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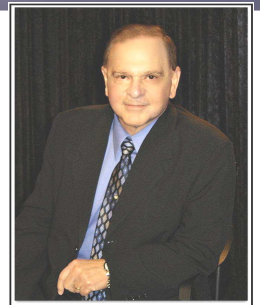
Uncertain Times (*Suffering*) Will Build Christian Character

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

The Lord is with us. So, let's remember what the psalmist said, "God is our refuge and strength, [He's] always ready to help [you] in times of trouble." (NLT-Psalms. 46:1 Quotations marks are mine).

Our society is driven by the desire to succeed so there will be no suffering. And if you're not one of the elite who enjoys this elusive plateau, you are labeled a failure. This kind of thinking is not biblical. To make matters worse, some preachers actually teach "If you're not making lots of money, you're not in God's will." This is certainly not the apostolic view of the early Christians who endured hardship and death. They were tortured, burned at the stake, starved, chained, thrown into prison to rot, and fed to wild beasts in Rome. Yet they shared whatever they had with each other (Acts 4:32-33) because they were filled with love.

To assume that the Christian lifestyle doesn't involve suffering is a mistake. The Bible says in Romans 5, verse 3 that "we can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they are good for us – they help us learn to endure" (NLT-quotation marks are mine). Think about this! As followers of Christ, we should actually grow stronger spiritually when we face problems and trials; i.e., when we suffer. I agree that it's not a lot of fun, but God's ultimate plan is to help us grow through suffering. Therefore, we must remember that when we endure suffering (trials), we are not alone. The Lord is with us.



So, let's remember what the psalmist said, "God is our refuge and strength, [He's] always ready to help [you] in times of trouble." (NLT-Psalms. 46:1 Quotations marks are mine). ♥

Supreme Court Update

Excerpt from Christian Law Association

In wonderful news, the Supreme Court unanimously decided a case in favor of strengthening religious liberty laws. In *Tanzn v. Tanvir*, a government agency was sued for wrongfully discriminating against a religious group. The discrimination against the Plaintiffs was eventually corrected, and the government was attempting to argue that the Plaintiffs should not be able to sue the individual federal employees responsible for monetary damages (even though the discrimination cost the Plaintiffs a considerable amount of money).

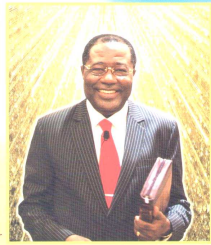
The law in question was the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 (RFRA), and whether the language in this strong law protecting religious freedom allowed for monetary damages to be sought against the agents responsible for violating said law. If the court had denied this request, it would have likely emboldened government employees with religious bias to religiously discriminate more often, as the potential for consequences would have been substantially lessened.

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Stay on Fire for the Lord Jesus Christ as our Predecessor

By Dr. Daniel O.C. Agomoh, AEGA Int'l Council of Bishops

Calvary greetings to you all in the mighty name of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ, Amen. You all are precious and blessed in Jesus' mighty name Amen! **Stay on fire for the Lord Jesus Christ as our predecessors here below in Jesus' mighty name Amen.**



Do you remember the firebrand man of God, Benson Idahosa of Nigeria? Who declared that the planned meeting of Witches and Wizards in Benin city cannot hold while he was alive and so it was.

People like Katherine Kuhlmann, Billy Graham, Smith Wigglesworth and those great men and women of God. ASK THOSE WHO SAW THE REVIVAL OF 1930s, 1970s AND 1980s, THEY WILL TELL YOU WHY WE ARE CRYING OVER THIS "FIRELESSNESS" WE ARE SEEING IN OUR GENERATION OF BELIEVERS.

John Knox prayed: "Lord, give me Scotland or I die..." St Patrick, a rugged believer that brought even dead animals and trees back to life prayed: "God, Give me souls or give me nothing else.." Brethren, The Hebrides revival prayed: "Lord, if you will not use us, please, kill us..."

The brethren who brought the Fire from Azusa Street revival gathered everyday under the terrible cold. Their only prayer topic was: "Lord, give us men that will spread Your Fire in the streets." During the Indonesia Revival, those hungry hearts were seen praying day and night: *Lord, The harvest is ripe... If it pleases You, please use us!*

One prayer that was common during the days of William Seymour was: "Lord, this is another day that hell must lose men and women. Please, we are here use us." Paul said: "Woe is me, if I preach not the gospel." Rachel said to her husband, Jacob: "Give me children or I die."

