless of the methods, we must remain true to the Word, our calling, and loving the people to whom we are sent.”



### ✦ TIPS FOR EVALUATING

#### Ask these questions:

- A ministry’s mission statement can evolve or grow, but what did God place within my heart?
- Has that mission changed? If so, why?
- What seven or eight core values do we embrace as a ministry entity?
- Have my own motives for ministry changed for good or bad? If so, what precipitated the change?
- Have the ministerial ethics and stewardship practices of the ministry improved or declined? If so, why?

#### Keep in mind:

“When we reevaluate the ministry and ourselves, we have to be honest. In other words, we have to **face reality**. Otherwise, there’s little chance for change. This process is often difficult, because ministers are wounded or in denial, or they want to spiritualize their current circumstances. But there is hope! God’s call upon our life hasn’t changed (Rom. 11:29).”

## TIPS: FIVE STEPS TOWARD PROGRESS

When a church is going through difficult times, just “cutting back” and “eliminating the excess” are not enough. Don’t forget to get proactive. Here are some additional steps to take:



## Step 1

## Change your thinking

We all have self-imposed ceilings in our lives—things *inside us* that keep us from going higher or moving to the next level of success.

The best way to change your thinking and remove these ceilings is *to talk to others!* Proverbs 11:14 says, “*In the multitude of counsellors there is safety.*” None of us can afford to be isolated. You can take off the lid of your preconceived ideas by making use of the ideas, answers, and vision of others. These can help you identify and remove the barriers in your life.

Cell phones are a good example of “ceilings.” Some of us had a flip phone for a long time and were perfectly happy with it. We even resisted changing to a smart phone, thinking we didn’t need it. But then someone we knew and *hung around a lot* got a smart phone, used it around us, talked about it . . . and we started to see the

benefits. **Eventually, what *they* knew changed our minds. We embraced the idea and got a smart phone too.**

When we were at RBTC, *all* the instructors together had input into our lives. It was a collaboration, not just one teacher or method. But some of us graduated and isolated ourselves from the influence and ideas of others.

We are members of a Body. There is no reason for us to reinvent the wheel or be trapped under our self-imposed ceiling.

Ask yourself, “Am I stuck in a box?” If we stay by ourselves, we’re limited in our methods and vision. But if we begin to ask questions, mix with others, listen to people, and avail ourselves of new things, we can start to embrace new ideas and methods. This will remove the ceilings from our lives, and then the sky is the limit!

 Larry Burkett said, “Show me your check-book, and I’ll show you your priorities.” The same can be said for churches. Spend 20 minutes looking at your church’s budget, and you’ll quickly be able to tell its priorities. That’s why it’s so important for the church to be open and honest with the congregation. 



## Step 2

### Take a look at money

- **The budget.** First, do you *have* a budget? If not, get one (see **resources**, page 19).
- **The numbers.** Examine each area to see where you can save: utilities, supplies, cleaning, staff costs, and so forth. Get volunteers to do what you've been paying for. If utility bills are too high, put in electric timers and seal windows and doors to eliminate leaks.

Don't be afraid to count how many people are at each service, and how many are giving. Know the state of your flock. Maybe someone who has stopped giving needs your help. People often stop giving before they stop coming—it's not bad to be concerned about them. Seek them out. Once every three months, look at the numbers.

**Connections says:** *If multiple people have church credit cards, be sure they understand the spending limits per week or month. Take a month and record every expenditure. Know where every dollar is being spent. After that month, review for unnecessary spending and eliminate it.*

- **The members.** Don't just preach on money—help your congregation with *their* finances. Hold a Financial Peace University seminar in your church ([www.DaveRamsey.com](http://www.DaveRamsey.com)), and even make it available to the community. Help people get out of debt and financial trouble. Many people sitting in your church are drowning in a sea of red ink and financial mismanagement. If they prosper, your church can prosper. (For more

*ideas along these lines, see the spring/summer 2008 issue of Connections, "Financial Freedom: Getting Your House in Order," at [www.rhema.org/alumni](http://www.rhema.org/alumni).)*

**Connections says:** *Have the whole staff take the workshop. How a person handles personal finances will be mirrored in the church finances (without exception). If a pastor or staff member is behind in household bills or has always struggled with finances, that person will eventually cause the church finances to drift into the same condition.*

- **Be accountable.** Be trustworthy and open about the finances of your church. Make sure your bylaws are in order. Have disbursements go through the proper channels, perhaps two layers of management approval. Record all charitable contributions given to the church, whether they are cash or non-cash donations. Issue appropriate statements or non-cash contribution letters annually to be used by donors for charitable giving tax credit, if they so choose. Meet six times a year to establish policies, set budgets, oversee operations, and review ministry accomplishments. If necessary, have the church's books audited yearly by an outside accounting firm. In other words, be accountable to steward donation dollars in the most effective and efficient manner.

**Connections says:** *Employ an outside accountant who understands ministry finances. Ask other grads in your region who they utilize.*



## Step 3

### Investigate other income streams

- Should you rent out your facility to others?
- Should you get a secular job? (See pages 14–15.)
- Should you meet a need in the community? (For instance, parents' night out, labor force, illiteracy, homeless, shut-ins, and sporting events.)
- Should you do fundraisers? (For example, concerts, a community-wide talent show, a pasta dinner, a kids carnival, or concessions.)

