

## Rick Pavlu: The Little Church That Could

Church Point, Louisiana was thought to be a city that could not have revival.  
Pastor Rick Pavlu proved otherwise.

By Richard C. Brown and  
Christopher Todd Oakes

Things weren't supposed to happen this way. During the 1960s and 1970s, Church Point, Louisiana gained a reputation as being a city that could not have revival. A combination of factors earned the city this distinction. The area residents came mostly from Catholic backgrounds and were resistant to change. Also, since most were of French descent, the city's population tended to be leery of White Americans. Consequently, in 1979, when the pastorate of First Pentecostal Church became available, ministers were not exactly beating a path to its door.

But then, along came a pastor who believed in the little church at Church Point. Rick Pavlu, formerly from Jennings, LA, came with an "I think we can" attitude. And like "The Little Train That Could" in the old children's story, that attitude took the church over the top of their own growth mountain.

And just look at the results: The "church that couldn't grow" went from an attendance of 19 in Pavlu's first service to about 275, and is now closing in on 300.

### A Familiar Background

Bro. Pavlu had one advantage in relating to the residents of Church Point. Pavlu himself, now 41, came from a Catholic household.

"Up until I was about 17, I was planning on becoming a Catholic priest. But somewhere between 17 and 18, I got to where I wasn't sure any longer what I wanted to do. So I decided instead of wasting time, I would go ahead and go to college."

Which he did, and at Louisiana Tech University, Pavlu not only received a master's degree in plant systematics (which allowed him to



Bro. Rick Pavlu, pastor of First Pentecostal Church in Church Point, Louisiana.

eventually author the book *Evolution: When Fact Became Fiction*), but received salvation as well.

"My first day in college, I met a couple of boys from a Pentecostal church from Leesville, Louisiana. We got to be good friends, and after a couple of months, I brought up the subject of religion. They told me about the Holy Ghost and invited me to church. As a result, in 1971, at age 18, I received the Holy Ghost and was baptized."

Pavlu immediately became involved in ministry. In fact one of the things that most influenced his decision to preach was a local Pentecostal campus ministry. Bro. Pavlu served at the campus ministry there at Louisiana Tech; by his second year, he was elected president.

Yet, while Pavlu knew immediately that God had a calling on his life, it was not until 1975 that he understood this calling more clearly. At that time, on Thanksgiving day, he acknowledged his call into the preaching ministry. Yet

"all through that five years," Pavlu said, "I was highly involved in ministry work. I was teaching and preaching."

### Taking On Church Point

Then, at age 26, Pavlu received the challenge of his life: to pastor a church that seemingly would not grow.

"I was assisting my father-in-law, pastor in Leesville, Louisiana. By that time, I'd married his daughter, Beverly. So I went to one of our sectional banquets, sponsored by the Louisiana district. Our district superintendent, Bro. Tenney, called me aside and mentioned to me that there was a real small church that had come open in south Louisiana, and since he knew I was from south Louisiana, he asked me if I would consider it." After trying out for the church, he was elected pastor in January, 1980. Pavlu was the 11th pastor at the church during an eight-year period, and

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Lee Stoneking  
Evangelist  
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I have such a burden for our people, as I see demonic attacks increasing. There is corruption at every level, coming down through governments, the schools, and the workplace. And now it's coming right into the church, as people are rubbing shoulders with the spirits behind that corruption. Another cause is worldliness creeping into our homes, including our preachers' homes. Our preachers are so wrapped up in entertainment and athletics that it's really taking its toll on our people.

Preachers must realize that they've got to somehow push out the forces of evil in that city; they've got to break that spirit or they're going to struggle and struggle. This means they must be willing to fast and pray. There is no shortcut but to plow through the spirit world this way. Programming doesn't work; nor do charismatic personalities or psychology. Only prayer and fasting will prevail.

Finally, you must use the name of Jesus. Missionaries from South America talked to me a long time ago and said, "On foreign soil, we don't wrestle with devils; we speak to them." I never forgot that. The name of Jesus is so powerful, and only Apostolic Pentecostals can be effective in this area, because we have the Name.



## Overcoming Demonic Oppression

Pentecostals are not plagued by demonic powers as much as we are by human ones. Ninety percent of our troubles are stubborn human spirits. Still, we are under tremendous spiritual attack. I came into Pentecost in 1925, and there's no comparison: The attack is far greater today.



T.W. Barnes  
Co-Pastor  
Minden, LA

One reason is that when Communism fell in Russia, most of the principalities of Russia moved to America. As a result, we've seen a terrible attack on our freedoms as a nation. Also, attacks often come through prayers of witches and occultists assembling in the city.

To fight this, first, of course, you need to bind the powers of Satan over the city through prayer and fasting. Also, I think that a church should pray that the prayers of occultists and witches will degenerate and never reach Satan, but rather, fall to the ground right where they're at. Plus, you need to preach faith, and ask the Lord for the Gift of Faith, so that when you preach, it will lift and move the saints.

We also need to remember that one of our most wonderful weapons is the doctrine of One God. The one thing that causes Satan's kingdom to shake is when we shout, "Hear us, Satan, Our God is One, and His name is Jesus!" When that is released in faith, it moves every devil out of the house.



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The closer it gets to the endtime, the greater the spiritual attacks are going to be, because the spirit of Antichrist is beginning to get stronger in the world. A period of extended fasting is the primary key to breaking these spirits. The Bible says that fasting will break every yoke. It also helps to get counsel from an older, more experienced pastor.

There's no doubt we're attacked by demonic power today, so we need to be careful who we lay hands on and pray for. The sons of Sceva in the book of Acts were not prepared to cast out demons. The devils told them, "Jesus we know, and Paul we know, but who are you?" So there is a need for discernment as to who we should pray for.

I don't think the devil is attacking us any more than in the past. Everybody likes to believe that they're living in the worst time. But the devil has always attacked the church. People in Bible times were persecuted and killed.

It's useless to pray against people, because they're not your problem. It's a spiritual battle, and it has to be fought with spiritual weapons. One key in protecting against oppression is to make your emphasis in preaching the Word.

The first step to take against demonic oppression is to have strong seasons of prayer and fasting. Second, the pastor would need to consult with two or three friends in the ministry who have had experience in this area. Finally, I've noticed that the more a church is involved in evangelism, the more victory they have.

The intensity of spiritual oppression has increased. To detect this oppression, you need the Gifts of the Spirit in operation, such as discernment, the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, or even prophecy. One thing we do to fight against oppression is, in every service, right after the singing, to go into a period of intense intercessory prayer.

