

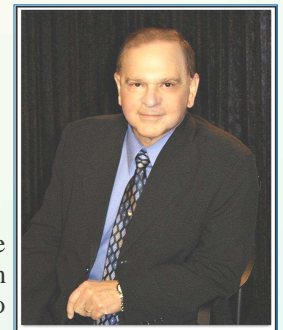
the Informer newsletter



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | PCAI FELLOWSHIP
PARAGON CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE INTERNATIONAL
JULY 2018

PORTRAIT OF A VISION

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



Through the years I have written many articles concerning “vision,” and no doubt thousands of messages have been preached on the subject. Why? Because it is important and is not impossible to achieve. Even though we are blind (spiritually) we now can see! It is imperative that we never forget the purpose of understanding the vision God has put in our lives and ministry.

Terry Hopwood Jackson is an artist from the UK who continues to create art in spite of being completely blind. If an artist suddenly becomes blind, from an accident for example, he or she can still use the “mind’s eye” to create art. Blindness is debilitating; however, even this does not make it impossible to create beautiful works of art. What a great spiritual lesson can be learned here.

The first thing we must understand is: “To have a Godly vision, God must be the goal setter for each of us.” There is a risk factor that follows the receiving of a vision from God. Noah had to give up his day job to build the ark, Abraham started a family in his 90’s, Moses had to go back to Egypt, David had to face the giant Goliath ... and the list goes on.

It has been said that stepping out in faith is like parachuting. Nobody “sort of” parachutes — you either do or don’t! You will never know the thrill of walking on water until you get out of the boat. If there is no risk, it is probably

not a God thing! When you are sure that your vision and direction are from God, then align everything you do to that vision.

When God gives us the promise (vision), He continues to work with us to accomplish the goal He has in store for us. Yet in spite of this, we often try to escape from the Artist’s brush in an effort to paint our own portrait.

Every God-given vision will become real when we patiently persevere and let the Master Artist (God) work. Just think of the awesome amount of power and creativity He has! It may seem to us that He never hurries, that the strokes of His brush are slow, and the colors seem dull. However, it is during those times when we must trust that HE sees the picture clearly. In fact, we come to learn that what we considered dull and uneventful was actually the foundation paints selected by the Divine Artist. They form the base upon which all the other bright and exciting colors rest. Upon that realization God knows He can trust the vision to us.

In conclusion, let’s strive to see through our spiritual eyes and let Almighty God “paint our vision.” In due season it shall come to pass. A little nugget I have learned through the years is that the vision God has given me is continually expanding. I believe it’s because He knows I would have been too overwhelmed to view the glory of a “whole portrait” at one time. ♥



The Presence of God On You and In You

By Pastor Lynn Burling

Let's settle something from the git-go –the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Ghost, the Holy Spirit or as Phil. 1:19 calls Him, the Spirit of Jesus Christ...yes, I said Jesus Christ, are one and the same. (John 14:17) *“Even the Spirit of truth...for He dwelleth with you and will be in you. I will come to you.”* Vs 20 *“...you will know absolutely that I'm in my Father and you're in me, and I'm in you.”* This could be a summary of the above verse, “I'm in the Father and I'm in you and you are in Me!” Jesus said He must first come upon you (the promise of the Father at Pentecost) then John 14:17 states *“He dwells with you and shall be in you!”* God wants to inhabit you as the ark of His Presence. Many people want to encounter God's Presence for a variety of reasons. Some for goose bumps, thinking if I can “feel God” that means He and I are still in good stead. But the real presence seeker has one purpose in mind- **RELATIONSHIP!** That relationship has a purpose because when God lives inside of you and you live IN Him, He will be released IN your life and through you to those you're to influence. What this does is connect us to the “NOW WORDS” of His Spirit. 2 Peter 1:12(NKJ) says, **“I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you Know and are established in the PRESENT Truth...”** Peter

is saying as I get more revelation I'll give it to you, but the foundational truth will keep us until then. He's directing our attention to what the Lord is revealing for that season. Everyone in scripture that was in some way mighty in God's presence had a recorded history with God. We can actually read it. They can't give their history to you. Only you can make history with God and He will make history with you by his presence IN YOU! It's out of that union we know what it is to love him and to KNOW without exception He has always loved us.

