

the Informer newsletter

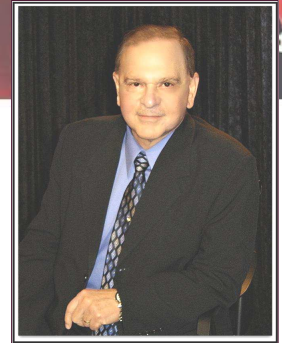


MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | PALAGON CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE
INTERNATIONAL (PCAI) CLERGY ASSOCIATION
SEPTEMBER 2020

FIVE TYPES OF ANCHORS



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



“The Anchor Holds” was a popular song some years ago, and remains popular today because it gives hope to the believer. Since I live in Louisiana, I have seen the adversity that Louisiana folks have endured in the past years from the most devastating hurricanes and floods in our nation’s history and most recently the Corona Virus! Some never recovered from these types of disasters; some lost their sanity, physical health, and jobs, but some survived the *adversities*. Symbolically speaking, these obstacles are somewhat like the *adversities* that we face in our families, physical bodies, finances, and spiritual lives. Although no one truly understands why *adversities* come, God in His sovereignty has a reason for what He allows.

As an example of God’s protection and guidance, Joseph came to prominence after facing many *adversities*. He was sold into slavery by his own brothers (Gen. 37:23-28), accused falsely of sexually assaulting Potiphar’s wife, then was imprisoned (39:6-20), and was even forgotten by a man who promised to gain his release from prison (40:6-23). Yet, in spite of these *adversities* God exalted Him to second in command to Pharaoh (the king). Because of his *adversities*, Joseph saved the lives of many people in Egypt, as well (Gen. 45:4-7) as his own brothers, whom he forgave for their wicked act (50:19-21).

Take some time to read Romans 5:1-11. Here in these verses you will find strength during your time of adversity, whatever it may be, because Christ—the Anchor holds. There are “Five Anchors” in Romans 5:1-11 that will help stabilize you and help you “hold on” during adversity. They are as follows;

First Anchor - Realize that your faith gives you peace (v. 1) with God. God’s wrath no longer is directed at you because you have been made “righteous” by Christ’s atoning sacrifice. Adversity does happen, but you have access to God and you may enter into His presence (Heb. 10:19) and ask Him for help.

Second Anchor - Reflect on the hope that you have in Christ (v. 2). Hope (Gk. *elpizo*) from a Scriptural view denotes “desire or wish.” New Testament writers use the word hope to express that we have trust in the Lord.

Third Anchor - Recognize that God has a purpose for adversity (vv. 3-4). Nobody wants to suffer, but hard trials bring out the “pure gold” when one is driven to his/her knees. And from this comes true Christian character.

Fourth Anchor - Recall and reflect on God’s amazing love (vv. 6-8). These verses describe people who don’t have hope in Christ. They are without life and strength; they are ungodly and enemies of God, because they haven’t believed in the only begotten Son of God (Jn. 3:36).

Fifth Anchor - Rejoice in Who God is. You have already been justified (OT term that means “made righteous” in the NT). Therefore, you have much to rejoice about because you’ve been delivered from the power—grip of sin (vv. 9-11).

Remember, Christ—the Anchor will keep you stable when you’re experiencing a storm in your life. Study the “Five Anchors” and use them when you face adversity. ♥

Is America at a tipping point in the natural and the spiritual?

By Rev. Mike Taylor / Religion Columnist

My last few columns have talked a lot about God's righteousness and justice. God's righteousness and God's justice is far above the world's definition of righteousness and justice. God is a holy god. He is perfect. Man's definition of righteousness and justice is flawed and mixed with opinion and political persuasion.

The current conditions in the world are ripe for God's chastisement and justice. The

Bible says that judgment begins in the house of God. God is bringing about His justice and His righteousness in the Earth. It is not political. It is only according to His word in the Bible and before it is over, we will all get splashed. None will escape for the Bible says that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Jesus said it his way *"He who is without sin among you, let him throw the first stone."*

This brings me to my main point in this article. Is America at a tipping point in world history? We have been here before. We have the Revolutionary War, the Civil War and World War II to just name a few. Will we yet again turn back to God and His righteousness or end up in the trash heap of history.

