

# the Informer newsletter

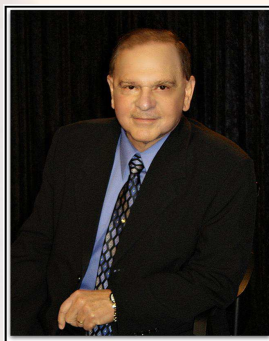
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF PCAI FELLOWSHIP  
PARAGON CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE INT'L & PCAI CLERGY  
ASSOCIATION  
AUGUST 2017 – VOLUME 8



## WHAT IS A “GREAT SERMON?”

By Dr. Henry A. Harbuck / PCAI Int'l President & General Overseer

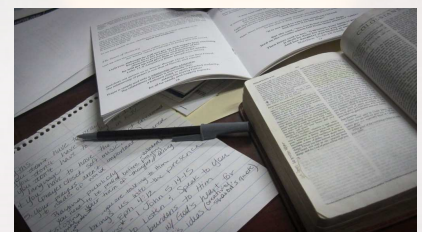
Every preacher is unique. He/she spends hours preparing what is believed to be a “great sermon” only to learn that the audience did not *receive the message* because there was “information overload.” As a preacher, how many times have you experienced this? I’ve experienced it many times, having spent days studying and praying only to deliver a sermon that fell on deaf ears. Although I thought it was a “great sermon,” the people were looking for something else. Because I preach in many different churches, sometimes I find it challenging to adapt to a different style of delivery – one to which the congregation is accustomed.



Martin Luther once said, “*Prayer and meditation will give you a sermon, but only temptation (the daily experiences in life) will transform your sermon into a message.*” While Luther’s statement is true and a preacher may explain how he overcame temptation, I maintain that a preacher must tread cautiously and not disclose too much of his faults. Be careful how you present yourself.

In conclusion, the delivering of a Great Sermon is actually a myth. Search for it if you will, but the “great sermon” is elusive. Why? Because each person in the audience will respond differently to every sermon you preach. If you prepare a message from the book of Revelation, this does not mean the majority of your audience want to hear it. Perhaps they wanted to hear some other subject more relevant to their life. The parents in the congregation may have wanted to hear a sermon on how to improve communication in marriage, how to control their teenagers, or how to overcome inferiority. Although from time-to-time you may preach landmark sermons designed to wake people up, no sermon is “great” if it does not speak to the needs of the people.

But don’t be disillusioned as you search for the “great sermon.” There is still hope for that “great sermon” you’re looking for. □



# Restoration of the Local Church and Its Leaders

By Pastor Lyn Burling / Christian Faith Church Senior Pastor—TX

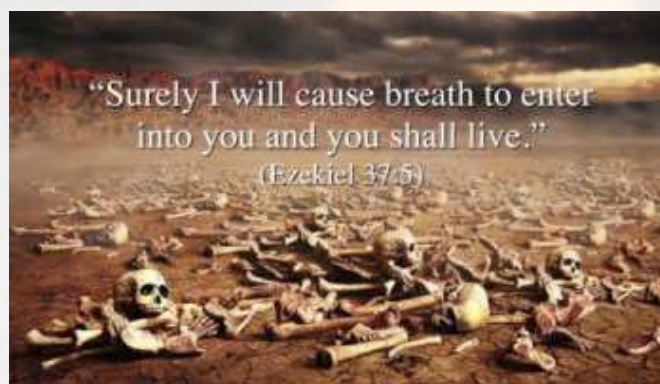


(Ezek. 37:1-10 NIV) *“The hand of the Lord was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. 2 He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. 3 He asked me, ‘Son of man, can these bones live?’ I said, ‘Sovereign Lord, you alone know.’ 4 Then he said to me, ‘Prophecy to these bones and say to them, ‘Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord!’ 5 This is what the Sovereign Lord says to these bones: I will make breath[a] enter you, and you will come to life. 6 I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord.’” 7 So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone. 8 I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them. 9 Then he said to me, ‘Prophecy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to it, ‘this is what the Sovereign Lord says: Come, breath, from the four winds and breathe into these slain, that they may live.’” 10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army.”*

A true Life & Death Lesson for His body / the Church from Ezekiel 37... *“The Valley Of Dry Bones”* Background; Israel had defiled God’s Temple, so the honeymoon period between God and Israel was over. Captured by Babylon, now their hope was gone; their dreams dashed, yet Ezekiel is called upon to prophecy to their “condition.” This tells me that God is saying, *“Your troubles don’t always last.”* When everyone gives up, God sees **potential** when we just see **dry dead bones**. Question for the church and its leaders...the Lord asks...**Do You SEE What I SAY? Then You Will SAY What I SEE.** God wants to transform the way we deal with our purpose in our life span (generation). Notice vs.1 where God sets *“You”* down. Then immediately begins looking for the purpose of where and who He wants you “connected” or to be identified with. Understand what God is saying so you can **see** what He **sees**. He asks us not for His edification but because of our limited revelation...Can These Bones Live?