Question: Who is going to separate us from the love of Christ? I mean who will get between me & Christ. You'd have to separate Christ from God to do that and that is impossible. It is the same with us. John 14:23 says... *“And my Father will love him and we will come unto Him and make our abode with Him.”* Imagine God, Christ and the Holy Spirit all present at one time in you and yet you still say, “Lord, I don't feel your presence.” I submit that His “active presence” in all of us is changed as we seek Him more and make more demands upon Him because of our elevated knowledge of His presence in us. I also submit that when His presence that is in us, moves us to an action given us to complete, then He comes

upon us for the benefit of ministry. In essence, I am then “doing things” (all things) as Phil. 4:13 *“through Christ who strengthened me.”* The Amplified Bible says, *“I am self-sufficient in Christ's sufficiency.”* Christ is always working outward from us to accomplish His will. We are literally carriers of His presence in the earth. He said, *“I will never leave or forsake you. I will come to you...”* How? *“I will send the Holy Spirit to live in you.”* Here is a question we would all like to know the answer to. Why do we “feel” so alienated at times from His presence? The answer is in the word *feel*, a fleshy term, and one of our human senses. In fact when the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus, He received power to overcome Satan and conquer him. That same power of the Spirit of God dwells in us. Remember God is present everywhere at all times. He is omnipresent. That's **“who He is.”** But He chooses who He lives in and has fellowship with.

The Bible emphasizes God's **manifest present**, not only His **omnipresence**. Imagine living in the same house and never speaking to one another. How very specially in tune with Adam and Eve was He in the garden? God was vested in them. There is a difference in saying, “God is everywhere” and “God is here.” **When He's here...that's relationship.**

“God's intentions from scripture are clear, that all of God's work ends with the Lord dwelling



God has brought back His presence to His people through His Son. God steps in to pay the price and the Creator becomes the Covenant Redeemer. ***God's intentions from scripture are clear, that all of God's work ends with the Lord dwelling with man.*** It is not only an objective it is also the means by which redemption is fulfilled. The presence of God finds its greatest expression in Emmanuel, “God with us.” God himself comes to save man. Jesus, the Son of God, entered human history a ransom for many. God crafted a plan before the foundation of the world to reconcile us to Himself and re-open access to the Father so that those **outside His presence** might again draw near to God. God has prepared His people for a ***present and future presence.*** God allowed Himself to be localized in the Old Testament in the temple and also in the New Testament in the Incarnate Christ. We experience Him in the heightening of “His reality” in our lives for good if we are in His grace and for not so good if under His wrath. Jesus makes God the Father a welcoming reality or presence to us. Scripture is replete with invitations from God to draw near, come close, and enter into. His presence is an indescribable influence as He exerts it for good in special ways of reality. He is nearer than we can imagine and desires that we find Him and experience Him through His Son, who is the visible image of the invisible God. ♥

Shift

By Pastor Ricky Martin



Many people talk about a shift in the Spirit, atmosphere or their lives. A shift can be good or bad, easy or abrupt. For example when the plates below the surface begin to SHIFT or change locations earth quakes and volcanic eruptions take place which are usually very quick and hard causing great distress. The shifting of the gears in a car is somewhat different unless you don't know what you're doing. Years ago while travelling with The Singing Evangelists the Lord had bless us enough that Bro. Wayne Taylor bought an old Greyhound bus for us. It wasn't an automatic so we had to SHIFT the gears. Well they didn't let me drive too often because they said I had preached too hard and I needed my rest. Seriously they didn't want me driving because I would grind those gears. You see over the years that old bus had gotten used to changing at what I call the sweet spot, that place when the RPMs got high enough it would just glide in gear. Either I couldn't hear it or I just didn't have the touch and I would grind those gears.

So what does this have to do with spiritual life? There are shifts in the kingdom and some come abruptly and others smoothly. Like in any shifting you have to get the timing right. If it's the right timing you will sense something has changed in your ministry & life. One key: "YOU WILL NEVER SHIFT IF YOU STAY IDLE", you must walk in faith until you get to that sweet spot then it is time to SHIFT. ♥

Just Thinking:

Being part of the body of Christ we'll only attain our full strength when as many of us as possible realize we are priests of God. When we realize that as God's ministers that jobs need to be done – and we're the ones to do them. And when we realize that we are called by God to work together (as Ephesians 4 says) "so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."

Blessings,
Dr. Jan Harbuck
PCAI Vice President
(Facebook posted)



Warning For Us All: CALIFORNIA LEGISLATION ALERT!



