

BETTY SUE WALLING INTERVIEW 2010

Lake City, South Carolina

How long have you been associated with the IPHC?

I came into IPHC 22 years ago. I did not grow up in it. One side of my family was Methodist and the other was Baptist, but there was a lot of holiness in the mix.

I became Pentecostal Holiness at the time I met my late companion, Rev. Robert R. Walling. We both had lost our first mates and through most unusual circumstances God brought us together. I asked him to go to church with me (the Baptist) one morning (he was on sabbatical from pastoring) so he agreed and endured the quietness of the service then he asked me to go with him to the Pentecostal Holiness that night and I agreed. The church was Aiken PH Church. The pastor asked me to sing with him (keep in mind I had never met him before). I was thrilled with the freedom in the worship that night. The Holy Spirit was flowing!!!!!!! Even though I did not know all the songs the pastor wanted to sing I just said okay Lord this is your voice and I am yours so use me. As we were walking to the car at the conclusion of service my companion asked, "Well, what do you think?" My response, I am ready to become Pentecostal Holiness.

I had been introduced into Holiness in my youth when I would attend Church of God with friends, and travel to sing in service with groups. Having done this so much, I was familiar with Holiness from youth.

I have been in the IPHC for 22 years.

The church where my companion had taken me that night was in Aiken, South Carolina but sadly is no longer a functioning church. A few months later we married in this same church and in our hearts symbolic of a complete commitment for our beginning as IPHC Ministry together – you might say. While we were on our honeymoon the conference superintendent, M. Donald Duncan found us and requested we consider pastoring one of four churches he needed to fill. Gave us the names and addresses, asked we go pray over them then give him an answer which we did. As we went to the first 2 God was very clear instantly: "NOT THIS ONE." We went on to the third church had did not get the conclusive yes or no. Thus we drove to the fourth and got down on the ground praying and knew this was it. My husband had been pastoring for many, many years and evangelizing but this was our first pastorate together.

DO YOU REMEMBER WHO WAS PASTORING THE CHURCH THERE IN AIKEN WHEN YOUR COMPANION TOOK YOU THAT NIGHT?

YES it was Carl Hardee

When were you Married? October 22, 1988.

When were you LICENSED?

IN 1991

When were you Ordained?

In 1993.

I had gotten my mission worker license or as it is now called local church license in 1989.

I wish I could speak to women and tell those who are embarking on this wonderful journey of licensing/ordination process. It is different for women if they are not prepared for this journey because so many come with preconceived ideas. I would tell them throw away your preconceived ideas and rest in the Holy Spirit.

WHAT KIND OF PRECONCEPTIONS DO YOU THINK THEY HAVE?

After talking with many women I repeatedly heard their ideas were 1. Their ministry would have precedence over their husband who was already ordained and in some

Instances pastors. 2. They think they will preach every week perhaps several times a week. 3. They will be accepted same as men.

During some counseling sessions with couples after the wife had gotten her credentials we would here a devisiveness of the couple.

These preconceived ideas have caused in some cases I know from counseling with them divorce, family breakdowns, harmful to the body of Christ where the couples were in ministry

Also in 2 specific cases the men finally surrender their ordination papers to their conference board feeling they were out of harmony.

Also I feel some do not understand that all 'calling' is not preaching. Many ladies hold credentials for other ministries in the Body of Christ. All who are 'called' by God, are important but do

Not hold the same office to be filled for Him. We need women 'called' in all functioning areas of the church. If I recall both Dr. and Mrs. Garnett Pike have tried to address this

Issue in their seminars, books.

So many (large percentage) of women when coming for credentials think they will be given a church to pastor immediately.

Just as in marriage our husbands are first under the Head (Christ) so should this principle be followed in the ministry when both are called. He is to have prominence in the pastorate.

We credentialed women should feel our husbands ministry has priority over ours. The Holy Spirit as leader will arrange her time to preach.

HOW DID YOU AND YOUR HUSBAND WORK OUT WHO PREACHED AND WHEN?

