



*"Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."*

**2 Corinthians 4:16-18**

Dear SIMC Leaders, Speakers, Delegates & Supporters:

Over 30 years ago, the Southern Interstate Youth Conference (SIYC) was born out of a need to ensure selected and interested Christian youth did not miss out on beneficial training, development, nurturing and exposure by way of national conventions which provided opportunities far beyond what their local church congregations could offer. From the 1<sup>st</sup> Conference in 1986 to our most recent conference in 2016, the Southern Interstate Ministries Conference (changed from SIYC to SIMC in 2004) has broadened its focus and scope to include not only the nurturing and development of young, up and coming church leadership, but the nurturing and development of the entire church family.

But sometimes, as SIMC Organizers, Leaders and Supporters, we are forced to pause and reflect on not just the **intangible**, such as our *vision* "Planting Seeds, Cultivating Fruit, Multiplying Gifts", but the **tangible**, the **actualization** of that vision. Sometimes, we are provided opportunities, in the midst of great struggle and challenge, to grow, although we may not, at that moment see it as that, to be better persons, followers, disciples and Christians. **Now is such a time!!**

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Hurricane Harvey has wreaked havoc on much of Southeast Texas, an area which includes a great number of SIMC Delegates and Supporters. Due to the overwhelming devastation and now subsequent need for immediate help and rebuilding assistance, we have decided to **transition from a Conference to an Active Relief Effort** to assist Texas residents who have been severely impacted by the Hurricane. This year's theme of "**Ancestral Decisions**" seems fitting as it will be our mantra moving forward as we do what we know our ancestors have always done in times of great challenge and need; they rose to meet said challenge and need with an equal amount of **COMMITMENT to deal** with the challenges, **STRENGTH to endure** the process of change and **FAITH that God did not bring them as far as he had to leave them**. Since 1986 to 2017, **this** is the purpose of the SIMC; to come together in a time of great need to embrace, support and strengthen the family when embrace, support and strength is needed most.

We are asking all of our delegates and supporters to visit the SIMC website ([www.thesimc.org](http://www.thesimc.org)) and click the "HARVEY" Main menu link to learn more about relief needs and efforts. For additional information please contact Sis. Karen Williams @ 225-938-1914 or via email @ [simckaren@aol.com](mailto:simckaren@aol.com). THANK YOU for your support of the SIMC relief effort and vision.

In His Service,

Preston Ervin, Jr.