Can your church live, can your sickness be healed, can your circumstance be changed? **Don’t Ever Answer A Situation Based On The Evidence Of Your Senses.** Ezekiel answers only what he knew and that was only what God revealed! When God asks a leader or one of the fivefold ministry a question it is because He is opening a door for you to be part of the solution! The Word says in 37:1, *“The **hand** of the Lord was upon me...thank God this was God giving us direction and unction. We see in scripture where, “the **hand of the Lord** was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.” Again in 2 Samuel, “And David said unto Gad, I am in a **Great Strait** (Bad degree of difficulty-trouble or crisis.) “Let us now fall into the **hand of the Lord**, for His mercies are great.” One more to critically substantiate that **“His hand”** can be against His enemies yet protect and lead those He loves. In the case of Elijah His hand was on him for exceeding great exploits. How you ask? As when Elijah said to his servant, *“I hear the sound of the abundance of rain.”* 1 King 18:46 says ... *“And the hand of the Lord was upon Elijah and he girded up his loins and ran ahead of Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.”* What? How? Jezreel was 17 miles from the top of that mountain and Ahab had the finest chariot and the best horses his kingship could own. Listen... Jesse Owens, the Olympian once out run a horse for one hundred yards but this is ridiculous...17 miles. **When God Asks A Question, He Is About To Transform Our Vision!** Don’t always assume when you see scattered dead bones that you are the one who has to match bone to bone or connect the*

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## Restoration of the Local Church... continued from page 2

dots. God says there's a way for it to be done and He wants us to adapt to His ways of speaking, declaring and **prophesying** it done. Rom. 12:6, "*Prophesy according to the proportion of your faith!*" The answer is this, prophesy for them to **HEAR!** Too many in the body/church are listening but not *hearing*. Hear what... "**The Word of the Lord!**" Hear this, we live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. Ezek. 37:4, "*Again He said unto me, prophesy to these bones and say to them...*" Whoa...speak to the conditions in your church body, your family, your job status, your school situation, relationship/marriages. Jesus says have faith in God. When He **D-I-R-E-C-T-S** you about your confession, **He's priming your pump.** What did God want of him? Listen, if the **DEAD BONES** can hear, then a **DEAD SPIRIT** can hear, a **DISEASE** can hear, a **WAYWARD LOVED ONE** can hear. How can a bone hear...a dead dry bone? Hear me saints, when God decides to do something, He shows them a humanly impossible situation, then He gives them instructions for the solution...and 100% of the time the solution is in His Word. (God never said to Ezekiel pile up those bones over there. I don't like some of those bones...they don't deserve My blessing.) No! He included all of them! Could it be that what we're **NOT prophesying to**, has stymied God's progress in our churches.

Listen the enemy comes and scatters a few bones around in our churches and He knows if we get used to seeing them scattered and dismembered, that sooner or later we will begin to step over them and consider those dead bones as just part of what we have to deal with in our churches. A few bones here, a few bones there, pretty soon we're anesthetized and they become common occurrences. Listen, "the enemy is looking for ways to contaminate our existence with "little deaths strewn around!" We need to look at the first one that appears and SAY immediately, "Bone you can live and be restored to the body!" God truly wants to revive His body today. "**Death Is Reversed In The Valley.**" Ezekiel is suddenly transformed from being the spokesman for "**Human Impotence**"...to being the spokesman for **Divine Omnipotence** (and so can you). The church can have every office filled-everything in place, and still have **No Spiritual Life**. But to go from **Very Dry Bones to a Standing Army** is nothing to God! In 2 King 13:21, "*When a dead man came into contact with Elijah's bones, that man revived and stood up on his feet.*" (That's what I'm talkin' about.)