When both are ordained the pattern I believe scripture teaches the pattern is to have husband head of home and first in ministry. Women should trust God to give them their

Opportunities to preach. Just as I was under the leadership of my husband in the home I also was in submission to his priority in ministry. On occasions when we were honoring ladies of the church he would ask me to preach, or youth emphasis some time. I always laughed responding “you do know God is the preacher, I just get joy of standing behind

The pulpit?” On other occasions he just asked me to preach with no ‘SPECIAL’ service emphasis. I recall while we were at one church the mother of a family was at home and

Not expected to survive we were called to come when we got there the family were all in agreement they did not want my husband to leave and it was Wednesday night

I had to rush to church and hold service unprepared with the exception of obedience to the scripture teaching be instant in season and out of season. This was really a test.

All our decisions were under the prompting of the Holy Spirit. If pastoral couples could remember this there would be more pastoral couples contented.

I did not expect to preach weekly but as grandfather said, “ be prepared in season and out of season.” (we laugh) With this in mind I would be ready if my husband spontaneously

Asked me to preach. Grandfather instilled many gold nuggets of truth which enabled me for the multitude of challenges that not only I but most ministers and ministers wifves

Face.

My first sermon after receiving my mission worker (local church license) was in Williston PH church,-Williston, South Carolina. The title was “Seven Steps to a Vital Faith”. Oh I prepared

And did those infamous notes we are all guilty of making, but I got a big surprise when I got up – I opened my bible, then those “notes” but they were totally blank. God did that to

Teach me yet another lesson- rely on Him only!!!!!!! Again those scriptures “be prepared in season and out of season.” Therefore, I gave my scripture and opened my mouth then

The Holy Spirit took control.

How old were you when you were saved?

NINE years old

Let me take you back 1 year however, I was under conviction for 1 year and everyone around me knew I was miserable. After all my misery caused them misery.

We had a Sunday school teacher that we knew walked with God because she lived and taught her love for the Lord and us. We would go in to our classes get marked present

Then sneak out and go to Mrs. Bonnie's class. Some of the things she taught us were always carry your bible or at least a small New testament. She also continued to teach

Us to choose a bible verse and claim it as our own for life. She lived to the age of 99 years young. Never went in a nursing home, just lived alone. Surely the Lord had added years to her for her faithfulness. What an example for all those who knew her. Oh yes she tried to tell us we would possibly be 'rejected' by others for living for Jesus

WHAT VERSE DID YOU CHOOSE?

Romans 8:28 --"and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God ,to them that are called according to his purpose."

I believe this was my verse knowing I was called for ministry, had a family that did not believe in women ministers, the rejection received in family, community,

Even our conference.

For years I would look with deep appreciation at writers, never thinking I would or could become one myself but surprise when you think it too late God says

okay you have more work to do and I began writing. I am growing and learning in this too. Is there a magic to avoid errors in this?

Some of the ministries God has birthed in me as mentioned singing, instrument playing (I only play 4 now) but trying to learn violin. Then there is puppetry, drama

revisited from my youth, teaching seminars on various subjects such as friendship, prayer, marriage (this stems from my counseling preparations), then later on the

subject of abuse in small groups.

When were you called into the ministry? At the age of 9 shortly after my conversion but I did not understand it for as referenced above women ministers were

Unheard of in either my maternal or paternal grandparents homes, or even the community where I lived.

My paternal grandmother was a Quaker thus always quiet. Granddaddy said to me, “daughter you could learn from her.” I never met a stranger, just someone not known, so

I would talk. (we laugh).

Another preparation for my life calling was in grandfather’s home after dinner we all would go to living room for devotions. Each had our responsibilities – mine was to

Play the piano, grandmother (the quiet little Quaker) would pick out the songs for that night. I became church pianist at age 5. Also accompanied soloist, duets, quartets.

One more thing about my Quaker grandmother – when I needed discipline (which to her must have appeared constantly) she never said a word just the tears flowing

And I would beg to be spanked so I could go on and get into something else I am sure. (again we laugh)

The night I was saved was in August after a three week revival already on Saturday night about 10:30 p.m. My cousin had preached that revival, incidentally, it went on 1 more week!!!