**Connections says:** *Consider contacting other pastors in your area—even the ones you don't know—to ask them what they're doing to add income streams. Gleaning from others is a must if progress is to be made.*



## Step 4

### Evaluate your staff and volunteers

- > Are there jobs that volunteers could do? (Cleaning, maintenance, hospital visitation, office work, daily upkeep, and so forth.)
- > Are you valuing and constantly communicating with your leadership? Pour your life and enthusiasm into them.
- > Value your staff as well as your volunteers. (Make it a team effort.)
- > Don't overwork your staff or your volunteers.

**Doug Jones says:** The proper perception of staff, department heads, and volunteers is vital. It's like purchasing a lawn mower—it gives you the ability to accomplish more than you could without it. Yet there are pastors who spend more time caring for their lawn mower than they do their church helpers.

Your staff, department heads, and volunteers must be viewed as valuable assets. Nurturing them is a must. More time must be invested in these dear ones than in any other group. Often, in hopes of convincing someone to join his team, a pastor will pursue a potential helper by communicating his heart and openly discussing the true condition of his church. But sadly, after the helper accepts the position, the degree of free communication quickly deteriorates. We must understand, "Communication *begins* a relationship, and communication *maintains* a relationship."

As a pastor I learned there was one sure way to choke the life out of a program, and that was to never talk about it. This is also true concerning staff and department heads. Leadership silence and staff vibrancy are impossible roommates.

Here are some questions to ask yourself about communication:

- > Have I proven to my staff and department heads that I actually considered their ideas and suggestions?
- > Do I draw out the opinions and ideas of the more silent members of my staff?
- > Do I respond in a timely manner to ideas presented?
- > Do I allow my staff to express their opinions about what they believe is ineffective?

Pastor, staff, and department heads must become a united entity that collectively evaluates, creates, executes, and maintains the overall progress of the life and endeavors of the church. A pastor who attempts to lead through his wife and himself alone shortens his reach and hinders what could be accomplished in and through his church.



## Step 5

### Get real

- \* Evaluate your current spiritual condition. Are you spending time daily in fellowship with God—in prayer, the Word, and worship? Are you keeping a vital connection with the Source of your life? Every time you draw near to Him, He draws near to you.
- \* Is your preaching relevant? Does it apply to life? (See Joe Cameneti, page 5.)
- \* Check the tone of your message delivery. Are you allowing your frustrations to show from the pulpit? Are you bringing a word that encourages people or beats them down?
- \* Are you making room for continuing education and spiritual growth—for yourself, your staff, and your lay ministers?
- \* Under pressure, have you slipped from believing to mental assent? This may be a good time to get back to basics in the Word of God, rehearse scriptural truths regarding provision and prosperity, and let faith rise in your heart again. Get encouraged, and turn "the switch of faith" back on!



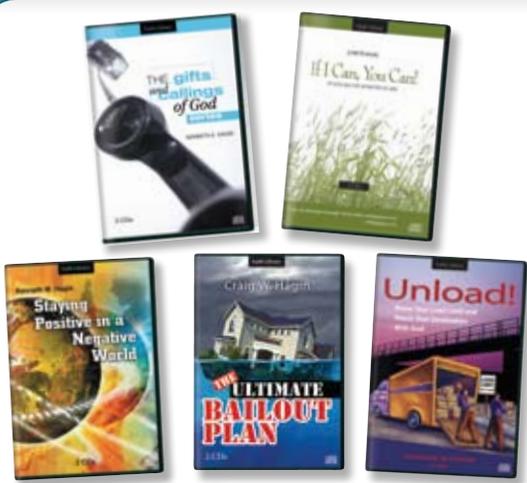


# FAITH LIBRARY PUBLICATIONS



## DVDs

- The Life of Abundance**  
Kenneth W. Hagin (1 DVD) / KIT11CN06A.....\$10.50
- Keys to the Greater Glory Series**  
Kenneth W. Hagin (3 DVDs) / KIT11CN06B.....\$28.00

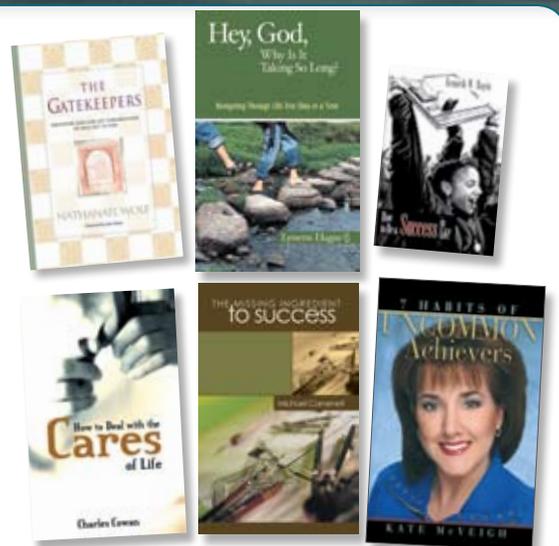


## CDs

- The Gifts and Callings of God Series**  
Kenneth E. Hagin (3 CDs) / KIT11CN06C.....\$14.50
- If I Can, You Can!**  
Lynette Hagin (3 CDs) / KIT11CN06D.....\$14.50
- Staying Positive in a Negative World**  
Kenneth W. Hagin (2 CDs) / KIT11CN06E.....\$10.00
- The Ultimate Bailout Plan**  
Craig W. Hagin (2 CDs) / KIT11CN06F.....\$10.00
- Unload! Know Your Load Limit and Reach Your Destination With God**  
Kenneth W. Hagin (3 CDs) / KIT11CN06G.....\$14.50

