
YEAR END UPDATE



WHEN ANTICIPATION TURNS TO DESPERATION

Another Christmas, another New Year. Most people like to begin the New Year with a sense of anticipation. We

hope, we pray, we believe the year ahead will be better than the one behind - anticipation. But what happens when anticipation turns to desperation? What happens when what you experience isn't what you expected?

The Wise Men, from the Christmas story, might have felt that way. With great anticipation they started out on their journey to find the Christ, the King of the Jews. No doubt they wondered what that moment would look like, when finally they laid eyes on Him and presented to Him their gifts. I suspect that what they found was not what they expected to find. Instead of a King seated upon a throne, they encountered a baby lying in a manger! Anticipation - Desperation.

With all that has transpired this past year, these past several years, a lot of people have seen their anticipation turn to desperation. Wars and rumors of war...famine, pestilence and earthquakes...wickedness and lawlessness everywhere. Not what we had hoped for. Anticipation - Desperation.

As spiritual leaders, we must step up and step into this moment in history and lead with hope, hope that even in the midst of

desperation, we can anticipate that God is still in control and He is still *"working all things together for good"* for us. And like the Wise Men, we must keep our focus on Him; seek Him, Worship Him, rejoice in Him!

For the year ahead, that's what the PFWB network of churches is going to do - we are going to keep our focus on six key spiritual indicators; 1) reaching the lost with the Gospel, 2) leading people into a lifestyle of Holiness, 3) introducing people to the Spirit Filled life, 4) inspiring people toward a vibrant prayer life, 5) engaging people in the reading and the application of Scripture, and 6) a renewed commitment to regular church attendance and involvement.

In practical terms, this means that we are going to direct all of our time, energy, and resources to train, motivate, and equip our pastors and churches in these six areas. We will offer resources, provide training, and sponsor events to train and equip our folks to share the gospel, to live Holy lives, to walk in the Holy Spirit, to pray more, read more, and attend church more.

It's what we call our Spiritual Reset. It's part of what I am calling our *"Last Days Vision."* If we are truly living in the last days, if the end times are really before us, then these are the six things we want to be doing when He comes and calls us home. Listen up for details throughout the year and join us on this exciting journey.

CHURCH PLANTING & CHURCH REVITALIZATION

The PFWB, like many Christian organizations, is at a pivotal point in our history. With over sixty years under our belt, still recovering from the impact of the past two years, and the prospect of the Lord's return close upon us, we must stop and ask ourselves, what matters most. What must we be doing when the Lord returns? Two things come to mind - Plant and revitalize. It is paramount that we aggressively plant new churches in new places and that we help revitalize PFWB churches that are struggling, churches that are stuck.

We Have Got to Plant New Churches

Several years ago, I cast a vision to plant PFWB churches along the I-95 corridor from DC to Florida and along the I-40 corridor from Raleigh to Nashville, Tennessee. I said then, and I believe now, that there ought to be new PFWB churches in places like Fayetteville, Lumberton, Roanoke Rapids, Richmond Va, Greensboro and Winston Salem. The PFWB has a clear vision and a proven strategy to plant new churches. We have the resources, the training, and the coaching...all we need is church planters! We are praying that God will put it on the hearts of some of our ministers to step up to this challenge to plant new churches. Reach out to me if you'd like to know more about the PFWB Church Planting process.

We Have Got to revitalize Stuck Churches

We have identified four categories of PFWB churches that need our help; 1) Churches that are Derailed and in need of some level of revitalization to move to a new level of effective ministry, 2) Churches that are Declining and are going to need to face some hard facts and make some tough decisions in

order to remain relevant and enjoy fruitful ministry, 3) Churches that are Dying and in need of a totally new vision and direction and must embrace a new approach in order to continue operating, and finally, 4) Churches that are Dead and have closed the doors of the church and the property is sitting empty with no ministry presence in the community.

Just as we have identified four categories of churches needing our help, we have also adopted four models to help those churches. These models may not be a fit for every church, but I want to challenge many PFWB churches to at least prayerfully consider one or more of them. Here they are;

- The Coaching Model is for churches that could benefit from the help of a trained coach who can help them move forward with greater effectiveness.
- The Merge Model is for two or more churches in close proximity that have become weak and/or unhealthy and might accomplish more through a merger.
- The Campus Model is for churches that have become weak and/or unhealthy and might benefit from becoming a campus of a more healthy church in close proximity.
- The Church Plant Model is for a church that has closed its doors and the properties are left vacant and a new church plant is feasible.

As part of our effort to help churches that are stuck, we have launched the PFWB Coaching Network. It's part of our commitment to help pastors and churches. Beginning in February, we'll be offering LeaderLabs Ten Essentials of Effective Leadership. And beginning in June, we'll be offering The Acts 2 Journey. Listen up for details about both of these brand new programs.

HEALTHY STRUCTURES & SYSTEMS

Healthy churches need proper structure and systems to sustain growth. Here are three that I believe many of our churches should consider as we move forward.

Governance Models - Historically, our churches have been led by Deacon Boards. While this practice has Biblical support, the Bible also speaks of the need for a church to recognize the place of Elders. In scripture, the Deacons were those selected to lead the day to day operations of the church while the Elders were those selected to attend to the spiritual oversight of the church. I believe our churches should give careful consideration to the observance of this dual role of leadership.

Decision Making - Historically, most PFWB churches have followed a congregational form of government where the vote of the people carried tremendous weight. I believe local churches should consider a more limited approach to voting. I recommend you ask your congregations to only vote on the following four items; Hiring/dismissing a pastor, buying/selling real estate, changes to the church bylaws, and approval of the annual budget. Beyond these four decisions, I recommend that all other decisions in the local church be made by those elected to lead the church.

Pastoral Authority - Historically, pastors of PFWB churches have had little control in the local churches they served. They have functioned more like hirelings than leaders & this has hampered the ministry of many churches. God calls men & women and gives to them the gifts to lead the local church. I hope more churches will recognize this and take steps to empower those called and gifted to lead to, in fact, lead.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Come To The Altar - January 7th

The theme for this gathering is "REVIVE US AGAIN." It will be a gathering for PFWB ministers and church leaders & will mark the kick off for our annual *Twenty One Days of Prayer & Fasting*. I hope every minister in the PFWB will join us and bring your leadership team with you.

Family Conference - January 21st

Our Christian Life Ministries Department is sponsoring this brand new conference focusing on marriage and family life. At a time when the enemy has launched an all out attack against the family, this conference will address how to build strong marriages and families for the future. the date is Saturday, January 21st. Special guest speakers include:

Anthony Braswell (NorthPark Church, Raleigh, NC)
Nick Dalton (The Jefferson Church, Jefferson, GA)
Kris Dillard (Marked Church, Fayetteville, NC)

Bible Conference - February 11th

We are pleased to announce the PFWB Ministers Bible Conference. The date will be Saturday, February 11 from 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM. Our special guest speaker will be Dr. Tiff Shuttlesworth, noted scholar on End Times and Biblical Prophecy. I hope you will make plans now to attend this timely conference and bring your ministry team along.

A Friendly reminder...Let's remember our year end giving to the PFWB. In addition to our commitment as ministers and churches, to tithe to the PFWB, let's also consider year end offerings to help support the ministries and programs offered by the denomination.