But unfortunately, our churches are filled today with people who are not ashamed of spiritual barrenness. We are asking, "God give me more money. God give me spouse. God give me visa to foreign country to settle down." Where can one see believers again seriously praying and fasting for the harvest of souls. When can one see believers praying to the Lord for heavenly Fire of revival to fall on them as never before.

When Paul encountered Christ, he fell down and rose. What he asked was: "Lord, what will You have me do." But today, when

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How To Ensure Effective Board Training

SOURCE: Church and Tax Law

Board members volunteer their time, talent, and treasure for the sake of your ministry. They are often well-intentioned, but they are not always well-equipped. Fortunately, there are ways you can help your board members become more effective in their roles and therefore better at providing both oversight and insight for your church.

The role of a board member comes with significant responsibilities. Board members must exercise the duty of care and the duty of loyalty, meaning they must act in the best interests of the organization and set aside any personal opinions or agendas. They are held to the standard of doing what a reasonable person would do in the same situation.

At the same time, board members may wear several "hats" within the church. They might put on the volunteer "hat," for example, when they lead a small group or help with the parking ministry. They may wear the parent "hat" when considering the impact of a ministry decision on their children in the nursery or the high school youth group. The donor "hat" is worn when they determine how they will tithe and what additional ministries or church needs they will support.

However, it is imperative that board members not put on the

wrong "hat" when they act on behalf of the church, and that their role as board members is clear to them and to those with whom they speak. When wearing a board "hat," someone speaks as a voice of the whole board and acts only as directed by the board.

Training Your Board

Churches have opportunities to improve the skill set of board members beginning with the start of their tenure and continuing throughout their term. An intentional focus on board development will yield significant results: not only will it be helpful to the ministry, but it will invest in those individuals and make the board an attractive place to serve.

Starting Off Right

When new members join the governing board or a committee, make sure they have the information necessary to start well. Provide them with organizational documents, such as bylaws and the constitution, as well as meeting minutes from the last couple of years. In this way, they can better understand the inner workings of the ministry. They may have been involved or participated in the church for a long time, but the average churchgoer doesn't typically understand the church's corporate activity or the information that was considered before decisions were made.

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Adding Emergency Provisions to Your Bylaws

How Adopting these provisions allows for legally sound virtual meetings?

SOURCE: Church Law and Tax

In 2020, the United States experienced a pandemic that shut down the country and limited physical gatherings. These lockdowns prohibited in-person meetings, including religious organization's board and committee meetings. Churches with congregational governance could not conduct an in-person business meeting. Suddenly, the religious organization could not follow its usual governance model.

Churches that have not already done so would be wise to add the following two provisions to their own bylaws, to the extent allowed by their state's law.

Meeting by electronic means

The corporation may hold a meeting by any electronic medium in which all persons participating in the meeting can speak and hear each other. The notice of a meeting by electronic means must state the meeting will be held by electronic means (including the directions to participate) and all other matters required to be included in the notice. Participation of a person in an electronic meeting constitutes the presence of that person at the meeting.

Action by consent without meeting

Any action required or permitted to be taken by the members, board of directors or committees may be taken without a meeting and with the same force and effect as an in-person meeting. Members, members of the board of directors, and committees must return the consents to the secretary. Such consent may be given individually or collectively to the secretary in writing, fax, via a secure website, or electronic mail. The action is adopted if the requisite number of consents is submitted to the secretary to approve the action, assuming all members, all directors, or committee members voted.

Emergency authorization by state statute

Frequently, state nonprofit corporation statutes authorize the religious organization to include provisions in the bylaws that become effective in an emergency. The state law will define when an emergency exists and what actions may be authorized during the emergency. A disaster declared by the President frequently allows the emergency provisions to become effective and remain effective as long as the emergency exists. Here is a sample under Texas law:

Emergency Powers. An "emergency" exists for this section if the Board of Directors' quorum cannot readily be obtained because of some catastrophic event. If an emergency exists, the Board of

Directors may: (i) modify lines of succession to accommodate the incapacity of any Director, officer, employee or agent; and (ii) relocate the principal office, designate alternative principal offices or regional office, or authorize officers to do so. During an emergency, a notice of a meeting of the Board of Directors only needs to be given to those Directors whom it is practicable, including Internet website, email, publication, or radio. One or more Corporation officers present at a meeting of the Board of Directors may be deemed Directors for the meeting, in order of rank and within the same rank and order of seniority, as necessary to achieve a quorum. Corporate action taken in good faith during an emergency binds the Corporation and may not be the basis for imposing liability on any Director, officer, employee, or agent of the Corporation on the ground that the action was not authorized. The Board of Directors may also adopt emergency bylaws, subject to amendments or repeal by the full Board of Directors, which may include provisions necessary for managing the Corporation during an emergency including: (i) procedures for calling a meeting of the Board of Directors; (ii) quorum requirements for the meeting; and (iii) designation of additional or substitute Directors. The emergency bylaws shall remain in effect during the emergency and shall be revoked after the Board of Directors has deemed that the emergency has ended.