Next Month's Topic:

### How To Handle Problem Saints

If you would like to give your opinion on this topic, send comments and photo to A.I.S., P.O. Box 47917, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46247



# Rick Pavlu: The Little Church That Could

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indeed, has out-lasted the previous 10 by many years. Further, the small congregation at the time, reflected the entire community's apprehensions.

"There were only 13 voting members at the time, and since they were of a French culture, they were very leery of me," Pavlu said.

## Establishing A Bond Of Trust

So when Bro. Pavlu set out to communicate his vision of growth for the church, he had to do so in a subtle way. He wanted to first establish a trust bond with them. One of his first challenges came only a few months later, as Pavlu began to see the need for new facilities.

"When I took the church, it was in a very old section of the town. Everyone's backyard faced the church. It was a very poor location. It was a white wood frame building, and they had added a couple of rooms to the front of it.

"The church had already by this time purchased a piece of land on Main Street. It was totally paid for and in the possession of the church. I really wanted to change to that new location, but I didn't want the congregation to know I wanted to, because if I had mentioned that I wanted to, they would have all been against it. So I waited until a couple of representatives of the church came to me and said they would like to go ahead and build there. I played neutral with it, and made them feel like it was totally their idea." As a result, within four months of Pavlu's pastorate, the church started their new building program.

That new building, which was completed the following September, seated about 100, while the congregation itself had already grown to around 40. Since then, they have built a new sanctuary on the same property.

"Our current facility is a church that seats approximately 500 people. It's hexagon shaped, and the inside sanctuary is fan-shaped. The pews fan around the pulpit. The ceiling has six valleys and six ridges, almost like an umbrella over the top. It's about 35 to 40 feet high. And it's got a skylight in the center." That building, completed in 1986, was built in such a way as to allow a new, larger sanctuary to eventually be attached to it. "We presently have plans developed for a gym and a fellowship hall that we hope to start soon," Pavlu said.

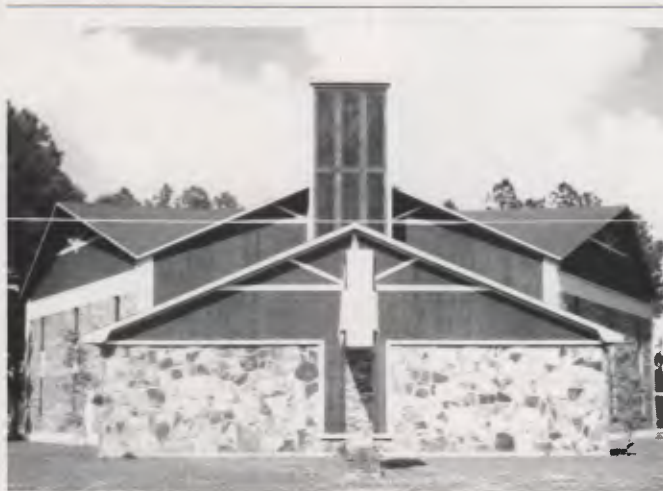
## The Growing Process

Still, it was no easy task going from the small

congregation that he first encountered at Church Point to the 275 he now pastors. At times, he said, it was slow, arduous going.

going to their homes with the study, and as a result, we're retaining them.

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**Top:** Outside view of the First Pentecostal Church of Church Point, Louisiana. **Middle:** The church sanctuary as seen from the pulpit following a recent service. **Bottom:** View from the back of the sanctuary, which seats approximately 500.

"Probably during the first four years, we were still running fifty to sixty. The few who came to the Lord during that time were people who just happened to stop by and visit the church. They enjoyed the service and decided to stay. They were not won through organized outreach. So of course, during that time, the church grew very slowly."

Since 1988, however, that has changed significantly. From then to now, the Church Point congregation has added between 150 - 160 new souls. In fact, just last year, the church had nearly 60 conversions. And "it's unbelievable what we've had this year," Pavlu said. "Just in the last revival, we had over eighty get the Holy Ghost.

About sixty percent of those were from out of town."

## Not Your Typical Home Bible Study

The number one outreach method that helped accomplish this growth was home Bible study - but with a twist.

"I didn't use just any home Bible study. I developed my own that would match my community." That study, breaking from conventional wisdom, takes Pavlu or the study's teacher into the student's home for 20 lessons.

"Whenever we're teaching a Bible study, it is actually a part of what we call our 'retention' ministry. You see, there are three major areas that a person has to establish within a church. The three areas are outreach, retention, and establishment of new converts. The most important thing to do first is to develop a strong retention program, which would involve a 'New Life' department. Even before you have strong outreach, it's vital to have this strong retention program established. Then, for the outreach, I would recommend customizing a home Bible study that is suited to your community. And finally, you have to prepare new converts for their own ministry in the work of God."

Under Bro. Pavlu's philosophy, the home Bible study actually becomes an important part of all three of these church functions.

"Teaching a Bible study is not just an outreach. It is actually a part of retention as well, because we're going into their home every week. So if they've already prayed through, we keep going to their homes with the study, and as a result, we're retaining them.

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*Bro. and Sis. Kent Thomas  
and son Bro. Jeff Thomas*

**T**he Thomas family has designed and built a wide variety of commercial, custom residential, and church projects since 1970. Over the years they began to recognize that churches are better served by a unique approach to planning and construction.

Omega Church Consultants, Inc. was founded in 1991 expressly to meet those specific needs. At that time the Thomases decided to devote their experience of the past 21 years toward helping churches to meet the challenges of growth by offering a comprehensive package of services including consulting, architectural design, master planning, renderings, models, financial direction, real estate services, budgeting, and construction management.

Omega was created to offer a step by step, "Phased Approach" to take the waste, risk, complexity and unnecessary cost out of the design and building process.

The Thomases view the services that are offered by Omega as a six-day-a-week ministry. Since 1981 Bro. and Sis. Thomas have also ministered each Sunday at Carmel Care Convalescent Center in connection with Calvary Tabernacle Church, Indianapolis.

Omega retains an architectural staff which at present consists of two architects and two CAD draftsmen with hundreds of church projects to their credit. The Thomases bring vast experience to this ministry. Kent has managed construction projects from West Virginia to Louisiana over the past 25 years. Jeff earned a B.S. in Business Administration in 1981 and became a real estate broker the same year. He also has designed dozens of commercial, residential and church projects since joining the family business thirteen years ago.