As many of you in California are no doubt already aware, the California legislature is moving forward with a very troubling piece of legislation. AB 2943 would be added to the California Consumer Legal Remedies Act by illegalizing any "advertising, offering to engage in, or engaging in sexual orientation change efforts with an individual," if those activities are intended to result or do result in the sale or lease of goods or services to any consumer. The term "sexual orientation change efforts" is defined as any practices that seek to change an individual's sexual orientation, including efforts to "eliminate or reduce sexual or romantic attractions or feelings toward individuals of the same sex."

Sadly this is not California's first attempt to limit "change efforts." California already has laws in place making it illegal for any licensed therapists or counselors to engage directly in "change efforts" with clients. However, this new bill is even more concerning because of the vague language and potential breadth. AB 2943 would allegedly illegalize any sale of goods or services that supposedly had any relation to "change efforts." This could and likely would criminalize the sale of any Christian counseling books addressing dealing with homosexual persons in a Biblical way. The Assembly Judiciary Committee even acknowledged the law could encompass church retreats that charged money to attend. While unlikely, someone could even attempt to argue this law could ban the sale of Bibles.

Now is the time for Christians of California to speak up and let their voices be heard regarding this legislation. What can you do? (Christian Law Association)

Employing Ex-Offenders

A touchy subject at best but one the church is dealing with at a rapid pace due to the large number of persons incarcerated in the US. As Christians we cannot just pretend the problem does not exist. Is the church a place for ex-offenders to find a place of employment re-entry? Below are some thoughts from a recent article in Church Law & Tax Report by Richard Hammer. The statements are used with permission.

1. It is against the Equal Employment Act for a person to be denied employment solely on their criminal background the same as with gender, race, or age.

Continued on page 4

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CREDENTIAL RENEWALS

OCTOBER 1st

TWO WAYS TO RENEW:

- 1) Complete the credential form that we will be mailing to you soon and send it back to us.
- 2) **ONLINE**—you can fill out the renewal form by going to our website www.paragonchristianalliance.org located under the “Resource” tab



Employing Ex-Offenders continued from page 3

2. When considering an ex-offender for a position do the following:
 - A. Inquire. Ask them questions about their full histories and backgrounds.
 - B. Verify. Go to the courthouse and check public records to verify what they have disclosed. Answer the following questions: What were the charges? What were they convicted for? How long were they in prison? Did they disclose everything?
3. Document. Write those verified answers down. Keep a confidential personnel file for each candidate.
4. Repeat. Every so often, go through the preceding steps and run checks on every staff member, those with or without a prior criminal record, because statuses have the potential to change over time.

Along with the above steps check for rehabilitation efforts (such as anger management counseling) and call their references. The questions are: Are they truthful? Or are they hiding it? If they're hiding it, you should be more suspicious.

The church administration has the responsibility of the safety of the congregation. If a crime were to occur, the church may be sued for risk of negligent hiring. That phrase means the carelessness or failure to exercise reasonable care in the selection of a worker. Negligent selection claims arise any time that a church's failure to exercise reasonable care in the selection of an employee or volunteer leads to a foreseeable injury. (See Chapter 10, Volume 4 of Pastor, Church & Law, 4th edition by Richard Hammer.

One way to avoid negligence after hiring is not to select to place the ex-offender in an area of service related to his offense. (i.e. don't put a sex offender in a children's or youth ministry). Provide mentoring and make sure the new hire is fully trained. Create accountability for all your employees.

There is hope for ex-offenders and the church has its part to play in this ministry of recovery. By doing extensive work on the front end and putting good markers into place along the way many be brought back to full productivity. And the church can have a hand in it. (Christian Law Association)

Church/Ministry Tax Dates to Remember

In addition to regular semiweekly and monthly withholding requirements, churches/ministries should note the following dates. Keep good records!

Need Help? Call AEGA Office
 Dr. Jan Harbuck ~ 1-800-842-5176



July 17th

1. If you have non-ministerial employees and deposit payroll taxes monthly, the June 2018 payroll tax deposit is due.

July 31st

1. File Form 941 (payroll tax) for the second quarter of 2018 and deposit any unpaid taxes. If your tax liability is less than \$2,500, you can pay it in full with a timely filed return. If you deposited the tax for the quarter timely, properly, and in full, you have until August 10th to file the return.

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

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