

# the Informer newsletter

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER |  
PARAGON CHRISTIAN ALLIANCE  
INTERNATIONAL & PCAI CLERGY  
ASSOCIATION

NOVEMBER 2023 – ISSUE 11



## ENTER HIS GATES WITH THANKSGIVING

By Dr. Elizabeth Foy, PCAI Executive Board

*“I Will Enter His Gates ...”*  
(Psalm 100:4)

Not only are these words the beginning of a familiar scripture, but for those of you who remember the early days of the ‘Charismatic Renewal’ you will recognize they’re also a favorite chorus. The rest of the phrase is “... with thanksgiving in my heart”.

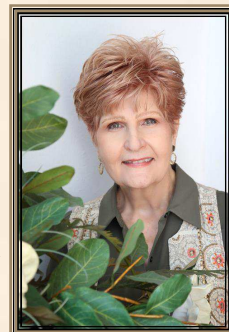
Yet as I attend church each week I find the above expression is not always what I see on faces in the sanctuary. Perhaps, like me, you find Sunday can be the hardest, most stressful, and fastest-lived day of the week. And I’m not exempt from times of being ‘less than thrilled’ with the pace that Sundays seem to set for us -- at times a far cry from God’s intended day of rest.

I fully realize that most of you reading this are ministers, thus Sunday truly is the hardest work day of the week. But I would like us to think about the fact that attitude goes a long way toward determining how hard or stressful a day is -- not necessarily the amount of work or type of task to be done.

When I reflect on David writing this psalm, I wonder if he was recalling past days of Israel’s history – years spent in captivity when they were unable to formally enter the “gates of the Lord”. Was he thankful that, unlike those before him, he could willingly, cheerfully go to the house of the Lord to give thanks for HIS goodness?



As so much in our world changes, and the political climate grows more cold toward Christianity, it behooves us to be thankful for our privilege of worship.



Yes, I know we can worship anywhere, anytime. We can worship alone or with our families in our homes. But there is something about gathering with others to publicly acknowledge HIM. As one line in a song goes ... “Here I am to worship, here I am to bow down, here I am to say that you’re my God”. I feel as though I am occupying till HE comes when I take my worship outside the safe boundaries of my home. And when I go publicly to a building known to be set aside for HIM, then I openly declare to the world my commitment to serve HIM.

Our freedom to worship Christ has come at a high price for many. Let us treasure it this Thanksgiving season. What a heritage has been handed down to us -- beginning with the ones who first landed on this continent. Those early Americans did not have a lot of physical comforts for which to give thanks. Likewise, we must never get caught in the deception of being thankful for only the things HE has provided. Instead, let us mature and be thankful for WHO we are privileged to worship. May we never take for granted our privilege to freely enter HIS gates! ♥

# Choices... God Give Them to Us

By Dr. Henry Harbuck, PCAI General Overseer



**Matthew 25:23  
(NIDB)**

*“Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over some little things. [Come now!] Enter into a state of blessedness and share in your master’s joy!”*

An oft repeated mistake in ministry (and one which I too have been guilty of) is placing someone in authority before they were fully equipped to handle the responsibility. This often happens because we are prone to appoint someone based on his or her personality, talent, or ministry gifts. But when someone is appointed to do an important job, yet has not proven themselves responsible in small things, it is fruitless to believe they can successfully manage a more significant assignment.

God, in His wisdom, gives each of us choices. First, He gives

each one the opportunity to prove him or herself in the handling of small matters. Then, if our choices in these things prove to be expedient, we are qualified to handle bigger issues. A person, who is a good servant, will do three things when asked by a superior to perform a task:

- 1) He or she will be disciplined in the task to which they are assigned (Luke 16:2);
- 2) He or she will be determined to carry out the assignment successfully (Galatians 6:9) without regard for the difficulty of the task; and
- 3) He or she will be delighted to have been chosen by a superior who has confidence in their abilities.

I am convinced that one’s spiritual intimacy with God determines the amount of effort a person puts forth in implementing a task. True faith in God is exhibited by total obedience to the task assigned, whether by God directly or

Godly leadership. If you believe God is leading the one in authority to assign the task, how can you be slack in your performance? We must trust God to know when we are ready, what we are ready to handle, and how much responsibility we are equipped for.