Before founding Omega Church Consultants, Inc. the Thomases found that the standard practice utilized by many churches was the same as that employed by many commercial clients, i.e. a commercial architect was hired to design the church facility, then bids were solicited from several general contractors. The congregation often would then discover that they had spent a great deal of money for a design they could not afford to build.

The Omega system results in less risk and less cost because feasibility and budgets are established before proceeding with construction drawings. In essence, churches are offered an additional and very valuable service, at no cost, when the design is halted at the bid plan stage and the project is bid by subcontractors and suppliers local to the church. This approach results in an accurate building cost estimate before the church makes a commitment to the completion of the construction drawings. This service is included in the low architectural fee. The process also gives the local bidders input into the design, which often results in cost-effective alternative methods and materials.

The Omega system is proven and has resulted in significant, verifiable savings to many church clients.

Omega has numerous projects in various stages of completion with independent Apostolic church congregations, the United Pentecostal Church International, the Shepherd's Home, the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, and others.



*Please contact Omega for more information and references.*

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# Winning At Spiritual Warfare

■ AIS CONVERSATION With Nona Freeman



**E**ditor's note: As part of our discussion this month on spiritual warfare, AIS contacted Sis. Nona Freeman. Sis. Freeman served for many years as a missionary to Africa and encountered spiritual darkness in many forms. Portions of this recent interview with Sis. Freeman are excerpted below:

### **On The Intensity Of Spiritual Attacks:**

Spiritual oppression is most certainly on the increase. The more we have opened our doors to Satan in our country in a legal way,

the more we have increased this assault. I have just returned from three days in Wyoming, where my brother has worked among the Indians. There, he has had such a hard time getting people established. So I preached for them Sunday and Sunday night, and when I opened my Bible, and read my Scripture, I could feel such powers of darkness in that church. Considering that this was on an Indian reservation, with all of their superstitions, that's not surprising. So I closed my Bible. I didn't know if anybody else felt it, but I said, "We do not have to put up with this. Jesus Christ came to conquer every demon." So I marched down off that platform and led a victory march. We ended with such a victory that my brother has had revival there ever since. And now, the people are staying and getting established.

### **On The Difference Between Carnality And Oppression:**

I think that there's a considerable difference in atmosphere. There is a sense of darkness when you're under spiritual attack. But with carnality, there's a grief. The true shepherd, I think, feels grief over carnality, because of the people's lack of spiritual discernment in what they are doing.

### **On First-Hand Accounts Of Spiritual Oppression:**

One of the churches we established in Africa was about the worst I've seen in the area of spiritual oppression. It started with the pastor falling into adultery, and then it was just one thing after another. In that area of South Africa, there are so many people oppressed. Almost everyone that got saved, we first had to cast devils out of, because they live with this submission to Satan. It took several years before we finally got the victory over those powers of darkness. Today, it's a different story. When I was there last Christmas, I spoke at a rally one night, and I looked at that crowd of about 2,000 people, all rejoicing. Everyone there had formerly been either a Muslim or a Hindu. So there's a great victory there now.

Also, we have seen powers so strong that people possessed by demons would be slobbering so much that it was just like a faucet opened. And I've seen those people delivered. On the other hand, I've seen people here demon-possessed, and we have watched and waited for someone to take dominion over those demons. But instead, the minister will go and pray for that person. Now prayer is definitely very appropriate. If you don't have a prayer life, you will never be able to take dominion over Satan. However, when you come face to face with a demon, that's not the time to pray. That's the time to take authority.

### **On The Correct Approach To Spiritual Warfare:**

First, I really believe that we must recognize our foe. We need discernment. And then, we have instructions on how to answer him.

Then we have to take dominion over Satan. I read a preacher's testimony one time who said that his church had made a point of every

morning rebuking the devil. Finally, though, he said that he realized that they were inviting the devil into the service, because he loved to come and be rebuked. The demons were getting attention, which is what they wanted.

In our 41 years in Africa, my husband just always took dominion over Satan rather than rebuking him. And he did it quietly. A lot of people think you have to do a lot of screaming, but the name of Jesus is what does it. Our physical efforts do not do anything except maybe impress somebody watching us. So instead, my husband used to just lift his finger and take authority over Satan: "I command you to leave."

It's definitely possible to overcome demons, but you're not just going to flip your hands at Satan and scare him. The only thing he is afraid of is the name of Jesus.

Another example: In Ethiopia, where we have the greatest Jesus' name revival in the world, they have the firm belief that every city that they enter, they must first take dominion over the powers of evil. We have stood in the airport and taken dominion over cities.

Then, the other things are worship and the blood. Satan cannot stand worship or people's mention of the blood of Jesus. The worst thing we can do when there is an attack is to become depressed or discouraged about it. We should never have a fear of Satan. When we are covered by the blood of Jesus and charge demons in the name of Jesus, that demon has to go. So if people will begin to thank God for the blood, they don't have to fear.

### **On The Source Of Our Spiritual Authority:**

Our authority comes from His name. His name has all power. I have seen the name of Jesus stop guns from shooting! I have seen it stop attacks that have come from every direction. We have the authority. It's so plain in the Bible. In fact I have been preaching lately from Mark 13:33-34. This is our ground. He gave authority to His servants, and to every man his work. We need a greater consciousness of the authority God has given us

God has endowed us with everything we need to fight this battle victoriously. When He sent His disciples out for the first time, He gave them power over unclean spirits and all manner of diseases. Jesus is the conquering King. In Him, we are more than conquerors. So it all comes back to taking authority over Satan rather than rebuking him; worshipping God and making frequent use of the blood of Jesus. In our humanity, we cannot do anything with demons. But Jesus has been doing this for thousands of years, so when we charge demonic forces in the name of Jesus, they have to flee. ■

.....  
Sis. Nona Freeman spent over four decades with her husband as missionaries to Africa. The author of several books detailing their missionary experiences, Sis. Freeman now resides in Minden, Louisiana, where she attends Bro. T.W. Barnes' and Bro. Gerald Trammell's church. In addition, Sis. Freeman travels extensively, preaching conferences across the world.





**LEGAL**

*I've heard about the concepts of negligent hiring and supervision. Do they really apply to my church? Aren't we exempt because we're a church?*

Owen Taylor

These concepts are being increasingly used in reference to churches in their employment practices and in their practices concerning supervision of youth activities. For instance, in the recent case of *Moses v. Diocese of Colorado*, the court ruled in favor of a plaintiff. The court found the church negligent in its hiring/supervision for various sexual offenses of an assistant pastor. Damages of over one million dollars were assessed.