## Books

- The Gatekeepers**  
Nathanael Wolf / KIT11CN06H.....\$7.50
- Hey, God, Why Is It Taking So Long?**  
Lynette Hagin / KIT11CN06I.....\$10.50
- How to Be a Success in Life**  
Kenneth W. Hagin (minibook) / KIT11CN06J.....\$1.00
- How to Deal With the Cares of Life**  
Charles Cowan / KIT11CN06K.....\$7.00
- The Missing Ingredient to Success**  
Michael Cameneti / KIT11CN06L.....\$7.00
- Seven Habits of Uncommon Achievers**  
Kate McVeigh / KIT11CN06M.....\$7.00



## E-Books... At Your Fingertips

Why wait to read Faith Library's newest releases? Visit Amazon or iTunes to download our latest books along with some classic favorites. E-books available include:

- *The Believer's Authority*
- *Power Up!*
- *The Name of Jesus: Legacy Edition*
- *Along the Way*
- *And many more!*

*Don't forget to check back often as more Faith Library e-books are being added all the time!*



## Spanish

- Planes, Propósitos y Ejecuciones (Plans, Purposes, and Pursuits)**  
Kenneth E. Hagin / KIT11CN06N.....\$9.50

## Three ways to order

- Visit [www.rhema.org/store](http://www.rhema.org/store)
- Call 1-888-28-FAITH (283-2484)
- Mail the enclosed envelope

Listed prices do not include shipping and handling.  
Offers expire December 31, 2011.

### ✓ *Connections* says:

#### Advantages of Working a Secular Job

- Takes financial pressure off your family. Being unable to pay your bills adds unnecessary pressure to all of your relationships and is not a good witness. *“If anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever”* (1 Tim. 5:8 NASB).
- Takes financial pressure off the church. More of the church’s resources can be used for church growth, outreach, and publicity, instead of only for paying salaries.
- Allows you to serve a congregation that is otherwise unable to afford a pastor or additional staff. Churches should not be deprived of a pastor or staff member because a minister is unwilling to seek outside employment.
- Offers opportunities to form relationships outside the church setting and expands your circle of influence out into the community and beyond.
- Gives you a realistic perspective of the everyday world. Full-time pastors can become very isolated from today’s issues and what congregation members experience on a daily basis. Even though ministers deal with trials and difficulties in people’s lives, we tend to deal with them in a sanitized setting. We don’t want to become so professional that we lose our compassion and heart for lost, hurting people.

## It’s All About Obedience

### Tommy FiGart (’87, ’88)

*Tommy FiGart and his wife, DeLisa, pastor  
Grace Family Church in Vinton, Virginia.  
[www.GraceInTheValley.com](http://www.GraceInTheValley.com)*



After Tommy FiGart graduated from RHEMA, he worked full-time in ministry for several years. But then he took a position as a children’s pastor and got a secular job to make ends meet.

“After being in full-time ministry, it was a shot to my ego to take a secular job,” he says. **“But I learned to establish my identity in who God said I was, not where my income was derived from.”**

Now that Tommy pastors his own church, he continues in secular work.

“Having a secular job can be good, especially when a ministry is getting started,” he says. “In our first seven years we were able to secure a \$2.2 million facility and add numerous key part-time positions with only 130 people, simply because the church did not have to pay a significant pastoral salary.”

Tommy says it’s all about obedience. “Don’t allow pride to stop you from doing what is right for your family and ministry,” he says. “The Apostle Paul built tents at times but he was not a tentmaker. He was an apostle, even though his income sometimes came from tent making. Ecclesiastes 9:10 tells us to do whatever our hand finds to do. If the income from your ministry is not paying the bills, go find something to put your hand to.”

Not every job requires a degree. “Take a look at your abilities and find a job that matches them,” says Tommy. **“I had no skills other than preaching. So I found a job requiring communication skills—I went to work collecting past due loans over the phone. Not the most glamorous or pleasant job! But now I’m Corporate Director of Business Development for a multinational company while pastoring a church of 300. Soon I’ll be able to step from being bivocational to focusing all my time on ministry. In the meantime, I’m going to remain obedient to God’s leading.”**



He sums up his bivocational experience: “The bottom line is that God has a plan for all of us, and we must be obedient to that plan. For some that includes secular employment. But when we follow Him, it always leads to success and victory!”

## Hard Work Is Honorable

**Bill Yanney ('91, '92)**

*Bill Yanney and his wife, Trish ('95, '96), pastor Family Worship Center in Sioux City, Iowa.*

[www.FWCSiouxCity.com](http://www.FWCSiouxCity.com)



When Bill and Trish Yanney moved from Florida to Iowa in 2007 to start their church, they had three kids and one on the way, plus a rocky economy to face. It didn't seem like a great idea.

"But we were led by the Spirit to go," says Bill, "and that is the most important reason. It doesn't matter what the state of the economy is—you need to obey God."

Their pastor had told them, "Where God guides, He provides," and the Yanneys believed it. "But that doesn't mean you can sit back and just expect checks in the mail," says Bill. They used a large offering from their home church to get into a building, pay other start-up costs, and meet some personal needs. But eventually things became financially stressful, and Bill took a part-time job teaching at a college.

