



REMEMBER THOSE EARLIER DAYS

GUEST EDITORIAL BY JOHN CAUSEY

Editor's note from Kip McKean: *First and foremost, I hold John Causey to be a very dear brother and friend. So it gives me unfathomable joy to share with you that John and Emma Causey officially placed membership in the City of Angels ICC on April 9, 2017, thus joining God's new SoldOut Movement! John was baptized in 1979, as the first baptism of the Indiana State Campus Ministry. Emma was baptized through the efforts of the same Campus Ministry in 1982. They married in 1984. In 1989, the Causeys heard the call of God and entered the full-time ministry. During the 1990's, God used the Causeys to powerfully lead the Chicago Church, the London Church and the Metro Region of the LA ICOC, which we call the Southland Region.*

After the ICOC's return to Mainline Church of Christ theology in 2002 and the ensuing falling away of thousands after the Kriete Letter in 2003, John became very involved in HOPEworldwide as a spokesman and a board member. In 2010, John was elected a founding member of the ICOC's Service Team of Eight who worked in collaboration to oversee what remained of the ICOC even though these congregations embraced autonomy. (The Service Team does not have a set leader.) Of note, John was re-elected to the Service Team every year until his resignation last fall. Also, John was the Coordinator for the LA ICOC Staff Meetings. In addition to these charges, John disciplined the Church Leaders of the ICOC's Asia Pacific and Oceania Regions, who have a collective membership of over 10,000. With all of these responsibilities, John was arguably the most influential Evangelist in the ICOC until his self-imposed sabbatical and resignation from all responsibilities in October 2016. During these years, our beloved sister Emma developed a dynamic leadership training program for mothers and daughters called "Fine Pearls for Divine Girls". Please read John's remarkable account of how the Spirit led the Causeys into God's SoldOut Movement – in this our Year of the Impossible!



KIP AND ELENA PRESENTED JOHN AND EMMA WITH AN UPSIDE DOWN GLOBE ENGRAVED WITH THE WORDS "THE DREAM" TO WELCOME THEM INTO THE SOLDOUT MOVEMENT.

REMEMBER THOSE EARLIER DAYS

"Remember those earlier days after you received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering... But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved." Hebrews 10:32-39

Growing up my Mom would say, "Never forget where you came from, because it can save you from where you might end up!" I was born into a very conservative and religious family. My grandfather, John Adam Causey, was the Founder and Pastor of a large Baptist Church in the Southside of Chicago, Illinois. He was a visionary church leader as he planted churches in the neighboring states of Missouri and Indiana. My grandparents had six sons, and five of them were ministers. The exception was my father, John Adam Causey II. Dad worked for International Harvester and moonlighted as an entrepreneur. Shortly after marriage, my parents were eager to have lots of sons. However, Mom delivered five consecutive daughters! Turning to God like Hannah, Mom vowed, "Father, if you will give me a son, when he is older, I will return him for service back to you." God answered her prayer, and John Adam Causey III was born! (Me!) Mom often repeated this vow to me growing up, and my response was fear and a complete resistance to religion. At 18 years old, I decided that I would attend college and business school, and thus I began preparing to follow in the steps of my father.

During the fall of my freshman year of university, I received the devastating news that my Dad had advanced prostate cancer and was not expected to recover. I visited him from campus during the second weekend of October. Upon arriving back on campus that Sunday night, I received a call that my Dad had just passed away at only 48 years old. Losing Dad was devastating, as he was a major inspiration in my life. Later after the funeral, I realized that seeing the effect of cancer on his body was meant to be a "scared-straight moment!" It worked! I gave religion a try. So I joined the local Campus Gospel Choir and started going to church on Sundays. While all these changes made me feel better, and helped me come to peace with my father's passing, they did not address my sinful character of immorality, arrogance, filthy language and selfishness. Those 10 months of becoming more religious left me looking better on the outside, but unchanged within.

In the fall of my sophomore year, God moved in a miraculous way! At that time, the Eastside Church of Christ decided to "experiment" with Campus Ministry! Greg and Teresa Jackson were hired to lead the charge. On Greg's first official visit to Indiana State University, he prayed for God to lead him to the right dormitory; for the elevator to open up on the right floor; and for a student's door to be open who would be open to the Gospel! Cromwell Hall was that dormitory; the ninth floor is where the elevator door opened; and my door was the only open door that morning! Greg walked in and invited me to a Soul Talk (Bible Talk). We studied the Bible for six weeks, and I was the first campus baptism of the new Indiana State University Campus Ministry!

Scores of other students were baptized during my remaining three years. Also, my Mom, several family members, and the love of my life, Emma Jackson, became disciples!