One defense that arises in these cases is the issue of the scope of employment. In other words, the church - employer will state that the employee acted outside of the scope of his employment. These defenses work many times.

However, the best legal safeguards for a church are to have two adult supervisors at all times, to use juveniles (aged 16 - 18) to assist in driving other youths, and to carefully screen youth workers. Every church must create policy and guidelines and enforce its policy in order to establish a safe environment for youth. As the *Moses* case highlights, a church must provide enough and sufficient safeguards to permit a lawyer to prove that the church acted in a reasonable and prudent manner concerning their youth. Applications for employment, background checks, monitoring, sensible policy and good common sense are needed.

Every church should periodically review its hiring and supervision methods. Then, when trouble strikes, you can convince the jury that you acted reasonably and prudently and avoid a high judgment of liability.

*(For specific legal advice, you may reach Owen Taylor at 410-757-8080 or by writing Apostolic Law Association, 1304 Harmony Lane, Annapolis, Maryland 21401.)*



**THEOLOGY**

*As a former main-line denominational member, and now an Apostolic, how does the Apostolic movement view the Reformers of the Middle Ages?*

David Brown

Even though the Reformation period is a significant portion of church history and involves numerous individuals, a few general guidelines can be summarized here.

First, Apostolics identify with the New Testament church. The "church" of the Middle Ages, on the other hand, was not a very good representative of that early church. Therefore, the Apostolic church today would identify with the Reformers to the extent that both have a strong desire to return to the foundational basis of the New Testament church.

Second, we would recognize that the Reformers performed a valid service to the whole of Christianity. A Reformer, by definition, refers to one who amends or improves by change. The Reformers certainly were not satisfied with the status of Christianity in the Middle Ages, and they set about to make changes. The vast majority of these changes took place outside the confines of the Roman Catholic Church.

Third, the Reformers returned to a cardinal truth: Namely, that the Bible, and not a church, is the final source of truth. This was probably the greatest factor in the growth of the Reformation.

Fourth, each Reformer stood for a doctrinal idea that had been hidden, and by light of revelation was given to the public. Remember that during the Middle Ages, the Scriptures were not available in the common language, and the people were woefully ignorant of what God's Word said. These doctrinal ideas, then, became stair steps to further truth.

It should be noted, however, that no Reformer journeyed back to full doctrinal truth. This was a gradual process. For instance, research has indicated that some Reformers spoke with tongues, but most rejected Oneness doctrine.



**FAMILY**

*How can I be consistent in correcting my teen-ager? Disciplining him is very frustrating. About the time I feel I have the answer, he causes me to forget the question.*

O. C. Marler

This is a very valid question and targets a dilemma common to nearly every parent. The teen-ager who never becomes, at times, a disciplinary problem is unique.

We as parents have to approach discipline from a different perspective than that which we have used heretofore. Our teen is no longer a child that we can simply "tell" and spank. He is an emerging adult. And although a long way from maturity, he must be approached differently than he was as a child in regard to correction.

Although the rod of correction is appropriate for a child, it is really inappropriate for the adolescent (particularly an older teen). Other forms, such as loss of privileges, grounding, etc., are usually more successful.

The teen should clearly understand (and usually wants to) why he is being disciplined. Time must be taken, without anger if at all possible, to explain the offense, Scriptural principles violated, and reason for punishment.

It is vitally important for the parent to recognize this critical stage and relate differently than before. The teen is beginning adulthood and can no longer be treated as a child. Since childish behavior will still crop up, the parent must balance trust and authority to produce a secure and happy "in-between-ager."

Since it cannot always be planned, sensitivity to the child's spirit to know the necessary time of sharing and listening must be a top parental priority. Sharing cannot be "preaching" or giving adult advice. Listening, understanding, caring, and sharing, and a discussion of difficulties demonstrating respect and trust in the teen-ager is necessary. And discussion times should not always be based on a problem - only when discipline is needed.



**OUTREACH**

*My outreach director seems to have difficulty keeping all the outreach ministries working. I have asked him to oversee all evangelism ministries, which includes home Bible study, visitor follow-up, canvassing and tract*

T. W. Massengale

*ministry, as well as several others. Nothing seems to be working very effectively. What do you suggest?*

In order to maintain peak efficiency in your church's outreach ministries, it's important that you not place too many responsibilities on one individual. When an individual has two or three major responsibilities that all require consider-

able time, then it stands to reason that one or more will go lacking. This has often been the case with the church outreach director.

Too often one individual is given the title of "Outreach Director" and placed in charge of all home Bible studies, all visitor follow-up, all canvassing and tract distribution, and every other outreach that the church might have. Outreach is too critical to allow any of these vital ministries to fumble and fall. By separating visitor follow-up, home Bible study and canvassing out of one general "Outreach Department," and into their own individual departments, each with its own director, you allow all of these ministries to flourish.

Remember that balance is the key. By organizing your outreach ministries in the above way, you better balance your resources to contribute to each area's success. Also, you must balance

the outreach ministries ("outward" directed ministries) with those ministries aimed at the perfecting of the saints ("inward" directed ministries).

Overbalance in either of these two areas can cause problems, like having one leg shorter than the other. Too many churches are overbalanced on one side or another by an extreme. Your structure may not have exactly the same number of inward and outward departments, but it shouldn't be out of balance by three or four departments.

So I would say that while each of your church's ministries is important, none should ever be accomplished at the expense of another.

If you would like to send in a question to one of these ministers for their consideration, please address it to:  
 News Editor-AIS Perspectives  
 P.O. Box 47917  
 Indianapolis, IN 46247



## ■ RELIGION

## Church Phrases Often Unclear

Many Americans don't understand the church's message because of confusing terminology, according to a recent survey. In February, the Barna Research Group released a study that found that terms common to Christians are often unfamiliar to non-Christians.

Barna surveyed 1,210 Americans age 18 and older. Among the survey's findings was that 86 percent of Americans could not even try to guess the meaning of "The Great Commission." Five percent attempted a guess but guessed incorrectly, while only nine percent guessed correctly. Furthermore, even three out of four of so-called "born-again" Christians could not define the phrase.

Results were a little better - but not much - for the term "John 3:16." Twenty-five percent had some knowledge of the content of the verse, and 17 percent could quote it. However, 65 percent admitted to not knowing what "John 3:16" referred to. About half of "born-again" Christians knew something of the content of the verse.