Many empires and great men from the past have risen only to later have a great fall. There was the Medo-Persian empire, the Babylonians, the

Roman empire, Nazi Germany, Stalin and Mussolini to just name a few. God's holy word says that the kingdoms of the earth however powerful they might appear will one day be crushed and replaced by God's eternal kingdom. You can read about this in the Bible, especially in the books of Daniel and Revelation.

The Bible says that one day God's Kingdom will replace

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From The Heart of An Evangelist

By Dr. David & Sis. Pam Copeland / Revival Now Int'l Director

In understanding how to be led by the Spirit we must also understand there are three types of believers in the church. Paul describes this in 1 Corinthians 2:11-16

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are

foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? but we have the mind of Christ.

He goes on to say Chapter 3: 1-3

1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you

envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

First there are the natural men (natural man).

A natural man is one who is not born again. They may come to church often. They may even volunteer for service in the church. They even support the church financially. But they can't understand spiritual reasoning, forgiveness, agape love, giving or faith. It is all like speaking in an unknown tongue to them. Paul was clear when he said the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God because it's all foolishness to him. So, this natural man is one who is unsaved, one that does not know God and the freedom from slavery of sin.



Until he/she is born again, they will never be in a position to renew their minds to escape the cycle of unbelief because unbelief is directly connected to a natural mind.

The second group of people Paul describes are the carnal people.

Someone who is carnal is one that is controlled by and governed by mere human nature. They are born of the Spirit, but they are baby Christians. They have a very low maturity level. There are still some things they are overcoming. They haven't completely learned to crucify the flesh man and all his voices and appetites.

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The US Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit

Excerpt from Christian Law Association Publication

The US Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, headquartered in Chicago, decided an important case last week regarding the ministerial exception to employment discrimination laws. The answers to the questions before the court in this case are important ones. The ministerial exception to employment discrimination claims gives churches the right to hire and fire and make employment decisions for any reason without being subject to Title VII (and other employment discrimination laws).

The case

The case involved a lawsuit brought by Stanislaw Sterlinski, who claimed he was fired from his position as a church organist because of his Polish heritage. Sterlinski once was the church's director of music, but was demoted to the job of organist and later fired.

The Seventh Circuit recognized Sterlinski's role as music director meant he was a "minister" for purposes of the ministerial exception to Title VII and therefore could have been fired for any reason by the church. But the questions the court wrestled with focused on whether Sterlinski could be considered a "minister" after he was demoted to the position of organist and, more importantly, who ultimately decides whether one's role is ministerial—the employing church or a court.

Sterlinski argued that his job was simply to play notes assigned to him and therefore his role was not religious. The church argued that music was an integral part of its services.

The ministerial exception flows out of the recognition

that a "minister" is the lifeblood of a congregation and churches should not be forced to accept or retain a minister they do not want. The word "minister" means more than just a priest or preacher. In 2012 the United States Supreme Court unanimously held that a Lutheran schoolteacher was a minister for purposes of the ministerial exception. The ministerial exception is a recognition of the old adage that "personnel is policy." Thus, courts have recognized for years that forcing churches to accept or retain unwanted ministers can profoundly affect the direction and course of the church.

In the present case, the Seventh Circuit highlighted a disagreement over who gets to decide what is religious—federal judges or the church? Courts have reached conflicting answers to that question. In particular, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals held in an earlier case that it can decide for itself whether a given employee's job was religious as opposed to secular.

The Seventh Circuit decided to take a different approach. It noted:

If the Roman Catholic Church believes that organ music is vital to its religious services, and that to advance its faith it needs the ability to select organists, who are we judges to disagree? Only by subjecting religious doctrine to discovery and, if necessary, jury trial, could the judiciary reject a church's characterization of its own theology and internal organization.

The Seventh Circuit held that subjecting churches to this kind of decision-making by federal judges would result in "judicial entanglement in, and second-guessing of, religious matters." Instead, a church must be given the right to assert that a particular job is religious and the job of a federal judge is simply to determine whether that characterization is *honest*, not whether it is *correct*. The Seventh Circuit's decision is binding for the states of Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin. It is considered persuasive for the remaining federal circuit courts nationwide.

Looking ahead

The issue of which employees fall within the ministerial exception is one that is heavily litigated. Because many cases

are already being litigated on this issue, it is likely the Supreme Court will take up the issue again in the future. When that will be is difficult to determine. The first ministerial exception case was decided by a court in 1972, but the Supreme Court did not take up the issue until 2012. Churches and religious organizations may be in for a long, wait with more favorable cases in some circuits and less favorable in others.