We were totally devoted to God's Word, to one-on-one discipling relationships, and to preaching the Word daily to our fellow students, friends and families. In 1982, our Campus Ministry started attending the new Boston World Missions Seminars, thus joining with Kip McKean and the Boston Total Commitment Movement to evangelize the nations.

Following graduation and two years of pure dating, Emma and I married and began an adventure beyond anything we could have "asked or imagined!" (Ephesians 3:20-21) I worked for Ford Motor Company and then IBM. In 1986, I attended Sanford Graduate School to pursue a Master's Degree in Business (MBA). During this time, Emma and I assisted Tom and Sheila Jones – as the Campus Leader Couple – with the planting of the Birmingham (Alabama) Church.

Upon completion of my MBA Degree, I returned to work at Ford Motor Company in Indianapolis, Indiana. We served in the local church as Family Group Leaders and Bible Talk Leaders. During this time, we received a call from the Chicago Church Leadership inviting us to serve as full-time Region Leaders for the Southside Chicago Ministry. This would take us to the very city and area where my grandfather had built his church decades earlier! I then remembered my mother's vow and gladly accepted the ministry position! Through prayer and God's power, we grew from 90 members to 400 in three years! Kip McKean then personally invited us to serve in the Washington DC Church. Beginning with 500 members, within three years we saw the Spirit powerfully work, growing the church to 1,800 and having our Congregational Worship Services in Constitution Hall located in the center of Capitol Hill!

Kip would challenge our faith again in late 1994 calling us to move to Europe to lead the London Church and the United Kingdom Churches. We were the first African American couple charged with leading Great Britain and the surrounding nations. God blessed our faith, our prayers and our reliance on Him, and the church grew from 800 to almost 2,000 in less than three years! All of the churches in the United Kingdom experienced a time of refreshment and growth by God's grace and favor.

In 1999, we were called to lead the Metro Region of the LA ICOC and received discipling from Kip and Elena. Hundreds of souls were saved as God increased our numbers from 350 to almost 1,000! I still fondly remember July 2001, when God blessed our region to baptize over 100 people in one month! These were fruitful years! Emma and I fully embraced discipleship, our movement's central leadership, Kip McKean as God's leader of our Movement, and the dream of the evangelization of the nations in this generation.

The year 2003 would begin a time of great challenge. During this year, two months after the Kriete Letter, the McKeanes were unjustly fired as the LA ICOC Leaders and of the entire ICOC. It was then that our LA Region Leaders Group decided that we would no longer have a "Lead" or "Senior" Evangelist to replace Kip's role in the LA Church. In retrospect, I now understand that we sinfully decided that each region should have "local independence" (autonomy), and that each region would operate and function locally – with no oversight or accountability from a central leadership. As a group, we did acknowledge that we should cooperate and function as eight equal parts of the larger LA Church. We

selected a “Congregational Evangelist” – not the same as Lead Evangelist, as the Congregational Evangelist had no authority. He would only coordinate our agreed upon church-wide activities and had no discipleship or leadership oversight within the group. However, this decision for local autonomy and no formal group discipleship structure later led to the breakdown of discipleship throughout the entire church. What Kip has taught for now almost 40 years is true: “Autonomous churches beget autonomous disciples.” The sin of autonomy isolates disciples, which allows Satan – the lion – to devour them. (1 Peter 5:8-9)

I personally want to take responsibility for my role in creating this independent and autonomous cloud within the LA ICOC. I deeply regret my influence in creating the unbiblical concept of a non-authoritative “Congregational Evangelist.” Today, I sincerely apologize to the members of the LA ICOC, as I believe many members and leaders have been adversely affected by this decision to move away from the life-changing, healthy discipling relationships that we all need in our daily lives.

During the years of 2004 and 2005, I maintained contact with the McKeanes when God moved them to Portland, Oregon. I attended the first two Portland Jubilees and observed Kip’s leadership and continued commitment to church discipleship, central church leadership, and a visionary mission to reach all nations with the Gospel in our generation. However, in the fall of 2005, I silently pulled back from the McKeanes. With expressed reluctance – but to my eternal shame – I signed two letters sinfully disfellowshipping Kip from our churches. Sadly, for 12 years I had not followed up, sought any contact, or pursued reconciliation with a brother who had meant so much, and done so much in my spiritual life over the years! The Scriptures teach, “Though a righteous man may fall seven times, seven times he gets back up!” (Proverbs 24:16) God help us all, if in sinful judgment, we believe any disciple cannot get back up!