Barna received a variety of responses when it asked respondents to define "gospel." Thirty-three percent thought it was synonymous with the Bible, while 37 percent correctly identified it with "the good news of salvation through Jesus." Other responses: "the gospel refers to religion," according to six percent, "the gospel is a style of music," four percent believed, and the gospel is "the truth" according to three percent.

## ■ MORALITY

## TV Promotes Homosexuality

Television executives have been speeding up the process of legitimizing homosexuality in recent months, as shows and commercials have both been promoting the gay lifestyle.

It was just this past March, for instance, that ABC-TV's *Roseanne* decided to air an episode in which the title character visits a lesbian bar and shares a drink and a kiss with another lady. ABC had at first refused to broadcast the episode, but caved in when star Roseanne Arnold threatened to quit.

Meanwhile, a Swedish furniture company is the first company to sponsor an ad with a clearly-homosexual couple. The ad, which aired during March in four cities, was for Ikea U.S., a furniture manufacturer. The commercial shows two gay men shopping for a dining room table, and treats their relationship as a normal situation.



## ■ MEDIA

## Media Violence Is Serious Problem

Most of Hollywood's elite decision-makers are concerned about excessive media violence according to a new poll released in May.

The survey, conducted by U.S. News and World Report and the UCLA Center for Communication Policy found that more than half of Hollywood's elite are worried about media violence and believe it may contribute to violence in society.

The survey was mailed to 6,300 decision-makers in the film or TV industries, and received a 13.76 response rate. The normal response rate is only about five percent.

The poll found that 59 percent of Hollywood's elite believe violence in entertainment is a serious problem. This is still far short of the number of people among the general public who believe it is a problem. Seventy-nine percent of the general public worry about violence in entertainment.

Eighty-seven percent say that violence in the media may contribute to real-life violence, nearly mirroring the general public's view. However, only about 40 percent of the Hollywood elite believe government can contribute positively to Hollywood's attempt's to curtail media violence.

The survey also found that 65 percent of the public feel that Dan Quayle was right in 1992 when he said that people who control television have little or no sympathy for those holding to traditional family values. On the other hand, only 25 percent of Hollywood's elite believe Quayle was right.

Sixty-three percent of the "elite" group feel that the film and television industries glorify violence. Also, 58 percent admit that they have avoided watching a television program because of its violent content; 76 percent say they have either prevented or discouraged their children from watching such a show.

## ■ RELIGION

## Churches Sponsor Pagan Conference

It was not the type of conference you would expect mainline churches to sponsor. Yet, according to a recent issue of *The American Family Association Journal*, representatives of several Christian groups last November sponsored a meeting focusing on goddess worship and lesbianism.

The "Re-Imagining" Conference, associated with the World Council of Churches, featured representatives from such groups as the Presbyterian Church, United Methodist Church, the Lutherans, Roman Catholic Church, and the United Church of Christ. According to AFA, the largest amount of financial support came from the Bicentennial Fund of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

And what was the content of the meeting? According to Martha Sawyer Allen of the *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*, "they are exploring the sensual and sexual side of the divine." Also, according to AFA, the conference featured "a service of milk and honey to the goddess Sophia."

"Many doctrines essential to orthodox Christianity were repudiated at this conference," the *AFA Journal* said. "This includes the doctrine of God, the deity of Christ, His atoning death, the sinfulness of humanity, creation, the authority of Scriptures, the church, and the biblical understanding of human sexuality."

Judy Westerdorf, a United Methodist minister, told the conference that the Christian church "has always been blessed by gays and lesbians, . . . witches [and] shamans."

## ■ CHURCH &amp; STATE

## Is Witnessing Harassment?

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is reviewing some proposed new guidelines on harassment in the workplace based on, among other things, religion.

The EEOC said that these proposed new guidelines will only clarify law, and that "they do not set forth new law. Yet that itself worries some Christian groups. As the American Family Association put it, "They depart, sometimes radically so, from existing law. This will result in employers banning any type of discussion or expression of religion in the workplace."

The new guidelines define harassment as "verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her . . . religion. . . or that of his/her relatives, friends or associates."



YOUTH MINISTRY

## A Power Encounter For Ohio Youth

**L**ancaster, Ohio is like many mid-western towns. It has its share of young people looking for something to do; consequently, it also has its share of community centers to keep teens occupied. But now, Lancaster's young people have an even better option: They have Power Encounter Ministries of New Life Christian Center.

New Life, Pastored by Bro. Michael Fitzgerald, started its Power Encounter as a way of attracting the area's teens to the church. And, as Youth Pastor Robert Yanok points out, it has been an outstanding success.

"We have a Power House Youth Center. It's right here on our church grounds." Yanok said the center was once a big barn, now redone with a sanctuary, platform, chairs and sound system, plus a gym area for sports activities. "Also, upstairs, we have a couple of couches and a monitor to watch preaching or educational videos. This Power House is completely open to the kids on the weekends."

Fridays, in particular, the Power House sees a lot of activity. Three Fridays a month, the church youth meet, together with youth from the community. "Lots of junior high and high

school students come to this who wouldn't normally come to church. We play basketball, show videos and do other activities. It is unstructured and run mainly by the kids. On the fourth Friday of the month, another aspect of Power Encounter Ministries comes into play. On that night, the church holds a Power Encounter Rally.

Youth from all different churches come to these services. The rally features a Youth Praise time of worship songs. Then there are skits and other activities. Also, we have special speakers come and speak.

"The kids run the whole service," Yanok said. "I just introduce the speakers. It is very youth oriented. In fact, some of the praise songs are written by the young people themselves."

Yanok said that, like the social activities, the rallies have been successful in attracting unsaved youth. "As a matter of fact," Yanok said, "we baptized the Assembly of God youth pastor from our town just the other night. He came and brought his kids."

Further, Power Encounter sponsored a revival last spring, Yanok said, which 13 churches' youth groups attended. "Three people from the Baptist church came and received the Holy Ghost and were baptized."

A third aspect of Power Encounter is a youth newsletter of the same name. And, not surprisingly, the newsletter is sent to various area churches. It is designed as an outreach of New Life.

Then, the final aspect of New Life's program is a series of Power Encounter Crusades. "We have gone into a couple of different churches on Friday and Saturday and conducted these crusades. Youth teams have led the whole praise and worship aspect, and I preached. We've had big healing and deliverance services as part

of that, too.