What is reasonable to expect is that there will be more cases about this issue in the future. It is important for churches and religious organizations to address this matter with competent legal counsel before an employee files a claim. Being prepared is much better than trying to scramble after a lawsuit is filed. □

Tax Date this Month

Ministers (who have not elected voluntary withholding) and self-employed workers must file their third quarterly estimated federal tax payment for 2020 by this date (a similar rule applies in many states to payments of estimated state taxes). Non-minister employees of churches that filed a timely Form 8274 (waiving the church's obligation to withhold and pay FICA taxes) are treated as self-employed for Social Security, and as a result are subject to the estimated tax deadlines with respect to their self-employment (Social Security) taxes unless they ask their employing church to withhold an additional amount of income taxes from each paycheck (use a new Form W-4 to make this request) that will be sufficient to cover self-employment taxes.

A church/ministry must make quarterly estimated tax payments if it expects an unrelated business income tax liability for the year to be \$500 or more. Use IRS Form 990-W to figure your estimated taxes. Quarterly estimated tax payments of one-fourth of the total tax liability are due by April 15, June 15, September 15, and December 15, 2020, for churches on a calendar-year basis. Deposit quarterly tax payments electronically using the EFTPS system.

From the Heart... continued from page 2

This is illustrated when he tells them how he knows they are carnal. Look again at vs. 3. *For ye are as yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying & strife, and divisions are ye not carnal and walk as men?*

Then he goes on to tell them *“some of you say, ‘I follow Paul,’ another says, ‘I follow Apollos,’ another one says, ‘I follow Peter!’”* It would be like us saying, *“I am a Baptist, or I am a Methodist, or I am Pentecostal or Charismatic.”*

When the first words out of our mouths are where we go to church, who our pastor is or what our church or what our pastor believes, we are showing that we have not grown much in maturity with Jesus. We are still operating as a carnal man. Sure, if we die, we will go to heaven because you will go to heaven by knowing Jesus as your personal savior. Your carnality or maturity level shows through by whom you quote more: your pastor, your church belief system, or the Word of God.

The third group of people Paul mentions are the spiritual people.

You are not being spiritual by showing how many verses you have memorized, or how many times you have been to church in the last six months. A spiritual person as Paul uses the word here in 1 Corinthians 2:12-16 according to Thayer Concordance is *“one who is led by and governed by the Spirit of God.”*

Think about that. One who is led by AND governed by the Spirit of God. Learning to be led by the Spirit can be easy; it's being given governed by the Spirit, now that can be challenging. And if we are not allowing Holy Spirit to govern our lives, then all our revelation is simply *“a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.”*

I look back over my life and can see where God was trying to teach me how to hear the voice of God & live by being led by the Spirit, but I allowed religious people to talk me out of many things God was trying to teach me. Now I am having to catch back up to where I should be. But I AM determined to catch up in Jesus name!!! ♥

Is America... continued from page 2

all other kingdoms of the Earth and the faithful will be vindicated. The faithful are those who have repented and turned back to God in these difficult days of unrest, the virus, political upheaval, etc.

I have three main scriptures I live by. The first and foremost is Matthew 6:33: *“seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”*

Second is Romans 8:28: *“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”* I believe that nothing can hurt a child of God so deeply that God cannot turn it around for their good.

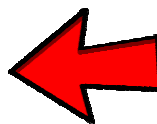
The third scripture is my anchor scripture. It is Psalm 91 which says in part, *“a thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; but it shall not come near you.”* (Psalm 91.7) NKJV. Abiding in the shadow of the Almighty. It speaks of the security that followers of Jesus Christ may find in God.

I think it remains to be seen where America ends up next. However, this I do know, the Bible says that the day will come, *“That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”* (Philippians 2:10,11) NKJV.

This is our only true hope. We must have and keep an eternal perspective on life. ♥

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Annual Credential Renewals

DUE OCTOBER 1ST



TWO WAYS TO RENEW:

- (1) Complete the credential renewal form enclosed in the July 2020 Informer Newsletter.
- (2) ONLINE—you can fill out the renewal form by going to our website: <https://paragonchristianalliance.org/renewals/>

NOTE: Review your monthly giving/contribution and bring to current if you are behind, before we can renew your credential.

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