

Leading Change in the Spirit-Empowered Church

I've been to more networking meetings than I can count. Sometimes I leave discouraged over what I see and hear: leaders with their own agendas whose lives don't match the **New Testament** because they tolerate compromise.

But a week ago my reaction at Converge21 in Virginia Beach, Va., was opposite. Instead, there were leaders who see the problems in the church and who are committed to getting the church back on track. Several hundred even signed a resolution articulating this commitment. Keep reading to see the entire resolution.

Converge21—held at Regent University—included many significant leaders like **Dr. George Wood** of the Assemblies of God, **Robert Morris** from Gateway Church in Dallas, **Billy Wilson** of Empowered21 and **Pastor Jack Hayford** from The King's University. It was really three meetings in one: the Society for Pentecostal Studies, which held its annual meeting; there was a small invitation only meeting of mostly older **charismatic** ministries; and Empowered21, which brought in “younger leaders.” Any time you get young people together who are eager to learn and be mentored, there is a tremendous energy!

The energy reminded me of Empowered21 two years ago in Tulsa, Okla. Now Empowered21 is helping lead the way with its vision: “That every person in the United States of America and on earth would have authentic encounter with JESUS CHRIST through the power and presence of the **Holy Spirit** by Pentecost 2033.”

The younger leaders seemed to thrive on the environment as I did 30 years ago when I tagged along to networking meetings

with Jamie Buckingham and got to meet leaders such as Dennis Bennett, Derek Prince and David du Plessis. Now I'm happy in these situations to "give back" and I had some great meetings with younger leaders like Matt Sorger, Sam Rodriguez and Sami Awad from Bethlehem, Israel. As I'm able I'll blog later about some of the things I saw and learned, especially about the situation with Pentecostals living in "Palestine."

I believe this resolution focuses on the problems and the solutions starting with a "commitment to the biblical teaching of the holiness, immediacy and power of the **Spirit of God** and the Spirit's empowerment of the Christian life and community."

If you agree with this resolution, leave a comment below.

EMPOWERED 21 USA RESOLUTION—March 2, 2012

WHEREAS a major contributor to the erosion of biblical Christianity in America has been the loss of a clear understanding of and commitment to the biblical teachings and practices of the person, immediacy, and power of the Holy Spirit; and

WHEREAS some Pentecostal and charismatic Christian communities in America are experiencing and increase in biblical illiteracy, a decreased desire for holiness, a lack of the fear of God, and significant moral and leadership failure; and

WHEREAS a significant gap exists between the aging leadership of many Spirit-empowered communities and the leadership formation and empowerment of students and young adults; and

WHEREAS a separation continues to exist between scholarship on the Holy Spirit and the praxis of Spirit-empowered communities; and

WHEREAS many Pentecostal and charismatic Christian communities report a decrease in Christ-centered, Spirit-filled, mission

awareness and involvement at home and abroad; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Empowered21 USA gathering of scholars, Christian leaders and next generation voices held at Regent University in Virginia Beach, Va., Feb. 29-March 3, 2012, affirms its unmoving belief in and commitment to the biblical teaching of the holiness, immediacy and power of the Spirit of God and the Spirit's empowerment of the Christian life and community (1 Corinthians 2:13); and

BE IT RESOLVED that we recommit ourselves to humbly seeking the fear of God (Acts 9:31) by immersing ourselves in His Holy Word (Hebrews 4:12) and cultivating the desire for a renewed holiness that His Spirit brings (Romans 1:4); and

BE IT RESOLVED that we will endeavor to answer the cry of the next generation for spiritual fathers and mothers by serving them through training, guidance, and modeling a complete surrender to the work of the Holy Spirit (Habakkuk 3:2); and

BE IT RESOLVED that we will seek to further our understanding and cooperation with the Spirit of God through a commitment to both scholarship and practice, recognizing that they both are empowered and guided by the same Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 2:15); and

BE IT RESOLVED that we will revere and utilize Pentecost Sunday of each year for teaching and preaching on the Holy Spirit, inviting every generation to experience the Spirit; and

BE IT RESOLVED that we will discern and develop a framework for Spirit-empowered discipleship, which will include age and stage outcome-based benchmarks of what a Spirit-empowered, Christ follower "looks like" and "lives like"; and

BE IT RESOLVED that we will boldly obey the call of Christ to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20), proclaiming God's Kingdom, God's liberation, and God's justice to the

“least of these” (Matthew 25:40), while affirming that it is not by might nor by power but by God’s Spirit that God’s mission is fulfilled (Zach 4:6, Mark 16:17-18, Acts 1:8), and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that we will unite together around the vision: That every person in the United States of America and on earth would have authentic encounter with JESUS CHRIST through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit by Pentecost 2033.