From 2015 to 2016, God began a period of discipline and refinement in my spiritual life. During this period I travelled in excess of 200,000 miles around the world: multiple trips to Asia, Europe, Africa and the Pacific Islands, as well as several US domestic trips serving the ICOC Churches and HOPEworldwide. In June of 2016, I realized I had become very emotionally and spiritually tired from trying to help – but with little success – with the many serious challenges inside HOPEworldwide and our struggling churches. Gordon Ferguson – an ICOC Elder and an outspoken opponent of the SoldOut Movement – stated what I sensed from my travels to be true in his book *My Three Lives – The Story Of One Man And Three Movements*, “The ICOC [in 2015 had] 667 congregations overall. 381 baptized one to 10 people and 122 had zero baptisms. Thus in our 667 churches, 503 (75%) baptized between zero and 10 people. And let me state the obvious here – when baptisms are so few – things are not close to going well.”

I discussed my exhaustion with my local staff, requesting some time off to recover spiritually. The staff was supportive, yet others would not act upon or honor this request. I tried to soldier on, only to realize I was more than weary; I was completely burnt out. For me it would require significant time away from ministry in order to spend time with God to revive and refresh my soul.

So in October 2016, I resigned from my role as the Metro Region Leader of the LA ICOC. I resigned from the ICOC Service Team. I removed myself from oversight and partnership roles with the churches in Oceania, Asia and in particular the Philippines. For the next five months, I devoted myself to prayer, fasting, Bible study and wrestling with God, to gain clarity and understanding of my spiritual condition and His future will for my life. This began a time of intense spiritual revelation, pain, loneliness, streams of tears, cries for God’s mercy, and a plea for the Holy Spirit to fill up my empty heart and life! Today I thank God for this time of suffering. He has filled my heart with fire again, refreshed my soul, and caused me to remember the core convictions of my conversion to Christ! During this time, Psalms 25 and 86 provided such a guiding light.

In the fall of 2016, I wrestled with the question, “Why are the ICOC Churches not growing but instead filled with seemingly unresolvable issues that wore me out?” After studying the Word, I came to a deep conviction that central leadership is God’s plan to lead His people so they will not become “sheep without a shepherd.” (Numbers 27:15-18) After abandoning our father in the faith Kip, we became a group of churches led by the ears and not visionary eyes. So in January 2017, following another Bible study on reconciliation, God put it on my heart to reach out to Kip. I realized after all that happened in 2003, it had now been 14 years! 14 years ago! I immediately reached out by phone and, in tears, apologized for my blindness of all that God was doing in the SoldOut Movement, for being a part of all the judgment, for allowing years to pass, for the hurt and pain that he and Elena had experienced by shaming them through a false disfellowshipment. Kip responded with warmth, openness and forgiveness. He expressed with humility all that God had put him through. Kip shared with me the lessons he needed to learn about humility, forgiveness, reliance on God, and having mercy for the weak.

Early last month in March 2017, Emma and I were invited to dinner by Kip and Elena at their home. Following this incredible reunion, I was refreshed and greatly encouraged by two days of discussions with Kip about his life, convictions and lessons learned from God. I will never forget the time that Kip and I walked up Mt. Hollywood (which he affectionately calls Mt. Shalom), got down on our knees crying together and prayed about our lives, our families, the city of LA, and the nations of the world! Though I found Kip to be a confident leader, I clearly saw how God had transformed Kip’s natural confidence to be a confidence in God alone. I was very encouraged to see the mercy, grace and love that Kip has for all the brothers and sisters in the ICOC, in spite of the hurt and separation that Kip and his family had experienced. I expressed to Kip that I was proud of his relationship with God and his inspiring transformation. I let him know that, “My happiest and most fruitful times were serving under his leadership” and that “as it was in the earlier days, he remains a visionary leader and God’s man in this generation!”

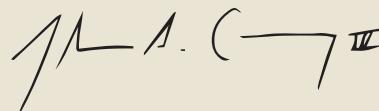
The next day, I visited the LA Staff Meeting of the International Christian Churches. I was blown away by what my eyes saw! I witnessed fire in the singing, zeal while sharing about the previous week’s baptisms, and an incredible warmth in the fellowship... then I “remembered those earlier days after [I] received the light” as a college student in God’s Movement! This was the church that I was baptized in! I was so inspired by the excitement of the mature disciples, and scores of young 19 to 23 year olds, who were passionate to be full-time in the ministry! I was very convicted that my own

judgmental heart and lack of faith did not allow me to see how the Spirit was moving in the new Movement. After a long fellowship, I left and prayed most of that day, thanking God for what my eyes and heart had just seen. (Luke 10:23-24) I was reminded that day, that there is a huge difference between a group of churches that form a fellowship and the Movement of God!