"I had been a missionary and an associate pastor in full-time ministry for 11 years," he says, "and it was hard to go back into secular work. But unless I had some outside income, we weren't going to make it."

According to Bill, **living by faith doesn't mean that things are going to just happen without effort.** "I don't think you should be ashamed of working a secular job," he says. "I think it's honorable to work hard in the secular world until the ministry can provide for you full-time."

Bill plans to work his way out of secular employment. "I'm not going to do this forever," he says. "I have a goal to be full-time in ministry by the end of this year. We started receiving a small salary from the church, and in the last year it has increased."

When it comes to balancing ministry, family, and a secular job, Bill has three tips:

- 1) "Don't let your relationship with God suffer. You can't make it if you don't pray. Prayer equips you to know what God wants to do in the church, what to preach, and how to pastor your congregation supernaturally."
- 2) "Be careful not to choose a job that is too demanding. Mine isn't. I prayed for it. If you ask God, He can provide that for you."
- 3) "Make sure you're taking care of your wife and kids, giving them the time they need. Some things in the church have had to go undone for a short time. You can't do it all. I've found if I don't neglect my family, somehow everything else just works out."



**✓ Connections says:**

### Things to Keep in Mind About Working a Secular Job

- Remember that Priscilla and Aquila and even the great Apostle Paul worked secular jobs (Acts 18:2-3). Working a secular job doesn't mean you're not in the ministry!
- Be clear about expectations—yours and the congregation's. You may not be as readily available for church work as someone who is employed full-time by the church.
- Prioritize. If you work an outside job, you may not have time to get everything done, or you may miss out on certain events within the church or region. Streamline your schedule and live within your limitations. Get others to help. Keep your marriage and family first.
- The more others help, the more they will have ownership. Churches don't "belong" to the ministers—they belong to the whole congregation. Get everyone involved!
- Stay in faith! God has promised to supply all your needs (Phil. 4:19). He may use a secular job to do so. Preaching the Gospel is the greatest privilege in the world. Sometimes it requires sacrifice—maybe only for a season. Keep a good attitude, keep your eyes on the prize, and always trust God as your source.

## Expand Your Influence, Be an Example

**Matt Beemer ('91, '92)**

*Matt Beemer and his wife, Julie ('90, '91), pastored in Manchester, England. They now live in Abuja, Nigeria, and are Directors of RHEMA Nigeria and RHEMA Egypt.*  
[www.RhemaConnect.com](http://www.RhemaConnect.com)

**M**att Beemer tells the story of a minister at a young church who wanted to quit his secular job (working for the county) to go full-time in ministry.

“Through his work he was meeting the most influential people in his community,” says Matt. “I suggested he go part-time, because it would be a shame to lose that influence. So he asked for two more days off per week to focus on his church. His employers agreed and kept him on with full benefits! Then he invited the local planner



to come to church, which came in real handy when he was looking for property for his new building. **When you quit your secular job, you shut the door on a sphere of influence.**”

In his work as a missionary, Matt has observed that in many other countries churches can't pay pastors, so they work secular jobs. “I currently know an attorney general, a minister of finance, and a judge who pastor



churches,” he says. “Their churches are several thousand people, and they are full of influencers. On the other hand, I've seen full-time pastors who lead *very small*, unhealthy works because all the income from the church has to go to pay their salary.”

Another benefit of working a secular job is being an example. “It helps people see how to balance ministry, family, and working life,” says Matt. “If they see you having a strong commitment to church while still holding down a secular job, it shows them it can be done. This lends itself to a church with a strong voluntary leadership.”

The Beemers witnessed this firsthand at their church in England. “We had people who gave up working full-time to use their gifts to help the church grow,” says Matt. “When they asked their employers to work only four days a week instead of five, they got approval and many times didn't lose out financially either. Some people even sold their homes to purchase smaller, mortgage-free homes so they could volunteer at the church. If people see you do it, they are more likely to do it too.”

### Did You Know?

You can still have credentials with RMAI and work a secular job.



## Manage Your Time

“**A**ll ministers are challenged in the area of balancing time and commitments. Bivocational ministers just have one more ball in the air to juggle. My wife and I have learned to block out necessary times for each other and for study. That is the time we choose not to be flexible with.”



*Ron and Jaclyn Farmer ('04, '05), bivocational pastors of Christ's Church Triumphant Ministries in Jacksonville, Illinois.*

# RBTC/RBC UPDATE



Welcome ALUMNI

MONDAY • Alumni Fellowship



Food, fun, fellowship, and a giveaway drawing ... grads gather with old friends and new.

TUESDAY • Missions Luncheon



RHEMA missionaries assemble from every corner of the world.

WEDNESDAY • Reunion Luncheon



Grads from 1981, 1991, and 2001 celebrate their 30-, 20-, and 10-year reunions.

THURSDAY • RMAI Luncheon



The first-ever RHEMA Ministerial Association International Luncheon was a huge success.

## Homecoming 2011

was held again this year with *Winter Bible Seminar*, February 20–25, on the RHEMA campus in Broken Arrow. Graduates came from all over to celebrate some great alumni events with their RHEMA family!