"What we are doing is reaching outside our four walls. The reason that kids get drunk or high and have sex is that they are looking for something that will take them out of their normal existence. Power Encounter tries to take these kids out of their normal existence into the reality of the Holy Ghost."



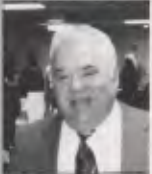
Robert Yanok

MINISTRIES

## Louisiana Small Groups

**S**mall Group Ministry has come to the Louisiana District (UPC) - with a twist. The district leadership is utilizing the ministry to bring their ministers closer together.

Under traditional Small Group Ministries, church congregations are broken down into several smaller groups. These groups meet for informal times of devotions and fellowship. Under the leadership of Bro. Fred Foster, and with Bro. John Cupit, the Louisiana District is in the process of adapting that concept for Louisiana pastors.



John Cupit

"In our district, with the bigness of things, you often lose contact with a lot of preachers," Bro. Cupit told AIS. "We're hoping that this kind of meeting will bring the pastors and their wives into a closer relationship with the other brethren."

As planned, each sectional presbyter will divide the section into groups of six to eight pastors. Those pastors and wives will then meet once a quarter for an informal time of "Caring, sharing, and bearing." They will perhaps sing, somebody will bring a short Bible study, and the rest of the participants will be invited to discuss that study. The groups will also pray for each other's needs, and they will conclude with a time of food and fellowship. "Right now, we've had a couple of training sessions. Bro. Foster and I hope to visit each section and explain to the pastors how it's going to work."

For more information, call Bro. Cupit at (504)835-4976 or Bro. Foster at (318)396-3982.

APOSTOLICS TODAY

## Marvin Treece Writes Acts Commentary

**F**or obvious reasons, the book of Acts has always been a favorite of most Pentecostals. Knowing that, Pastor Marvin Treece of Lake Charles, LA, recently completed a project to make studying Acts a more fulfilling endeavor. That project: an in-depth two-volume commentary on the fifth book of the New Testament, published by Treasure House.



Marvin Treece

"I felt a desire to be of service to those who wanted to study the language of the book but couldn't. I did a complete study of the Greek text, because our young people do not always study Greek," Treece said.

Treece himself has studied Biblical languages at Tyler University, where he received his Ph.D.

"I tried to do several things in the commentaries," Treece said. "One is to do word studies, to tear the

word apart and bring out the essence of the entire phrase. Then I underline what might be a homiletic possibility, something that might make a good sermon title."

Treece, who says the commentaries have sold well, hopes eventually to do the entire New Testament. "Right now, I am finishing I Corinthians; it will be out soon. Feedback has been good. I've had several publishing companies say that this is a first as far as Pentecost is concerned." For more information, call Bro. Treece at (318)477-5972.



**I**ndiana Bible College maintains a growing electronic database of research and Bible study files to assist pastors, students and church leaders. All files in the database are free to AIS subscribers and can be accessed by modem (dial (317) 781-7700) or by voice telephone ((800)8000-AIS). When ordering by phone, specify photocopy or computer disk, and have your User ID and Password ready. (A small photocopy/computer disk fee will be added to your monthly statement.)



## NEW FAMILY LIFE FILES

FATN06.TXT	2500	<b>Ways To Tell Teens You Love Them.</b> Good article on demonstrating love.
FACR21.TXT	6544	<b>Improving Relationships With Parents.</b> The importance of maintaining parental respect.
FAMA10.TXT	1400	<b>10 Commandments For Marriage Partners.</b> Tips for improving your marriage.
FACR22.TXT	12720	<b>Loving The Unlovely Child.</b> Good article on handling a rebellious child in a loving way.
FAMO02.TXT	5231	<b>The Meanest Mom.</b> Every mom will, now and then, have to show "tough love."
FAMA08.TXT	16924	<b>Preparing For Marriage.</b> Steps to help the future bride and groom prepare for their life together.
FAFA04.TXT	14753	<b>30 Ideas For Husbands &amp; Fathers.</b> Ways the man can become spiritual leader in his home.
FATN04.TXT	31943	<b>How To Help Your Kids Say "No."</b> Good advice on teaching your kids sexual purity.
FATN05.TXT	22329	<b>The Strong-Willed Adolescent.</b> Dr. James Dobson discusses the rebellious child.
FACR19.TXT	9033	<b>The 10 Worst Discipline Mistakes.</b> Excellent article on how <i>not</i> to discipline your child.



## NEW GRAPHICS FILES

HBGR15.PCX	205114	<b>Home Bible Study Progress Chart.</b> Good form for tracking your studies.
HBGR07.PCX	38000	<b>Home Bible Study Ads.</b> Sample ad recruiting people for home Bible study ministry.
HBGR01.PCX	27000	<b>Home Bible Study Logos.</b> Nice logos and designs to use in your HBS promotional material.
NCMA04.PCX	76000	<b>Holy Ghost/Baptism Certificate.</b> Quality certificate to honor your new converts.
LAMA09A.PCX	106387	<b>Ladies' Fellowship Ad.</b> Sample ad inviting participation in the church's ladies' programs.
LAMA09B.PCX	124432	<b>L.A.M.B. Newsletter.</b> "Ladies About the Master's Business" - Sample newsletter.
AVLG01.PCX	188814	<b>Church Logos.</b> Ideas for logos to include on your church letterheads.
AVLG02A.PCX	111144	<b>Miscellaneous Logos.</b> Logos to include in all of your church publications.
AVLG02B.PCX	101347	<b>Miscellaneous Logos - 2.</b> More logos for your church publications.
AVLG02C.PCX	96571	<b>Miscellaneous Logos - 3.</b> More logos for your church publications.
BUBP02B.PCX	100320	<b>Church Information.</b> Sample bulletin page featuring pertinent church information.
BUBP02C.PCX	100932	<b>Sunday School Department.</b> Sample bulletin page promoting Sunday school activities.
BUBP02D.PCX	84108	<b>Question &amp; Answer Page.</b> Sample page for your bulletin featuring questions and answers.
HBAC10.PCX	7077	<b>Bible Study Card.</b> Good card to hand out for recruiting home Bible studies.
HBAC11A.PCX	13554	<b>Home Bible Study Card - Outside.</b> The outside of a sample card for your HBS ministry.
HBAC11B.PCX	14651	<b>Home Bible Study Card - Inside.</b> The inside of a sample card for your HBS ministry.
HBGR02.PCX	88558	<b>Home Bible Study Form.</b> Sample form to assist in getting new Bible studies.
BUCA02A.PCX	77879	<b>Prayer Clipart.</b> A collection of clipart focusing on a prayer theme.
BUCA02B.PCX	145734	<b>More Prayer Clipart.</b> More prayer clipart for your church publications.
BUCA03A.PCX	108922	<b>Clipart - Churches.</b> Pictures of churches for your church publications.
BUCA03B.PCX	146686	<b>More Church Clipart.</b> Another collection of churches to include in your church bulletin.
BUCA04A.PCX	96586	<b>Pictures Of Doves.</b> Several clipart pictures of doves for your church bulletin or newsletter.
BUCA04B.PCX	107048	<b>More Pictures Of Doves.</b> Another fine collection of doves for your church publications.
BUCA05A.PCX	115922	<b>Music Clipart.</b> A quality collection of music symbols and instruments for church bulletins.
BUCA05B.PCX	148466	<b>More Music Clipart.</b> Some more music-related pictures for your church publications.
BUCA06.PCX	87850	<b>Clipart - Cassettes.</b> All the cassette tape clipart you could ever want.
BUCA07A.PCX	115171	<b>Patriotic Clipart.</b> A good variety of patriotic pictures.
BUCA07B.PCX	127191	<b>More Patriotic Clipart.</b> Still more quality clipart with a patriotic theme.
BUCA08.PCX	112229	<b>Pictures Of Jesus.</b> Several great pictures relating to the ministry of Jesus Christ.
SESF04.PCX	68234	<b>Music Flyer.</b> Sample flyer promoting a church-sponsored music workshop.