Let’s consider “faithfulness.” A good example is found in “The Parable of the Talents and Three Servants (Matthew 25:14-30). In this story the landowner (v.15) gives three servants financial portions according to their inherent abilities in the same way that God gives us certain portions according to our inherent abilities. When he called the three of them to give an account of how they handled his money, he commended two of them (vv.21, 23) who held their responsibility in high regard, and said to them, “Enter into a state of blessedness (peace and happiness) and share in your master’s joy!” And in each case he said, “Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over some little things. [Come now!] Enter into a state of blessedness and share in your master’s joy!” (New Millennium In-Depth Bible) But the third servant was fearful (vv.24-30), and lacked

confidence [and faith] in himself and his master. He even said that his master was “severe,” meaning “He was harsh and a cheapskate.” So the master takes away the money he gave the fearful and faithless servant (v.28) and gives it to the servant who had faithfully used the five talents he had received (v.20).

What does this parable in Matthew 25:14-30 reveal to us? That you and I will *not* be held responsible for what God gives to someone else, only what He gives us. The keynote of this parable is: Faithfulness in what the master assigned us, and trusting his confidence in our ability to perform it.

God wants to trust you... are you ready? You have a **choice.** ♥

## Spiritual Exercise More Valuable Than Physical Exercise

By Pastor Lynn Burling

**1 Timothy 4:8 (GNT)**  
*“Physical exercise has some value, but spiritual exercise is valuable in every way.”*

An introduction to what are spiritual things worthy of our pursuits and how profitable, and how they are valued. The amplified translation says *“Train yourself toward Godliness, piety, keeping yourself spiritually fit.”*

We’ve all seen body builders who’ve gone overboard to

impress us with their muscular physiques, and some have gone so far as being out of proportion for a natural look. It took them months, years, and special diets, and who knows what other additives to achieve their goals. Truth is, what is the eternal value of such endeavors? None. However, *spiritual exercise* profits for much, more value now, and in achieving his purpose for you and the ministry He’s called you to. One such person was Paul, who received great revelation of the Holy Spirit’s workings in a believer, even to a point of excellence and balance to contribute to the Kingdom and become a model

of what the Spirit has planned for all His sons and daughters. It is a literal promise of here and now, and what is to come; *“And when He, the Holy Spirit, comes, He will show you things to come, (sounds like future plans to me) and will bring all things to your remembrance.”* (things that I told you).

A “true” spiritual person is Led By The Spirit...including and especially the Five-Fold ministry. A few excerpts – examples: ... “And the Spirit led them”; “and the Spirit bade him go”; “and the Spirit said ‘No, don’t go’”; and the Spirit hindered him”; “and the Spirit stopped him”; “and the Spirit took him away”; “and they were filled with the Spirit”; “and



the Spirit said ‘Join yourself to the Chariot’”; “and the Spirit said “separate unto me Saul and Barnabas””. It seems the scripture is replete with men and women who knew something of spiritual encounters. He (Holy Spirit) was their guide walking alongside of them. They waited on Spirit instruction and unction.

*Continued on page 4*

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## ✓ Year-End Checklist for Church/Ministry Bookkeepers

*Excerpt from Christian Law Association*

**1. Housing Allowance.** Church Boards and/or Congregations should designate an annual 2024 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 2024 becomes effective that day even if it is backdated to 2023. **It is not deductible for 2023.** One exception: **Checks postmarked in 2023 are deductible in 2023 — even though not received until 2024.**

**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.

**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 2024 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 2024. 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](http://www.IRS.gov)).

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

**Jan Harbuck, Ph.D.**  
Church Tax/Law Specialist-PCAI Office  
Call: 1-866-268-5600 |  
Email: [info@paragonchristianalliance.org](mailto:info@paragonchristianalliance.org)



## 2024 Charter Renewal Deadline: **MARCH 28TH**

**ATTENTION: For 501(c)(3) Chartered Ministries & Churches under PCAI Group Exemption ONLY!**

Charters under the PCAI Group 501(c)(3) Group Exemption will receive their Charter Renewal Yearly Report Packet in January. OR, Forms are also available in our website: [www.paragonchristianalliance.org](http://www.paragonchristianalliance.org) under "Resources" tab.



**It is important that your report be received in our office no later than March 28th.**

These renewals are **necessary to remain in compliance** with the IRS code and maintain your charter's tax-exempt status under the PCAI Group Exemption.

**PLEASE REVIEW:** *This is a good time to review your monthly giving obligation to ensure you are up-to-date on your ministerial and charter giving. These must be current in order for your 501(c)(3) to be renewed in 2024.*

## Spiritual Exercise... continued from page 2

**Mark 1:12** “*And the Holy Spirit drove him*”, **Luke 4:14** “*and Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit*”. Following his steps to the synagogue, he took the scrolls and read from Isaiah, He said “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me to anoint me”... and Jesus’ followers knew how to operate in the Spirit. Another word for OPERATE is **FUNCTION!** Just to teach us Jesus’ own personal spirit, he groaned at Lazarus’ tomb, showing he was moved, touched and affected by our infirmities.