## SAVE THE DATE

*Worldwide Homecoming and Winter Bible Seminar 2012*

February 19–24



# 11 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

*if  
you're  
going through  
tough times*

- 
- 1. Have I stopped pressing?** It's easy to get distracted, lose focus, or get complacent and coast. In First Timothy chapter 4, Paul encourages Timothy not to let daily hindrances or troubles take all his time and attention, but to keep pressing into God, no matter what else is going on. He gives Timothy some specific tips (vv.12–15): *Don't neglect your spiritual gift. . . . In speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, be an example. . . . Give attention to Scripture, exhortation, and teaching. . . . Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your progress will be evident to all.* If your progress isn't evident, ask yourself: Am I making the best use of my time? Have I lost my focus? Can I make some improvements to get back on track?
  - 2. Am I stuck in a negative mindset?** Whether your tough times stem from money, illness, relationships, lack of growth, or something else, once you get the words “quit” or “hopeless” in your head, everything that comes along will seem to agree with them. Hebrews 11:6 says we must believe that God *is*, and that He is a *rewarder*! Do whatever you can to turn that mindset around—believe that God is working in your situation, and that there is an answer.
  - 3. Am I being swayed by adverse circumstances?** For example, if your marriage is in trouble, are you questioning whether you're married to the right person based on your current level of marital satisfaction? Or are you questioning your calling based on whether you're as far along as you thought you'd be? Remember, circumstances don't determine whether you're in the will of God. If circumstances were indicators, then Paul and Jesus were never in God's will! You *are* going to face hard times—in ministry, in marriage, in your finances, and so forth. Don't waver or wonder. Stay faithful to your commitments and calling. Expect answers from God.
  - 4. What is my purpose or the purpose of my ministry? Am I fulfilling it?** Sometimes we lose track of why we do what we do. Are you accomplishing what God wants you to? Do you need to “get back to basics”—to cut out some things and return to some others? Regardless of how anyone else is acting or not acting, get the focus back on how *you* can improve. Don't get sidetracked by circumstances. If you turn your attention back to the important things, God can meet you there.
  - 5. Am I a voice or an echo?** It's important to stay fresh and current in your relationship with God and in His Word. Don't just read a book or go to the Internet and repeat what someone else has said or done. What makes ministry powerful is the truth from inside *you*, not what you borrowed from someone else. Do whatever it takes to keep developing yourself in study, and keep honing your delegating skills and people skills. Walk among the people you minister to. Don't isolate yourself—live with them. Know where they are in their faith and what they need so you can speak into their lives and help them.
  - 6. Am I just “hanging on, waiting for God to move”—or am I taking purposeful, positive steps toward change?** It's been said that the definition of insanity is doing the same things but expecting different results. While it's important to stand fast and remain faithful, it's also important to give God something to work with. If you ask God to direct your steps, be willing to move your

“Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.”

—Winston Churchill

feet. *Do* something—take some steps. A ship at anchor is never going to catch the wind.

7. **When someone brings up a new idea, do I immediately think, “If only”?** We all have “ceilings” in our thinking—we just don’t always know where they are.
8. **Do I have a budget?** A well-planned budget is a tool that can guide you to a lifestyle free from debt so you can experience financial freedom. Without a budget, you may always spend more than you make and always work for money, instead of allowing money to work for you. (For some budget tips, see resources.)
9. **What are my specific goals?** Without a plan and a system to arrive at goals, how will you know if you achieve them?
10. **Should I get a secular job?** See pages 14–16 for benefits of secular employment and how to balance that work with ministry.
11. **How am I treating the people around me?** Tough times are hard on people. Your loved ones need extra love and care during this time. Be sure you are giving them as much as you can. If you are a church leader, evaluate how you are treating your staff and your volunteers. If you’re a pastor, what kind of person are you endeavoring to produce from your podium? Whatever answer you give, how are your messages addressing those qualities?

## resources

### Websites

#### Personal budget

[www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personal\\_budget](http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personal_budget)

#### Church budgeting

[www.FreeChurchAccounting.com/church\\_budget\\_tips.html](http://www.FreeChurchAccounting.com/church_budget_tips.html)

#### Creating a church budget

[www.FreeChurchAccounting.com/churchbudget.html](http://www.FreeChurchAccounting.com/churchbudget.html)

#### The reality behind church budgets

[www.ChurchExecutive.com/archives/each-years-budget-is-different](http://www.ChurchExecutive.com/archives/each-years-budget-is-different)

#### Budgeting in the local church

[www.ag.org/top/Church\\_Financial\\_Matters/ch\\_finance\\_budget.cfm](http://www.ag.org/top/Church_Financial_Matters/ch_finance_budget.cfm)

#### Ways to help the financial status of the church

[http://www.ehow.com/list\\_7296918\\_ideas-ways-financial-status-church.html](http://www.ehow.com/list_7296918_ideas-ways-financial-status-church.html)



### Reads

#### *Make Your Church’s Money Work: Achieving Financial Integrity in Your Congregation*

by John Temple

This book examines the practical aspects of budgeting, reporting, and control of expenses in a church. It suggests a remuneration policy for pastors and other paid workers, outlines the responsibilities of members in supporting their church, and includes a suggested spreadsheet for budgeting and reporting.

#### *Servolution: Starting a Church Revolution Through Serving*

by Dino Rizzo

Practical strategies that empower your church to be a blessing in the community through serving. Each chapter contains practical suggestions and resources for use in any church.