## NEW COMPUTER SOFTWARE FILES

UTDT05.EXE	137343	<b>Sparta.</b> Great Windows shell that makes your computer look and act like a Macintosh!
UTDT06.EXE	169886	<b>Master Control.</b> Finest DOS menu/user interface available. Looks, acts like Windows!
BIBS30.EXE	58936	<b>Prophecy.</b> Computerized, menu-driven study of Bible prophecy.
BIBS31.EXE	178902	<b>Revelation Slide Show.</b> Great "slide show" on the book of Revelation. Charts, outlines, etc.
BIBS32.EXE	67118	<b>Sermon Illustrations.</b> Use Windows Cardfile to view a fine collection of sermon illustrations.
HPMP09.EXE	96438	<b>Tour The USA.</b> Another good program to help you plan out-of-town trips, vacations.
GRPR12.EXE	1340668	<b>Page Plus Intro.</b> The best Shareware desktop publishing program available for Windows!
GAAR33.EXE	443265	<b>Electro Man.</b> Quality VGA action game where you play a space superhero fighting aliens.
GASM12.EXE	658485	<b>3-Point.</b> Good VGA basketball simulation, pitting you against the computer.
RIPTM154.EXE	589370	<b>Ripterm.</b> AIS has a new user-friendly structure. This terminal program gives full access to it!



## *Apostolic Law Association*

1304 Harmony Lane  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(410) 757-8080



Owen M. Taylor, BS, JD  
Attorney at Law  
President

### My Colleagues in Christ:

Many of you know me because of the booth the CHRISTIAN FREEDOM FOUNDATION has each year at the UPC General Conference. Several years ago, I met with the Executive Board and the General Board to share my vision for a legal resource for the United Pentecostal Church. I felt that the Lord had directed me to focus my entire practice of law in support of our churches and the ministry. I explained to the Board that my objective was to be a free legal resource to the UPC much like the organization that many of you have used - the Christian Law Association. The CLA is a worthy organization and has been used of God to help our churches and ministers. It was not my intention to, in any way, detract from the good and valuable work the CLA has done. In fact, I have been in their headquarters and worked directly with Gibbs and Craze. I can testify to their competence and valuable legal services. My feeling was, however, that the UPC had reached a place that it should have something like that for ourselves. Thus the CFF was birthed.

The CFF, now with its more focused name of APOSTOLIC LAW ASSOCIATION, as I mentioned above, has a booth at General Conference each year. The purpose of the booth is to expose to the Brethren its purposes and concepts and to solicit support for its objectives. Support, in theory, was to come from PIM like support from churches and individual contributors. In this fashion the CFF would reach a financial base that would allow me to staff up and have a law office opened and operated solely for the UPC ministry. Should any church become attacked by federal or local government, be subjected to unlawful or ungodly laws or regulations or experience persecution that made legal help necessary, the CFF would fill the gap. Thus a local church, which under normal circumstances is unable to pay for and sustain the use of good, competent counsel, would have a resource for protection. Additionally the CFF would function as a networking facility for UPC lawyers, be a source for legal information and assistance and be a source of comfort and counsel for pastors needing quick advice or direction. Universally, all who are aware of the objectives applaud them. Unfortunately, after 5 years of booths, manned by my wife and I, and speaking with many, many brethren, the funds are not enough to pay a full month's telephone bill.

Therefore, I am asking you to consider supporting the APOSTOLIC LAW ASSOCIATION. If many would contribute, even small amounts of \$20 or \$30 per month, much would and could be accomplished to seeing the vision become a reality. I already represent several UPC districts and I have assisted many, many churches and I feel that the reputation and quality of legal services that are available are well-documented. Men throughout our movement have endorsed the CFF and will give their recommendation of the CFF/ALA. N.A. Urshan, C.L. Becton, James Kilgore, Jesse Williams, T.F. Tenney have been on the Board of Directors; the entire General Board has approved the CFF as a ministry of value to the movement.

Please take a little time in prayer and consider supporting this project. Give me a call and we can discuss it. I am certain that the Lord will affirm for you His desire to see this project come into its own.

Sincerely yours,



Owen M. Taylor  
Attorney at Law  
Apostolic Law Association







### ■ BIBLE READING SURVEY

A new survey has some interesting things to say about who is and isn't reading the Bible on a regular basis. According to the poll, conducted by Barna Research Group, such factors as age, education, marital status, or urban, suburban or rural lifestyles have little impact on Bible reading. What does matter? Apparently considerations such as gender, church attendance and income do. The Barna survey found that 54 percent of women read the Bible, while only 36 percent of men do so. Fifty-four percent of regular church-goers said they read the Bible regularly; only 15 percent of non-church goers claim to do so. Approximately 54 percent of those people who learn less than \$20,000 a year read the Bible regularly, while only 30 percent of those who earn more than \$60,000 read it consistently. Yet by far, the thing that makes the most difference is whether or not the person claims to be "born again." The study found that 73 percent of those who call themselves "born again" read the Bible regularly, while only 29 percent of those who are not "born again" claim to do so.