“*If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit*” (**Gal 5:25 ESV**). Jesus told the woman at the well, “**God is Spirit**”, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth. In 1 Cor. 14, it tells us exactly what spiritual prayer is. “*If any man pray in tongues, it is our spirit that prayeth.*” Trust me, I would much rather the Holy Spirit direct my prayers any day, than me. (Our spirit prays with a great sense of exchange). Watch this: We pray mysteries unto God in the Spirit. Praying, in the Spirit means, the Spirit empowers the prayer and carries it to the Father in the name of Jesus. Paul nails this in saying that he speaks in tongues more than anyone (sounds like he found a key). He says (**1 Cor. 14:6**) “*How shall I benefit you unless I bring some revelation or knowledge, or prophecy, or teaching* (keep reading). **Vs 12** *So with yourselves, you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit (given to me to give to you). Strive to excel in building up the Church.*” Your ability to “**Build Up**” the church is how “**Spiritually Fit**” you are!

**I stress that spending time like Paul, praying in the Holy Spirit, is essential for the type of manifestations the Five-Fold must deliver in the anointing to help the Church.** I need bodily exercise and it does help, but spiritual exercise profits much more in spiritual matters.

Our personal prayer, in the Holy Spirit, builds you up – like physical exercise builds up in the flesh. When we do, the Spirit “stirs” our senses to know what and how to deliver His prophetic words of knowledge and wisdom, healing, or any manifestation of the Spirit. I’m even doing more than quenching “Fiery Darts”. My spirit starts overruling my soulish desires, my God life starts overruling my soul life. In other words, my 5 senses get dominated by the power of the Holy Spirit. If I do that, then my understanding is that of the Almighty God, and I’ve got the mind of Christ.

When I pray in the Spirit, I don’t know what to pray, but fruitfulness kicks in from His revelation to us to be activated for the right purposes. “We” do not operate out of the soulish realm. When Jesus said “you are of your father the devil, because you listen to his words”, Jesus tells me I won’t listen to another because the words He speaks, they are Spirit and they are life. Jesus’ words do not go for our intellect...His words go for the heart. The parable of the sower in **Luke 8 & Mark 4** says *that when the word is sown, it is sown-in-the-heart!...*” *Then cometh the devil and taketh away the word out of their hearts.*” It took *spiritual exercise* to read, listen and discern, so that our *spiritual muscle memory* can be strengthened.

Your **spirit** is God life, your **soul** is your life, and your **body** is your carrying life. Exercise both – one is the temple and one is His life in you, working His good pleasure.

Let us carefully understand that we do spiritual things through our spirit, although emphasized by **the Spirit**. When His Spirit is present with our spirit, although empowered by the Spirit. When His “S” (**Spirit**) is present with our “s” (**spirit**), everything takes on a greater dimension. When Jesus said, “*and greater things shall you do*”, he knew the additions of the Holy Spirit is the Great Enabler, the Comforter, one called alongside to help. God designed us for the capacity of the Holy Spirit’s presence in our clay pots.

Let us pray in the Holy Spirit that we may speak, teach and prophesy His mysteries, revelation or manifestations of The Spirit! ♥

## Did You Know???



Over the past years many have adopted the convenience of using PayPal to send their monthly offering. It gives the certainty your giving arrives each month in a timely fashion. We appreciate that thoughtfulness.

One thing you may not have considered is the loss to ministry funds that giving online creates. We get a lower percentage held out due to being tax exempt but over a month’s time and many users it normally adds up to \$500-\$600 a month that PayPal keeps.

Please pray about adding a few dollars to your offering to help offset this loss. We understand everyone is hurting these days with the decline in our economy but we wanted to make you aware in order that you might be able to help.

**PCAI Thanksgiving Holiday Office Hours: The PCAI Office will be closed on November 22, 2023 and re-opened on November 27th to give our dedicated staff time with their families. However, we will be checking the voicemail, emails, and processing mail during this time.**



## PCAI IS HERE TO SERVE YOU!

- Ministerial Credentials     501c3 for Your Ministry under our “Group Status”
- Prayer Support & More!

“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  
 PHONE: 1-866-268-5600 | FAX: (318) 345-0350  
 EMAIL: [info@paragonchristianalliance.org](mailto:info@paragonchristianalliance.org)  
 WEBSITE: [www.paragonchristianalliance.org](http://www.paragonchristianalliance.org)  
 OFFICE HOURS: 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM (M-F) CST