#### *Conspiracy of Kindness: A Unique Approach to Sharing the Love of Jesus*

by Steve Sjogren

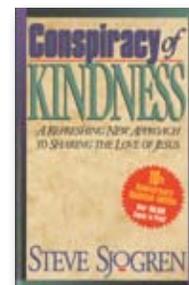
This book shows unassuming Christians how to share the Gospel through servant evangelism.

#### Go!

by Joe Cameneti

This is God’s command: Take the greatest story ever told to our world. But why? How? These are the simple questions that all too often stand in the way of a world in need.

[www.PastorJoe.com](http://www.PastorJoe.com)



RHEMA Bible Training Center AKA Kenneth Hagin Ministries/RHEMA Bible Church does not represent or endorse the accuracy or reliability of any of the information, content, or advertisements contained on, distributed through, or linked, downloaded, or accessed from any of the services listed here, nor the quality of any products, information, or other materials displayed, purchased, or obtained by you as a result of an advertisement or any other information or offer in or in connection with them. Any reliance upon any materials shall be at your sole risk. •



# WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

## 1976

**Tom Wickersham ('79)** and his wife, Dottie, recently moved to Columbus, Ohio, where he is the associate pastor at Faith Believing Word Church, pastored by **Thom Faiella ('80)**. They both work at Ohio Semitronics in Hilliard.

## 1982

**Kenneth Hielkema ('81, '82)** and his wife, Gladys, are pastoring FCF of Gallup, New Mexico, and are administrators of the School of Ministry in Gallup and Fruitland, NM. They are also reaching the Four Corners area with road trips and fellowships to encourage ministers there.



## 1983

### Alumni Spotlight



#### Jim Tyler ('82, '83)

For the past 33 years, Jim has been taking short-term missions trips around the world with the loving support of his wife, Joan ('84). They have ministered in Guatemala, Kenya, South Africa, Haiti, Mexico, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Russia, Philippines, and Siberia—sometimes as a couple and sometimes with a team.

Perhaps Jim's greatest influence has been in Ukraine, where he has ministered at least 18 times in the past 14 years.

"I'm a father figure to those who never knew their father," says Jim. "My translator Pavel was a 16-year-old fatherless boy when we first met. Now he is a 30-year-old husband and father who has taken two missions trips to prisons in South Africa. Pastor Max was a young, gifted musician

who now pastors a church. The hand of the Lord is doing much behind the scenes to prepare a glorious harvest in Ukraine."

When they are not on overseas missions trips, the Tylers are bringing the Word of God into state prisons, jails, and Christian halfway houses in Michigan.

"Not all of those I minister to will be released from prison, but they can find forgiveness and freedom in Christ and function for Him," says Jim. "If they receive and act on God's Word they, too, can find favor with God and man! Being free in Christ is the only way to live."



**Orville and Marge Schinke (both '81, '83)** are traveling full time in an RV, encouraging churches and teaching. Marge has published a book called "Creation Story Reader" to help little children learn to read. [www.TeachingBabiesTheBible.com](http://www.TeachingBabiesTheBible.com)



**Edgar Norris ('82, '83)** and his wife, Pamela, have been missionaries in Kursk, Russia, for the past 13 years. Nine years ago they started an English

speaking church to reach foreign students. The doctors, computer techs, and economists they've trained in the Word go back to their own countries and influence their world with the Gospel. [www.wccikursk.org](http://www.wccikursk.org)

## 1988

**Jim Bristow ('86, '88)** and his wife, April, announce the birth of their son, Joshua Owen, born November 5, 2010.



Jim and April pioneered Heirs of Promise Church in Largo, Florida, in 2001. After holding services in a movie theater and a recreational facility, they now have a new building. [www.HeirsOfPromise.com](http://www.HeirsOfPromise.com)

## 1989

**Alan and Marvene Wright (both '88, '89)** celebrated their 20-year church anniversary in January of 2011 at The Word Center Church of Los Angeles.

## 1991

**Mark and Laurie Lillo (both '90, '91)** were married in June of 1991 after they graduated from RBTC. Mark is the head pastor in the Pastoral Care Department at Living Word Christian Center in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota, and Laurie is a teacher at the Christian academy there. They have three children: Alyssa, Austin, and Andrew.



## 1994



**Jesse and Rose Zepeda (both '93, '94)** pioneered First His Kingdom Family Church in Pflugerville, Texas, as soon as they graduated in 1994, and in 2010 they celebrated their 16-year church anniversary. [www.fhkfc.org](http://www.fhkfc.org)

## 1997

**Steve Wenninger ('96, '97)** and his wife, Kathy, live in Bradenton, Florida, where they are helping with a church plant in Sarasota. They are the proud grandparents of Eli David Wenninger, born June 5, 2010, to **Eli and Kelly Wenninger (both '08, '09)**, and Ariel Joy Casiano, born July 4, 2010, to **Hector ('07, '08, '09) and Tina ('08, '09) Casiano**. Eli and Kelly are youth pastors at Glorious Church in Collinsville, Oklahoma, and Hector and Tina live in Broken Arrow and attend RHEMA Bible Church.



## 1998



**Ted ('97, '98) and Kathryn (Freeman '00, '01) Egly** live in Aurora, Illinois, where he works full time in finance and is part of the teaching team at Orchard Community Church. Kathryn ran the Children's Ministry department there

until this year, when she "retired" to stay home with their boys, ages 3 and 1.