### ■ MINISTERIAL MORALE

Many Christian ministers may be in danger of burn-out judging by recent statistics. One recent survey said that about 80 percent of ministers feel troubled by their jobs, and 80 percent also feel unable to meet the demands that the ministry brings upon them. And the same number report being concerned about the negative impact that their ministerial role is having on their families. Criticism is also a factor for many of them. Half of all ministers say that criticism unnerves them. Further, these ministers find it disturbing when the church leaders refuse to address this criticism.

### ■ CHILD ABUSE HELP

The tragic trend just keeps going, as more religious institutions and child-care centers are found guilty of child abuse. Now though, Christian Ministries Resources has produced a resource kit to help churches protect themselves. *Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in Your Church* features a resource book with detailed guidance for leaders, an audiocassette entitled "What Church Leaders Should Know About Child Sexual Abuse and the Church," a training videotape and leader's guide that provide a dramatized presentation of the problem and a clear explanation of important policies and procedures. The kit is available for \$49.95. To order or for more information, write Christian Ministry Resources, P.O. Box 2301, Matthews, NC 28106-2301. Or call (800)222-1840.

### ■ CHARACTERISTICS OF GROWTH

The May/June issue of *Your Church* reports some positive trends concerning church growth in the 1990s. According to the magazine's research, growing churches are now outnumbering shrinking churches by a ratio of 2:1. Further, half of all the churches they studied have shown growth during the past five years. The magazine also reported that growing churches have grown at twice the rate at which shrinking churches shrank. And finally, average Sunday morning attendance at American churches grow more than twice as fast as the U.S. population between 1988 and 1993. So having established that churches are growing, are there any characteristics that set growing churches apart from those that are not growing? Yes, reports the magazine. Some of these characteristics: 1) "Growing churches are early adapters of communications-revolution technology." According to their research, a growing church is twice as likely to own a fax machine, a computer network, and desktop publishing hardware. Further, they are more likely to provide computers for their church staff. 2) "Growing churches are 20 percent less likely to use traditional music in Sunday-morning worship." 3) The magazine reported that "members of growing churches are nearly 25 percent more likely to attend church each week." 4) Pastors of growing churches are more likely to attend seminars than are pastors of non-growing churches.

### ■ NEW MAN MAGAZINE

Just in time for Fathers Day comes word of a new Christian magazine devoted to men's interests and concerns. *New Man* is a product of Promise Keepers, a nationwide group devoted to communicating a message of morality to men. The publishers say that this will be a magazine targeting single or married men of all ages and ethnic groups. Topics to be covered in upcoming issues include leadership, fatherhood, ethics, prayer, friendships, marriage, communication, romance, sports, nutrition, stress, finances, and more. To order, call (800)877-5334. Or send \$15 to *New Man*, P.O. Box 365, Mt. Morris, IL 61054-9803.

### ■ NEW NON-PROFIT RULES?

The April 4, 1994 issue of *National & International Religion Report* says that non-profit organizations may soon be required to send copies of their annual tax returns to anybody who requests them. "The proposed reforms are aimed at curbing excesses by executives of charities," the newsletter points out. The proposal is one of several presented to the House Ways and Means Committee affecting charitable organizations, including churches.







# Rick Pavlu: The Little Church That Could

(Continued from page three)

"Also, as we teach them the Bible study, we keep injecting into them that after they are through with the Bible study, they will then be prepared to teach as well. In this way, the Bible study is also a part of our 'establishing' process."

For this reason, Pavlu's custom-made Bible study has been at the center of his church's evangelistic thrust. "We have worked with bus ministry and visitation to some degree," he said, "but it has all been focused on trying to get parents to have a Bible study."

Still, Bro. Pavlu said that, if he could do things over again, he would modify somewhat his approach to home Bible study.

"I would never have taught a home Bible study to anyone over 40. That sounds radical, but I've learned that whenever you teach a Bible study in a Catholic community to a young couple, they will receive it more readily and be flexible enough to break away from tradition. From there, the young couple will reach their parents and grandparents."

## New Life For New Converts

Besides home Bible study, the other ministry that shines most brightly at Church Point is Bro. Pavlu's new convert care ministry (hence, his emphasis on "retention" and "establishing"). "You have to prepare new converts for their own ministry in the work of God," Pavlu stresses. For that cause, Pavlu has placed heavy emphasis on their New Life class.

"The New Life program is a class that meets every Sunday morning. We've done this for about eight years now, every Sunday morning just like a Sunday school class."

The New Life class is a program of 12 lessons for new converts. Each new saint enters the class wherever the class currently is in the series and stays until he has received all 12 lessons. "They're taught in a revolving manner," Bro. Pavlu said. "Whenever they're through with that, they receive a

diploma, and they are well on their way to being an established saint."

## A Growth Attitude

Besides these steps, Pavlu's other advice for bringing growth to a church have to do with pastoring with the proper attitude. "A pastor should have his priorities right," he said. "A pastor should place his priorities into the enthusiasm of a church service. That is the highest priority. No matter how many Bible studies we teach or how much outreach we've got, no matter how great of a retention program, if that church service is not vibrant and alive and powerful, we're defeating our purpose, because that's what will actually touch that person and bring him into the church."

Also, Bro. Pavlu said a pastor should not focus heavily on finances at the expense of winning souls. "The greatest obstacle we've fought here has been finances," he said. "We've grown so rapidly, yet we've won mostly young couples that are still in the process of trying to make ends meet. As a result, we have grown faster than our finances have grown. Because of the time that it took to establish new converts and get them to understand tithing and sacrificial giving, finances were always lagging behind. We're just now starting to break out of that."

"And to be honest," Pavlu continued, "I never came up with a solution to this problem, because in winning young couples to the Lord, you're going to have to make that sacrifice on the financial side. So all I can suggest is for the pastor to have patience. Time is in their favor. Through time, these new converts will eventually mature and be at the place that they can give more."

In the old children's story, the "Little Train That Could" looked back at the hill he had just conquered, and exclaimed, "I knew I could!" And Rick Pavlu too looks back with gratitude at the hills God has brought the First Pentecostal Church over. Yet rather than boast about what they have accomplished, Pavlu looks toward the future, anticipating many hills and many victories yet to come.

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