

the Informer newsletter

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER |
PCAI CLERGY ASSOCIATION |
(PARAGON CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE INT'L)
JUNE 2019 – VOLUME 6



LEADERS KNOW HOW TO OVERCOME WORRY AND ANXIETY

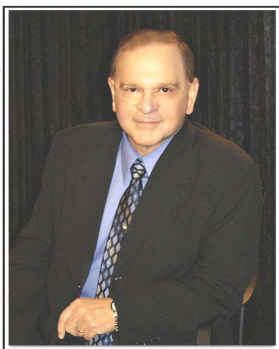
By Dr. Henry A. Harbuck/ PCAI Int'l President and General Overseer

Worry is America's number one killer. Excessive worry leads to mental illness, suicide, heart disease, high blood pressure, ulcers, arthritis, headaches, and a host of other problems. People worry about money, health, death, church, jobs, friends and family. Most worries are based on inner fears. These fears impede the progress of leaders and are destructive. However, human beings are not born with the nature to worry. Rather, the habit of worry is learned by watching and imitating parents, relatives, and friends. A

sound mind, free of worry, is something every Christian should strive to achieve. Remember that 95% of that which people worry about never comes to pass. Worry is one of the most common sins. Jesus said, *"And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life?"* (MT 6:27) Paul further states, *"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known to God."* (Philippians 4: 6) In other words, Paul learned how to whip worry. He made his requests known to God and drove unhealthy thoughts out of his mind. ♥

Luke 12:22

*Then Jesus said to his disciples:
"Therefore I tell you, do not worry
about your life, what you will eat; or
about your body, what you will wear"*



The INFORMER Newsletter is a free monthly publication of P.C.A.I. (Paragon Christian Alliance International) & PCAI Clergy Association

2149 Highway 139, Monroe,
Louisiana 71203

1-866-268-5600 |
FAX (318) 345-0350

Website:

www.paragonchristianalliance.org
Copyright © 2019

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



Quit Blaming Your Esaus

By Pastor Lynn Burling / Christian Faith Church Senior Pastor/Texas

Jacob was always grabbing someone else's heel, someone else's good fortune to get to the top. Now Esau, might be evil and Esau might be wrong and Esau might even be worldly... but when you finish facing your fears about your Esaus, you're going to understand that he's not-the-problem. Our Esaus are "other people," other circumstances, or another person. Everybody's got an Esau in their past somewhere and the last thing we hear before we leave is Esau saying, "I'm going to kill you!" I heard a preacher say, "We've all been to hell and back the last couple of years, but after you've been to hell, and back "what's five more yards!" There will always be an Esau...don't let him determine what you think and do! He'll try to make you ineffective, he can be a Judas, or an Ananias and Sapphira or an Alexander the Coppersmith.

"Now, Running From an Angry Laban"

Gen. 31:41-42 ESV "These twenty years I have been in your house. I served you fourteen years for your two daughters, and six years for your flock, and you have changed my wages ten times. 42 If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had not been on my side, surely now you would have sent me away empty-handed. God saw my affliction and the labor of my hands and rebuked you last night." Jacob is returning in strength and power and blessing but the crossing of the "t's" and God's dotting of the "i's," still remain. Now everything is settled with Laban and the 20 years with him, one down and one to go! Gen. 32:1 "And Jacob went on his way and the angels of God met him." That's a pretty good SIGN that God's got this. Gen. 32:11 "Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: **For I fear him, lest he come and smite me.**" He's just like us! He's had angel confirmation but he's still afraid.

"A River Called Jabbok"

Jabbok is mentioned seven times in God's book. Six Times, it's referred to as all that approached it or "Came unto it." The Bible

says, "They came unto it" referring to different peoples and tribes. Six times out of seven that the river Jabbok is mentioned, they only came "unto the river" but one time the Bible said, "They" (Jacob and his family) **passed over it.**" It's one thing to "come unto", it's another thing to "pass over." (Gen. 32:23) "Jacob arose that night and took his two wives, two women servants and his eleven sons and passed over the ford Jabbok."

