

the INFORMER newsletter



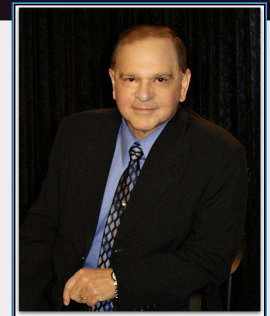
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF PCAI FELLOWSHIP
PARAGON CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE INTERNATIONAL &
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NOVEMBER 2017 – ISSUE 11

Offer A Special Prayer of Thanks

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

Each year at this time we celebrate “Thanksgiving.” Unfortunately, most young Americans do not know what “Thanksgiving” is all about. Many have never heard how the Pilgrims and Native Americans shared a meal together, thus initiating the “first” thanksgiving. They are no longer taught how the Pilgrims gave thanks for God’s goodness. And because they don’t understand the significance of “Thanksgiving,” it has become just another day when the schools close and parents are off work.

As believers in the Lord Jesus Christ we must never forget the legacy of our great country, and the privilege of living in a free country — the United States of America. Though I cannot quote the statistics regarding how many Christians are currently fighting the war against terror in Afghanistan and Iraq, it is likely that there are many. And while every combat soldier deserves a “Thank You” for investing his or her time fighting terrorism, it is seldom mentioned that a large number of these are Christians. They have always been on the front-lines when it comes to defending the country they so dearly love.



It is my prayer that you remember the true reason for Thanksgiving this year. Offer a prayer of special thanks to the Lord for His plentiful blessings to America and to you and your family. And let Christ continually reign in your midst and in your heart as you follow the course He has set before you in ministry. □

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OFFICE HOURS : 9:00AM to 4:00PM



Happy
Thanksgiving

What is the Church Worth to You? How to Measure the Values of the Local Church



By Pastor Lynn Burling/ Senior Pastor of Christian Faith Church-TX

“It is worth just what it develops in you and your measure of what you give back.”

The church is a living organism consisting of people related to the Living Savior Jesus Christ...who rules over them and works through them from His place in Heaven on earth. Listen... Paul tells us that gifted people have been given to the church in order to bring members of Christ's Body to a place of maturity and fruitfulness in service. (Eph. 4:11-13 Lexham English Bible) *“And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as pastors and teachers for the equipping of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for building up the Body of Christ until we all reach the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to a measure of the maturity of the fullness of Christ.”*

Two pertinent aspects...for the believer to grow in their faith and for the non-believer who is seeking to know God

Colossians 1:18

“And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”

and understand the truth. The church is the pillar of that truth. (Eph. 1:22) *“...And gave him to be the head over all things to the church.”* The local church has an important role in this process. People in it have been called to fill the important Biblical roles of pastor, teacher, evangelist, exhorter, giver, learner and disciple. It has a divine design to educate, to hold you up in weak or difficult times...to inspire you with “higher thoughts” and with improved dispositions. Of course, all of this is based on Christ being the center of the church, to give power to lift you into the invisible realms and grace to live in the visible realms of reality. (2 Cor. 4:18) *“While we look not at the things which are seen but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”* Look around... you have received its blessing and have seen them imparted to others. It teaches us that nothing less than God can satisfy or inform you in incomparable ways... once thought unknown or impossible. It is a place to remind us of what our mission is...and to uncover and to discover our vision where His vision and ours become one. It is learning together, praying together, serving together and worshipping together,

discovering the worth of each other.

Joint collaboration-side by side, hand in hand, and shoulder to shoulder *where cooperation's sum exceeds in great accomplishment all for His glory*. It is learning love; who love is, what love is and then...loving those who Christ died for...even me! **Love is sort of a measure of our efficiency**. Love should have instant and long lasting results, in the person giving it and the person receiving it. You are His church, He is the head (Col. 1:18 KJV) *“And He is head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence (to be first in rank and influence).”* The church is a treasure chest of secret mysteries revealed to those who seek Him. (1 Timothy 3:16 NHEB) *“Without controversy, the mystery of godliness is great; He was revealed in the flesh, Justified by the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, and received up in glory.”* (Mt. 13:16-17 Mess) *“But you have God-blessed eyes, eyes that see! And God-blessed ears, ears that hear! A lot of people, prophets and humble believers among them, would have given anything to see what you are seeing, to hear what you are hearing, but never had the chance.”* It is a place where

the sureness of His promises and His love-fueled presence intersect. When in our openness and honest hearts, we surrender our pre-conceived solution to our trials...that is when and where He *speaks quietly-moves quickly* to defend, hedge about and fortify our wounded spirit. It is a place for people just like you. (Hebrews 10:23-25 New Living Test.) *“Let us hold tightly, without wavering to the hope we affirm (State as a fact strongly and perfectly.) for God can be trusted (believe in the strength of His reliability) to keep his promise. Let us think of ways to motivate (by inspiring, influencing) one another to acts of love and good works and let us not neglect (abandon, desert) our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of His return is drawing near.”*

Listen...too often among Christians the church is viewed as ok, but rarely as necessary. Too many who claim to be born again, view the church as optional...if it meets my needs. I'm onboard. If it doesn't, don't bother me with it. In the scheme of things, the church's ratings has

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Year-End Checklist for Church Bookkeepers

1. Housing Allowance. Church Boards and/or Congregations should designate an annual 2018 housing allowance for ministers who own or rent their home (and for ministers who live in a parsonage and pay some of their housing expenses).