*"I believe today the Lord is picking you up, brushing you off, setting you down where possibilities abound...but when His hand, His instruction and His Word is in your mouth, speak and watch what God will do to bring life where God's people re-connect and are restored."*

There were millions of bones strewn around him-many of them represented someone's dreams or talents and gifting. 37:7 says, "**After** I prophesied there was a **noise**... (Nothing happens until you declare, speak/prophesy) and **suddenly there's a great rattling**. When you do... He will. In 37:8, the bones came together, muscle, ligament and skin covered them but still there was no life. I see a picture of defeat and death on its way to victory. Until, the hand **cannot** say to the foot (in the church), "I have no need of you." - we're still in a mess. We work too independently of each other, instead of the real power that's in the connection of each other.

- ◆ The brain was in the head but not thinking.
- ◆ The lungs were in the body but the body wasn't breathing.
- ◆ The heart was in the chest but it wasn't beating...

Until God inflates us with the breath of the Holy Spirit, we are just flesh and bones. What do you think Ezekiel, can these bones live? Pastor, worship leader, singers and musician, teachers and deacons, member of God's five-fold ministry, if Ezekiel would act like some of us, he would say, "Wait Lord, some of these bones come only once a month, some of these bones don't tithe or give and a whole bunch of these bones haven't been faithful and some of these bones haven't been "playing well together." (If you get my drift) God I've got faith in You and I sort of have faith in me but when it comes to these bones you've sent me (SET ME DOWN) [in my assignment, gifting and callings]...only You know. And we ask God, "Why am I here?" and God says, "If they weren't dead, I wouldn't need you! **You see very dry bones, I see potential.**" The church is just like the dry bones, we're all scattered—we refuse to come together to serve God's purposes. But God says, "They can remain in that condition or **You Can See What I Say And Say What I See.**" Prophesy to the bones and begin to call these bones together. Whenever the enemy wants to call a halt to the progress of the church or to your life, he'll come in and scatter so that no potential can be realized. And He does it in our valleys because He know you can't build a great church with discour-

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### Church/Ministry Tax Dates to Remember

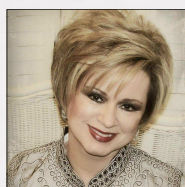
*In addition to the regular semiweekly and monthly withholding requirements, churches should note the following dates for this month*

**AUGUST 10th**—Churches having non-minister employees (or one or more ministers who report their federal income taxes as employees and who have elected voluntary withholding) may file their employer’s quarterly federal tax return (Form 941) by this date instead of July 31 if all taxes for the second calendar quarter have been deposited in full and on time.

**SEPTEMBER 15th**—Ministers (who have not elected voluntary withholding) and self-employed workers must file their third quar-

terly estimated federal tax payment for 2017 by this date (a similar rule applies in many states to payments of estimated state taxes.)

**Dr. Jan Harbuck—  
PCAI Office  
Need Help?  
Call PCAI -  
1-866-268-5600  
Or go to [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)**



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### Restoration of the Local Church... *continued from page 3*

aged and discontented people. As **Long as Your Team is Competing Against Each Other, They Can Not Complete Each Other.** We all want to minister on the mountain tops but hardly anyone wants to preach, prophecy, or sing in the valley to dry bones! Imagine for a moment with me that **you** are the one that **God has His hand on** and has **set you** down to see what can be done, “Wait a minute Lord, some of the bones look like. No, oh no, could it be, these are some of **MY BONES?**” And God says, (Get ready ministers and leaders... Get ready for what He’s about to say, are you ready... **GOD CAN’T RAISE HIS CHURCH UNTIL**

**HE RAISES YOU!** The reason we can’t do anything in the congregation is because we’re down there where they are and God is calling us to prophecy to all of the bones (yours’s included) and to the wind, to fill us with the life of His Spirit. Ezekiel was given the task of collaborating with God to bring new life. I believe today the Lord is picking you up, brushing you off, setting you down where possibilities abound...but when His hand, His instruction and His Word is in your mouth, speak and watch what God will do to bring life where God’s people re-connect and are restored.□

# Announcement

## Minister’s Credential Renewal Forms Mailed Out Due October 1st

### RENEWAL FEE:

Licensed Minister \$50.00  
Ordained Minister \$75.00

### TWO WAYS TO RENEW:

- (1) Complete the credential renewal form that was mailed to you.
- (2) ONLINE—you can fill out the renewal form by going to our website [www.http://paragonchristianalliance.org](http://www.paragonchristianalliance.org) located under the “Resource” tab

### NOTE:

**TO AVOID \$100.00 LATE FEE MAIL BEFORE DUE DATE!**

**PAYMENT ONLINE IS NOW WORKING JUST GO TO OUR WEBSITE UNDER THE DONATE BUTTON**

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