Get the picture here! Jacob had run for his life from Esau to Laban and his relatives, and for years worked for Laban as hire for his two wives. Now the time has come for Jacob to leave Laban and flee and come and face his brother Esau. The point of demarcation is the Jabbok River.

Fast forward to that night after passing over to vs. 24. "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." Now I don't know about you but when you wrestle with someone you pick up their scent. If you wrestle with the Devil—it comes out of your mouth, it comes out in your walk, we get critical and judgmental about our brother...but when we wrestle with God, we pick up His scent and He eliminates the enemy's scent on us! In spite of Esau waiting for him, he has to cross over, in spite of the Labans in your past and the bad memories and what appeared to be past failures, there's a time you can't just "come unto" any longer - you've got to pass over.

Now when "the angel" wrestled with Jacob, he left a permanent mark in his life. A mark so everyone can see there is a difference and even Jacob can be reminded as well. The name "Jabbok" literally means "a pouring out, an emptying" located between the Dead Sea and the Sea of Galilee. Halfway

Continued on page 3



Are Your Bills Piling Up?

By Karl Vaters in ChristianityToday.com

Your mortgage company doesn't want to foreclose on your church. The electricity company doesn't want to turn off your power. The plumber doesn't want to sue you to get paid for the emergency work that was done.

Before letting the bills pile up, call the bank, vendor, or business. Let them know you're having trouble. Ask for debt reduction, consolidation, or outright forgiveness. I admit that my church did this. We were able to set up a reasonable payment and rate reduction, which allowed us to get back on our feet again. If we had asked for help earlier, we'd have save a lot of money, worry, and ministry opportunities.

May all you wonderful
Dads enjoy a
Happy Father's Day

Quit Blaming Your Esaus from page 2

between death and life, you make up your mind whether you're going to cross it or not! **He crossed it moving forward in the direction of his living future, not his dead past!!!**

There are many today whose "identity" has been put on hold waiting for Jacob to be changed. Jacob's change began when he crossed Jabbok, then his name was changed, then he was eternally changed. For Abraham, it was an "emotional" wrestle. "You promised me my seed in Isaac now I've got to sacrifice him!" For Moses, it was an "intellectual" wrestling match..." How am I going to figure this out? The God who made Heaven and Earth in six days wants me to lead three-million people out of here?...But for Jacob, it was "physical."

You may be wrestling with your "emotional encounter," your "intellectual encounter" or your "physical encounter" but you're literally wrestling with the **Person** of God Himself, or the **Spirit** of God or the **Facts** of God. **This-is-the-place-of-change.** "Israel" (Jacob) was a God wrestler. Jacob separated himself from everything he owned, his possessions and wives, servants, etc. and **got alone!**...and there came a man and wrestled with him! Vs. 25 "He touched the hollow of his thigh!" The biggest bone in your body is your thigh bone. Why didn't he touch his "little finger" bone? 'Cause we're not dealing with surface issues here, God wants to get to the "thigh of the matter." We all have believed up to this point that just "coming unto" still works, but no longer! We've got to cross over and when you lose the wrestling match with God, you win! When you empty yourself, He fills you up!...then you have power to wrestle anything. We don't fight to convince God we're right, God fights us so we can get our future aligned.

If you've got an Esau spirit, God will never touch your thigh. God always uses imperfect people in an imperfect setting at an imperfect time. Maybe Jacob was "depressed" about what was facing him. Thank God! A depression is the only thing that can hold water after the storm! I came empty Lord, fill me! **We're all living between "the already" and "not yet."** You see Jacob left his children something...what we leave in our children is more important than what we leave to our children.