## 1999

**Kevin Darmafall ('88, '89)** and his wife, Jennifer, are youth pastors at Christian Life Church in Washington, Michigan, and have put together a resource called "A Superhero's Handbook" to help teens grow spiritually. Their son, Max, is three years old. [www.SuperHerosHandbook.com](http://www.SuperHerosHandbook.com)



## 2000

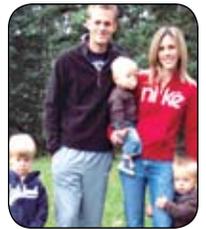
**Kelly Haworth ('99, '00)** and his wife, Tammie, live in Norman, Oklahoma, and travel in itinerant ministry. They have also started a ministry geared to both believers and non-believers who can't be active in church because of their work schedules. Their children are Asa, Titus, and Lydia. [www.kellhaworthministries.org](http://www.kellhaworthministries.org)



**Brandon ('99, '00) and Abbe ('00, '01) Ball** live in Birmingham, Alabama, where they work at Word of Life Christian Center for Pastor **Scott Webb ('82)**. Abbe is involved in music ministry, Brandon is executive pastor, and they oversee the college and career ministry. Their twins, Camden and Kensington, are 5 years old. [www.WordOfLife.org](http://www.WordOfLife.org)

## 2001

**Charley Elliott ('00, '01)** and his wife, Kelly, teach at a Bible School called Word of Life Bible Institute in Ciudad Victoria, Tamaulipas, Mexico. They receive students from all over the country of Mexico. Their children are Luke (age 4), Sam (age 2½) and Nate (age 1). [www.ibpdv.org](http://www.ibpdv.org)



**Jeanne Lee ('00, '01)** has been establishing schools, skill centers, and churches in African nations, India, Myanmar, and China since graduation. She works with Faith Leaders International Ministries, which has become a network of more than 400 churches. [www.faithleadersintl.org](http://www.faithleadersintl.org)



## 2002

**Reatha Mae Gooden ('01, '02)** lives in New Braunfels, Texas, where she has recently accepted a position at a funeral home after working as a nurse's aide for 35 years. She sometimes officiates at funeral services for those who don't have a pastor.





**Jeremy ('01, '02) and Sarah ('00, '01, '02) Elliott** announce the birth of their second son, Ethan Michaiiah, who was born November 21, 2010, joining his older brother, Josiah. They have pioneered Elliott Family Ministries, reaching out through children's, youth, and music ministry; strengthening local churches; and training leaders to reach the lost. They are based out of Delaware, Ohio, and attend Life Family Church with **Michael ('93, '94) and Pastor Kara ('96, '97) Steward.**

## 2005

**Mica Kilstrom ('04, '05)** has worked as an editor for Word of Life Church in Shreveport, Louisiana, and as a writer for Oral Roberts Evangelistic Association. Now she freelances full-time, working on books, newsletters, brochures, and marketing copy for ministries around the country. Mica lives in Tulsa. [www.CoffeeShopGirl.com](http://www.CoffeeShopGirl.com)



**Matt and Amber (Brown) Rowell ('04, '05)** were married on July 9, 2006, and have pastored Crosstimbers Community Church in Edna, Kansas, for two years. Their daughter, Emma Grace, is two years old. [www.crosstimberscc.com](http://www.crosstimberscc.com)

**Justin Goodson ('04, '05)** married Megan Quatrevingt on March 21, 2010, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He is the Student Ministries pastor at Metro Harvest Church in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. [www.MetroHarvest.com](http://www.MetroHarvest.com)



## 2006



**Matthew and Donna Farmer (both '05, '06)** announce the birth of their second child, Hannah Elizabeth, on May 27, 2010. The Farmers live in Cleveland, Tennessee, where they serve as assistant pastors and children's pastors at Cleveland

Christian Fellowship for Pastor **Mark Strickland ('79).** [www.ClevelandChristianFellowship.com](http://www.ClevelandChristianFellowship.com)

## 2007

**Adam Raines ('06, '07)** and his wife, Kendal-Leigh, were married August 2, 2010, and are now expecting their first child, due in July. They recently moved to Monroe, Michigan.



**Charles and Linda Laughlin (both '06, '07)** have been working in their church, A New Beginning Family Christian Center, in Port Orchard, Washington, for Pastors **Bruce and Renita Duggan (both '81, '82).** Recently they've also started working with Unchained for Christ ministries, a pre- and post-prison ministry.

## 2008

**Roland Osborne ('06, '07, '08)** is a chaplain with Racers for Christ, and publishes *Christian Motorsports Illustrated* and *Prison Victory* magazines. He ministers in churches, schools, and prisons, as well as NASCAR, NHRA, and Street Rod National events. [www.ChristianMotorSports.com](http://www.ChristianMotorSports.com)



## 2009



**Joey Wells ('08, '09)** and his wife, Emily, have taken a position as youth pastors at Life Church in Augusta, Kansas.

## 2010

**Jaivon ('09, '10) and Angela (Odom '08, '09) Anderson** were married November 6, 2010, in Cleveland, Tennessee. They are currently the youth pastors at Freedom Church in Fort Smith, Arkansas. [www.FreedomChurchFortSmith.com](http://www.FreedomChurchFortSmith.com)