On another occasion, I apologized to my friend Kip that I was the one who sent Evangelists and Elders to Hilo, Hawaii in September 2006 to oppose Kip and Elena’s efforts to help the young ministry leaders – Kyle and Joan Bartholomew – revive the Hilo Church. Ironically, I have come to understand that this singular action caused Kip and the Portland Leaders to conclude that God was saying to them that there was “no remedy” (2 Chronicles 36:15-16) to cure the ICOC. Thus from this incident, the Spirit sparked the new Movement – the International Christian Churches (ICC)! Today, I clearly see that the new Movement is “THE Movement” of God and Kip is God’s man for this generation – and always has been!

Today, I am very thankful for this journey. I have made many mistakes and fallen down many times. Yet God has graciously raised me to my feet again! I am looking forward to this next chapter in my spiritual journey with God and His Movement. The ICC has as our core convictions: 1) Central leadership which gives direction that produces a total unity among the churches (Numbers 27:15-18); 2) Discipling is a command of God (Matthew 28:19-20); and 3) The God-given vision of the evangelization of the nations in our generation for “God our Savior wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.” (1 Timothy 2:3-4)

My heartfelt desire is that we all understand that we have lost 14 years, and we dare not waste any more. My dream and prayer is for all disciples to be gloriously united. Imagine if our dear brothers and sisters in the ICOC would return to their radical Biblical convictions on leadership, discipleship and the evangelization of the nations in our generation that we all shared in the 1980’s and 1990’s! Imagine the glory to Jesus if disciples “remembered those earlier days, after [we] received the light,” change their convictions, and come together in THE Movement of God! Imagine the joy of hugging each other here on earth and singing with each other when we all make it to Heaven! If what I have shared resonates with you, please contact me. Emma and I would like to humbly serve as a bridge between the McKeanes and anyone (especially leaders) who may have been hurt during the McKeanes’ leadership of the ICOC from June 1979 to August 2001. Kip and Elena have graciously offered to sit down with us and anyone who in good faith longs to be reconciled. We know our hearts were healed and reconciled to them as they explained their spiritual journey and sincerely apologized for their shortcomings and past sins. Emma and I are revived and are exceedingly honored to be a part of the ICC Family of Churches! Excitingly in the past 10 years, the Spirit has multiplied the 42 sold-out Portland Disciples that planted the City of Angels International Christian Church into over 5,000 disciples, in 76 churches, in 31 nations on all six populated continents of the world! Clearly this is not a movement of men, but THE very Movement of God! To God be all the glory!



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“The Lord added to their number...”

Acts 2:47

THE FIRST 99 DAYS OF 2017

APRIL AVERAGE ATTENDANCE – 1,216

APRIL AVERAGE CONTRIBUTION – \$36,345

APRIL AVERAGE BENEVOLENCE – \$833

BAPTISMS – 87

RESTORATIONS – 19

PLACED MEMBERSHIPS – 10

TOTAL ADDITIONS – 116

NUMBER TO MISSION FIELD – 7

THE CROWN OF THORNS PROJECT

THE PLAN FOR WORLD EVANGELISM FOR THE SOLDOUT MOVEMENT

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”
Acts 1:8

“JERUSALEM” – LOS ANGELES

“JUDEA AND SAMARIA” – USA & CANADA

JUDEA: LAS VEGAS, PHOENIX, SACRAMENTO, SAN DIEGO AND SAN FRANCISCO

SAMARIA: BOSTON, CHARLOTTE, CHICAGO, DALLAS/FT. WORTH, DENVER, EUGENE, GAINESVILLE, HILO, HONOLULU, HOUSTON, KONA, MIAMI/FT. LAUDERDALE (2017), NEW YORK CITY, ORLANDO, PORTLAND, SEATTLE, SYRACUSE, TAMPA, TORONTO AND WASHINGTON DC

“TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH”

PHASE ONE: PLANT THE CROWN OF THORNS CHURCHES

SANTIAGO (2009)	CHENNAI (2014)
LONDON (2010)	MOSCOW (2015)
SAO PAULO (2011)	MANILA (2015)
MEXICO CITY (2012)	LAGOS (2016)
PARIS (2012)	DUBAI (2016)
SYDNEY (2013)	HONG KONG (2017)

PHASE TWO: CROWN OF THORNS CHURCHES TARGET SURROUNDING NATIONS’ CAPITAL CITIES

ABIDJAN, STOCKHOLM, BOGOTÁ, AMSTERDAM (2017), KIEV, KINSHASA (2017), AUCKLAND (2018), QUITO, JOHANNESBURG (2019)

PHASE THREE: EACH CAPITAL CITY CHURCH EVANGELIZES THEIR NATION

KOREZOUZOUA, BANGALORE, BIRMINGHAM, CEBU (2017), MONTERREY, NEW DELHI (2018), RIO DE JANEIRO, ST. PETERSBURG (2018)

(GREEN – CHURCH PLANTINGS PURPLE – REMNANT GROUPS RED – TO BE PLANTED)

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