Here Is The Application

God made sure Moses was dead before Joshua took over and crossed over the Jordan. Moses knew only certain ways God did things. Can you see God speaking to Joshua. "Take the priests with the Ark and let their feet hit the water at the Jordan...and here comes Moses...wait, stop, don't carry the precious Ark in the water like that—Joshua; "What's the matter Moses?" Moses: "You need a stick" what stick Moses? Well Joshua, I've got more experience crossing water than you ever had and you're going to die doing it that way. The priest's feet will get wet, it's cold. You get your stick and God will dry up this whole thing and you'll "cross over dry shod." That's not what God said to Joshua...that was on that side of the wilderness **that was then, this is now**, we're going to "cross over" into the promised land and God's looking for people who are willing to get their feet wet!!!!...like Jacob, like Israel!

Yes, Jacob had Laban bearing down on him and yes, he had to face Esau and his men, he was sandwiched at the Jabbok...he had to cross over. I'm putting myself in his place for a moment. Of all the bad and negative things, done in life, when it came time to face the pressures, the criticisms and yes, even death Jacob remembered Gen. 28:15. Before he met Laban and went through all he did God said I will bring you again into **this land**, which included meeting Esau face to face again. "And behold, I am with you and will keep thee in all places wherever you go, and will bring thee again into this land. For I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken about to thee." Wow...he counted on the Word of God spoken previously that it was good for then and it would be good "**until**," his life was completed. Child of God...until we cross over nothing will change but when we cross over everything changes. ♥

Is Your Ministry Ready for 2019

Excerpt from Christian Law Association Magazine

Times have changed and the rarity of the church being sued is no longer the case. Your ministry cannot afford to remain unprepared. There are certain steps that all ministries should have in place. See below.

1. **Bylaws** - There is arguably not a single document more vital to your church with the exception of the Bible itself. If your ministry is taken to court, the very first thing the court will ask to see is your bylaws. If your bylaws don't clearly set forth how your church runs, then even the simplest legal challenge becomes dangerous. Here are a few of the items your bylaws must absolutely address:
 - a. **Your Beliefs** – In today's anti-Christian culture, it is vital that your bylaws clearly set forth your beliefs on both doctrine and sin, particularly on homosexuality and transgenderism.
 - b. **Membership Requirements** – What disqualifies someone from membership? Are those qualifications clearly laid out? What is the church's procedure on Christian discipline? What happens when a member leaves the church without resigning? These are all questions your bylaws should have answers for.
 - c. **Officer Qualifications and Election Procedures** – How does your ministry elect deacons or elders? What happens when you need to remove an officer for amoral behavior? How is authority given between the pastor and deacons? In today's litigious culture, specificity on these matters is a must.
 - d. **Church Meeting Procedure** – Don't forget that churches are essentially corporate entities – your ministry must set forth general rules for member meetings: how are they announced, how are they run, who is in control, who is allowed to vote and more.
2. **Child Protection Policy** – There is arguably no more important ministry your church offers than the children's ministry, yet sadly, it is often the most overlooked. In the past several years reports of sexual abuse cases have abounded in many churches. It is crucial that every church have written rules in place for children's ministry volunteers.