2. W-4 forms. All employees should complete new W-4 forms to ensure accurate withholding.

3. Notice of donors. Donors should be advised in a church bulletin, newsletter, or by letter from the church, not to file their federal income tax return before they receive their Contributions Statement from the church. Some people may not be able to deduct certain contributions if they file a tax return before receiving their church contributions receipt.

4. Christmas gifts. Be sure to correctly handle Christmas gifts made by the church or congregation to a minister or staff member. In most cases, these gifts represent taxable income and must be reported as income on the recipient's W-2 or 1099.

5. Handling end of year contributions. The general rule is that a contribution is effective when delivered. This means that a check deposited in the church offering in January of 2018 becomes effective that day even if it is backdated to 2017. It is not deductible for 2017. One exception: Checks postmarked in 2017 are deductible in 2017 — even though not received until 2018.

6. Business Expenses. If your church reimburses some or all of a minister's business expenses, reimburse these year-end business expenses NOW.

7. Reclassification of workers. Now is the time to decide if you want to reclassify any of your workers for tax reporting purposes. If you have a minister or lay worker who is treated as self-employed for federal income tax reporting purposes, and you would like to reclassify the person as an employee, the ideal time to make the change is on January 1st of the new year.

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What Is The Church Worth to You... continued from page 2

dropped from "10" the highest to between 4-7. In the world the church has even less importance. The church has been marginalized in our thinking, so that we miss God's perspective and priority for His church. I recently said, "In the end we win! Jesus is still the author and finisher of our faith and the world will miss the church when it's gone." What matters to God is the church. Christ said, "I will build my church." (MT 16:18) This is exactly what He's doing. It is where His focus is. "Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her." (Eph. 5:25) God's eternal purpose centers on Christ and His church. If we want our lives to count for eternity, we've got to get God's vision and purpose for the church and live accordingly. If you give your life in service to His church, you are giving it to and for Him and the one collective entity He esteems.

There is a story of three men who were working on a stone pile at a construction site. A man passing by wanted to know about all the activity. He asks the first man, "What are you doing?" "Chiseling stone," was his reply. That reply didn't really satisfy his curiosity so he asked the second man, "What are you doing?" "Earning a living..." another dead end. With only one left, he asked the third, "Sir, what are you doing?" The man dropped his sledge hammer, stood up straight and with a confident voice exclaimed, "I'm building a great cathedral." Now all three men were doing the same job but only one of them saw how his role fit into a larger more important vision. How do you view your role in the church?

Paul speaks to how our lives fit into God's glorious eternal purpose for His church. When we see this; it will help us deal practically, to deal with life's difficult trials. (Eph.

3:8b-11 NIV) "...this grace was given to me; to preach to the gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things." His intent was that (now), through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in heavenly realms. God's eternal purpose is to sum up all things in Christ. He is the centerpiece of history. The Old Testament looks forward to Christ and all the New Testament gives testimony of Him. He is the head of the body, the church and the church is central to God's purpose. *Whoever heard of a church without Christ?* Yet many churches have not realized how they've broken His heart by making it a *meeting place with no presence or power or purpose.* They come, they show up, **but they're not there!** All trials of life have blunted their power.

This is a time of recovery, recover your purpose. Discard doubt, bitterness and turn your glazed eyes to gaze upon Jesus. Look around you, we need each other. At the peak is knowing that you matter more than ever before. **Revisit the cross. Rethink the "why He chose you."** You matter to Him, you matter to His church and to your church. Ask Him to open your spiritual eyes to see what is your "reasonable service." Where two or three are gathered (in my name)-if two of you will agree on earth-a threefold cord is not easily broken-if one can put a thousand to flight, two can put 10,000 to flight! **You are the church's multiplier.** The power of the church is that the church has lovingly placed Christ at the center, fully vested, all in...the church has a purpose. Discover yours where you worship. □

IMPORTANT REMINDER!

FOR THOSE WHO HAVE NOT PAID THEIR RENEWAL FEE AND TURNED IN THEIR RENEWAL FORMS, YOU SHOULD HAVE RECEIVED A REMINDER LETTER. PLEASE INCLUDE **\$100.00 LATE FEE** WITH YOUR RENEWAL FEE AND FILLED -OUT FORM. OTHERWISE, CALL THE OFFICE IF YOU ARE NOT INTERESTED TO RENEW YOUR CREDENTIAL WITH PCAI.

(PDF Version of Renewal Form available online at www.paragonchristianalliance.org)

Tax Date to Remember

November 10, 2017

Churches with nonminister 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 October 31 if all taxes for the third calendar quarter have been deposited in full and on time.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,
and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for
correction, for instruction in righteousness
2 Timothy 3:16



Year-End Checklist... *continued from page 3*

8. Voluntary withholding. Ministers' wages are exempt from tax withholding. This means they use the quarterly estimated tax procedure to prepay their federal taxes. Ministers who report their income taxes as employees can enter into a voluntary withholding arrangement with their employing church. Under such an arrangement, the employing church withholds income taxes as it would for any other employee; and it can also withhold an additional amount of income taxes to cover the ministers' self-employment tax liability.

9. Order tax publications and renew subscriptions. December is a good time to order your new 2018 copy of IRS Circular E (withholding table) and copies of Forms W-2, W-3, 1099, and 1096 that you will be issuing for compensation in year 2018. To order forms simply call the IRS toll-free number at – 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676) or visit the IRS website (www.IRS.gov).

10. NEED HELP? If you need assistance on good tax information for churches and ministers, please contact the PCAI office.

BLESSINGS & HAPPY THANKSGIVING TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY!

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