## HOMEGOINGS

'77.....	Eddie Goines .....	February 4, 2011
'78.....	Nancy Bennett.....	February 26, 2011
'79.....	Ralph A. Cruz .....	Date Unknown
'79, '80 .....	Arthur Scott .....	January 3, 2011
'81 .....	Gina Lupardo.....	February 6, 2011
'81, '82 .....	Terry Callanan.....	February 12, 2011
'81, '82 .....	Martin Logan .....	October 2010
'82.....	Debbie Tannehill .....	October 9, 2010
'82, '83.....	Johnny Street.....	February 12, 2011
'85, '86.....	Harlow (Bud) Fredrick....	September 13, 2010
'92, '93 .....	Joan Hayes.....	October 9, 2010
'00, '01 .....	Jan Gundersen.....	March 13, 2011
'01, '02 .....	Amanda Perez.....	January 9, 2011

## We Want to Hear From You!

If you've had a wedding, a new baby, something exciting happen in life or ministry, or just want to update fellow alumni about your life, write [rmai@rhema.org](mailto:rmai@rhema.org) and let us know!

*PLEASE help us make the most of your updates and photos by following these tips.*

### Tips for writing to us:

- Look at past issues and see what others have sent us.
- Tell us where you live, what you're doing in life or ministry, and how long you've been doing it.
- Remember to include your spouse's and children's names.

### Tips for sending photos:

- Send close-up shots with faces close together, as in this example. →



- For baby pictures, please include Mom and Dad too. (Your fellow alumni want to see you as well as your baby!) →

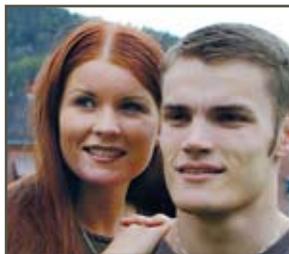


- *Digital Photos:* Send only sharp, good quality photos with high resolution—300 pixels/inch on your computer or digital camera. (If you are unsure of what pixels/inch your camera gives you, set your picture size to its highest resolution and largest file size; then we can adjust accordingly.)

**Low-resolution photos used for Internet sites and e-mail do not work well for print magazines like *Connections*.** ↓



Low resolution photo



High resolution photo

Send your updates and photos to us at

[rmai@rhema.org](mailto:rmai@rhema.org)

# Know Any Spanish Speakers?

RBTC USA now has a Spanish-speaking school—Centro de Entrenamiento Bíblico RHEMA Español, USA. And **we need your help to get the word out!**

To order FREE brochures you can pass out to Spanish speakers in your church and community, visit our website or call the number below.

**IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES . . .**



Centro de Entrenamiento Bíblico RHEMA Español, USA

[WWW.CEBRHEMA.ORG](http://WWW.CEBRHEMA.ORG) | (918) 258-1588, ext. 2460



## WE'RE HERE TO SERVE YOU!

Take advantage of our online resources today at [www.rhema.org/alumni](http://www.rhema.org/alumni) or call the alumni office at (918) 258-1588, ext. 2256.



## Kenneth Hagin Ministries

RHEMA Alumni Association

P.O. Box 50126

Tulsa, OK 74150-0126

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Tulsa, Oklahoma  
Permit No. 967

*Stay connected!*

## 2011 LIVING FAITH crusades

With Kenneth and Lynette Hagin  
[www.rhema.org/crusades](http://www.rhema.org/crusades)

**AUG 28-31** Believers Christian Fellowship  
2577 SCHENLEY AVE. N.E. | WARREN, OH 44483  
PASTORS JOE & GINA CAMENETI | (330) 372-3333  
SUN. 7:00 P.M. | MON.-WED. 10:30 A.M. & 7:00 P.M.

**SEP 11-14** Word of Life Christian Center  
100 DERBY PARKWAY | BIRMINGHAM, AL 35210  
PASTOR SCOTT & PHYLLIS WEBB | (205) 833-8500  
SUN. 7:00 P.M. | MON.-WED. 10:30 A.M. & 7:00 P.M.

**OCT 16-18** Heart of the Bay Christian Center  
24800 HESPERIAN BLVD. | HAYWARD, CA 94545  
PASTORS MARK & BRENDA THOMAS | (510) 786-3232  
SUN. 7:00 P.M. | MON.-TUES. 10:30 A.M. & 7:30 P.M.

**OCT 19-21** Antelope Valley Christian Center  
304 W. LANCASTER BLVD. | LANCASTER, CA 93534  
PASTOR TOM & MINISTER DONNA PICKENS | (661) 949-7200  
WED. 7:30 P.M. | THURS.-FRI. 10:30 A.M. & 7:30 P.M.

## 2011-2012 EVENTS

On the RHEMA campus in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma

[www.rhema.org/events](http://www.rhema.org/events) | 1-866-312-0972



**Campmeeting**  
July 24-30, 2011  
[www.rhema.org/cm](http://www.rhema.org/cm)



**Kindle the Flame® Women's Conference**  
September 22-24, 2011  
[www.rhema.org/ktf](http://www.rhema.org/ktf)



**Fall RHEMA College Weekend**  
October 21-23, 2011  
[www.rhema.org/rcw](http://www.rhema.org/rcw)



**A Call to Arms® Men's Conference**  
November 3-5, 2011  
[www.rhema.org/cta](http://www.rhema.org/cta)



**Winter Bible Seminar & Worldwide Homecoming**  
February 19-24, 2012  
[www.rhema.org/wbs](http://www.rhema.org/wbs)