Continued on page 4

Is Your Ministry Ready... from page 3

- a. **Back ground checks on every volunteer** – While the majority of states do not require background checks of church's employees and volunteers, our recommendation is that churches should act like they are legally required – background checks are that important.
 - b. **Two adult rule** – There is no easier target for allegations of improper behavior than having one adult alone with children. Ensure that your ministry is properly staffed with an absolute minimum of two adults per room.
 3. **Security Manual** – The sad truth Christians must face is that church violence is on the rise. Venues are being sued for failure to protect their guests and invitees. Is your church prepared on how to respond if the secretary receives a bomb threat? What will you do with a suspicious package or an active shooter? Churches today need a security team that is trained and prepared to handle any type of unfortunate situation, and a written policy defining how and when said team takes action.
 - a. **The Question of Firearms** – While we strongly urge every church to set up a security team, whether or not to arm that security team is a very big question with lots of risk and multiple state laws potentially coming into play. Contact our attorneys immediately if you are considering it.
 - b. **Security Cameras** – Security cameras can be a powerful and effective addition to your established security team. As a private entity, you generally have the right to place a video camera anyplace that does not have a reasonable expectation of privacy. Please know that recording audio is not generally recommended without speaking with our attorneys first.
 4. **Financial Controls** – It is a tragedy how many phone calls we get from churches who are blindsided by a treasurer or volunteer who has been embezzling money from the offering plate for years. Unfortunately, the majority of these scenarios could have been avoided if the church had proper internal controls in place to protect the handling of church money.
 - a. **Avoid the "one man" scenario** – There is likely no problem more common for the small church or ministry than not having enough willing volunteers. In these cases, it is all too
- easy to just hand off substantial responsibility to that one longtime member who is always willing to serve. Do not make that mistake when it comes to church funds. Different people should be used at every step of the financial process to ensure accountability for the ministry.
- b. **Don't be afraid of third party audits** – Your financial practices should be sound and consistent enough that you hold no fear of letting an outside organization come in an audit your finances. In fact, we would encourage every church to utilize an audit every few years.
 5. **Permission Slips/Liability Release Forms** – Forty years ago church bus drivers would happily pick up any child and their friend who wanted to come to church. In today's day and age, it is vital that your bus ministry have permission slips completed by every child's parent who wishes to ride your buses and attend church. While they are inconvenient to use, permission slips and liability release forms go a long way in protecting your church from accidents and even the deliberately malicious acts.
 - a. **Release forms should be specific to the event.** We get dozens of calls from busy youth pastors hoping to alleviate paperwork by having one annual release to cover all youth outings for the year. This is absolutely not recommended. The more specific a release is as to the details and risks of the event, the stronger it is.
 - b. **Don't forget about permission before posting.** Probably one of the most common mistakes we see are church posting pictures online of children at youth events or VBS to their social media pages without receiving parental permission first. This can lead to dangerous outcomes for some families. Make a habit of receiving written permission before posting photos of anyone online.

If your church does not have any of these documents in writing, rectifying that should be an immediate priority. Our attorneys have crafted detailed template policies on all of these matters as a starting point for every church. Have your leadership call 888-252-1969 today.

Could You Raffle Away Your Tax-Exempt Status?

Excerpt from Church Finance Today Magazine

Congregations that raise funds through raffles, bingo nights, or other games of chance would be wise to familiarize themselves with the 2018 revision of IRS Publication 3079, Tax-Exempt Organizations and Gaming. (Available on IRS.gov) Here is an excerpt that specifically addresses 501(c) (3) organizations- including churches:

An organization may qualify for exemption under IRS Section 501 (c)(3) if it is organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, literary or educational purposes or for the purposes of testing for public safety, fostering national or international amateur sports competition or preventing cruelty to children or animals. To be exempt under Section 501 (c)(3), an organization must engage in

activities that accomplish one or more of these purposes. Examples of such organizations include schools, churches and non-profit hospitals.

A common misconception is that gaming is a "charitable" activity. There is nothing inherently charitable about gaming. It is a recreational activity and a business. Although a charity may use the proceeds from gaming to pay expenses associated with its charitable programs, gaming itself does not further any charitable purpose. Thus, gaming cannot be more than an insubstantial purpose of a 501 (c) (3) organization....

An organization puts its exempt status in jeopardy when gaming results in inurement

or prohibited private benefit to individuals, or where funds from the activity are diverted for private purposes.

A charity conducting gaming as an insubstantial part of its activities will not ordinarily jeopardize its tax-exempt status but may be subject to the tax on unrelated business income...

The IRS determines whether an organization is conducting a "substantial" unrelated activity by examining all the facts and circumstances. There is no "bright line" or numerical test prescribed by the IRS Code. The IRS will consider the dollars raised by and spent on an unrelated activity as well as the time and other resources devoted to it in making the determination of substantiality.