Check to see if your state law contains such a statute.

Adopting the two provisions

Churches will need to research whether these provisions are authorized by their state's nonprofit corporation statute. These provisions may need to be modified to fit the state law requirements. If authorized, churches will need to amend their bylaws in the manner prescribed by the existing bylaws or state nonprofit corporation statute.

For congregationally lead churches, the members usually must approve bylaws amendments in a properly noticed and called in-person meeting. For board governed churches without members, the board of directors must approve the bylaws amendments in a properly noticed and called in-person meeting.

In many states, a majority vote is required to amend the bylaws but some state laws and bylaws require a two-thirds vote to approve the bylaws amendments. If the government authorities are prohibiting in-person meetings, then the amendments will have to wait until an in-person meeting can be convened. □

Supreme Court... continued from page 1

Thankfully even the court's more liberal justices agreed the language present in RFRA allowed for "appropriate relief", and that could absolutely include money damages against officials. Let's praise the Lord for this decision and pray that it dissuades future religious discrimination from occurring. □

**"God, you're such a safe and powerful
place to find refuge!
You're a proven help in time
of trouble—
more than enough and always
available whenever I need you."
Psalms. 46:1, (The Passion)**

How to Ensure... continued from page 2

New members need to understand the board's type of governance. Does it follow a policy governance model or is it more of a decision-making or operational board? Help individuals know what that means for them specifically and what their roles are. They should also be made aware of the overall organizational chart of the ministry, their primary contact for questions, and information about various committees and terms of service.

Keeping Up the Momentum

Ongoing training should be considered as part of each agenda or at least at regular intervals (e.g., quarterly). The topics can vary, but they should eventually cover all areas of key oversight. Encourage ministry leaders to bring information regarding their involvement in different programs and the effect of those programs.

Be sure there is specific training provided for committees such as finance and personnel. Information can change rapidly in these areas, and the effect can be significant; you can't risk being out-of-date. A broader perspective with updates should be provided to the overall board, so that they are aware of the risks and have the necessary knowledge to make decisions.

Potential topics for board member training include:

- Risk management
- Understanding financial statements
- Human resource compliance
- Housing allowance and tax matters
- Internal control structure
- How to build reserves
- Budgeting for ministry
- Legal exposure

Bringing in Outsiders

An outside perspective for some of the training may be beneficial. Qualified individuals in your church can provide great

context and invaluable history, and sometimes it's appropriate to tap into the expertise of a specialist, whether that specialist is an attorney, HR consultant, or CPA. A specialist could also be a facility expert, a banker, or someone from within the denomination. Any outside resource, though, must understand what you are seeking to accomplish, and they must be well-versed in how ministries operate. As there are many unique areas in a church, the trainer must clearly understand them.

Board training needs to be a joint effort between the board and leadership. Colossians 3:23 reminds us that whatever we do should be done with excellence, and serving as a board member (along with assisting those who do) should be no exception. Any training plan you create will certainly be adjusted over time, but the important first step is to start with an idea of what constitutes effective training and how it can be accomplished. □

Stay on Fire... continued from page 2

we fall under anointing, we begin to expect marriage proposals and employment and business opportunities. This generation of church members in our time don't have genuine encounters with the Jesus, the Man of Calvary. No generation has carried Bibles like us without opening it. No generation has been as materially driven like ours and we expect the land to obey us.

Jesus said, pray to the Father that He brings His Kingdom here on earth. Let's build up our spiritual life and be a signpost to point people to Christ. Remember, if you miss heaven most assuredly you will never miss hell. Think about it. Hell isn't a pretty place to go. Do the work of an evangelist now by sharing this message with your contacts. Have you ever wondered what would happen if we treated the Holy Bible the way we treat our mobile phone; as if we couldn't live without the BIBLE.

May the Almighty God grant good success to everyone who reads and sends this message out in Jesus' mighty name Amen. ♥

ANNOUNCEMENT

CHARTER RENEWAL DEADLINE

Charters under the PCAI 501(c) (3) Group Exemption have been mailed their annual renewal report packet. It is also available on our website at www.paragonchristianalliance.org, under "Resources" tab in a PDF file. It is important that your report be received in our office no later than

March 28th.



The reports and renewals are in compliance with the IRS code to maintain your charter's tax-exempt status under the PCAI Group Tax Exemption.

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

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