Having the diversified background of Methodist, Baptist, Quaker grandparents was one of the tools God used in my ministry. This was invaluable help.

Looking back at my life, each step, God was preparing me for all the varying ministry to come. Some of the precious tools for this great journey was I began singing at age 3,

Church pianist at age 5, traveled with evangelist to sing. Then after got saved at 9 years of age I “KNEW” what I was singing about. I began teaching the adult class at age 12!!

I worked in vacation bible school, did a lot of drama just to name a few things all preparing me for when I would be called a “minister of the gospel.”

My journey in life has been very difficult in many ways but always I had the Lord, the examples of the grandparents, my Sunday school teacher.

Would you share some of the difficulties?

My first husband was run over by some drunken men while he was in the neighbors yard talking. We had lost a daughter short time before that thus I was still grieving now left to raise my boys alone and get them educated.

Later , much later, God brought my late companion, Rev. Robert R. Walling and I together.

Is that when you began preaching?

That is when I began the study necessary to acquire all my credentials.

What was it like to be baptized in the spirit?

You, Dr. Welch used the term, “the first time.” I was 15 and not being in a denomination to be receptive of this experience at that time did not understand all that was

Happening. Allow me to give some relocation of that experience. I was in the altar and a presence surrounded me. Just the Lord and I when a great conversation began

Him talking, me listening. There was a warmth, uplifting, infilling of His Presence. The sweetness of God, His light. This was my “first” baptizing. As you know however,

The Holy Spirit comes back to periodically for us to get more refilling, refreshment.

Where did you and your husband first pastor?

In a church called Ravenel PH which now is a Hispanic church.

What are other churches you pastored?

St. George PH, Edisto PH, North Myrtle Beach, Monroe, N.C. and Sumter, S.C.

What other ministry were you involved in, if any?

Rather than take a vacation to “relax” we made overseas trips for crusades, mission work.

We did prison ministry for 6 years after acquiring security to go in for 2 to 3 hour services at each facility. On many occasions my husband would be in one section of

The compound holding service while I was in another preaching. Often we took singing groups in also. The first year we had 650 souls come to accept Christ in the 4 months of that year we did prison ministry. Then the last count we had was 2,550 in one year.

What facility did you minister in?

We were credentialed for jails, state, federal all over the country therefore when we were pastor of a church we worked in that and neighboring cities, states if need be.

Do you hear people say “oh it isn’t real they are just trying to get out?

Yes often that is heard but I know it is real.
We had 50 men called to ministry and kept up with them until my companions homegoing and knew 40 had kept true to their calling.

How would you answer the question, should women be ministers/pastors?

Dr. Paul F. Beacham, President of Holmes Bible College used in answering the question gave this response in Acts 2:17-18, I Corinthians 11:5.

We also can look at Exodus 15:20; Judges 4:4-5; Psalm 68:11-13; Luke 2:36-38; Luke 24:10-11; and John 20:17-18 just to name a few.

In every holiness movement of history women preachers are in the crowd.

Finally I am personally along with many others some I could name are rejected by family even excluded from special gatherings, often considered “guests” rather

Than part of the family. I and some others were called and told, “do not come back to worship in our services, our pastor nor we approve of you women

Ministers.

What would you say to other women who are in the beginning stages of the licensing/ordination process?

If I could tell them-- there are some preparations you will not necessarily find in books, will not be told by conference officials you will face perhaps:

Rejection from family, churches, conference.

Throw your preconceived ideas away.

In the realm of counseling it grieved me to learn of two (2) couples in pastoring where the preconceived notion mentioned above brought about devastation both for

each partner but churches. One lady unable and unprepared for her true role as a licensed and or ordained minister she made it known to her husband, the church,

in her work place, community “now I am licensed I should be the one making decisions in the church, doing the preaching. My husband should just go get a job!

This led to separation, divorce, after he had already taken his credentials in to his conference board. All this from wrongful precepts, not truly prepared for what

Her role and ministry was. How tragic.