



POWER LUNCH

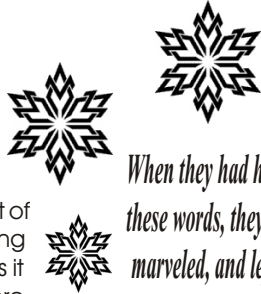
January 2005

Bringing Worship to the Workplace

Founder's Message

Don't Play Their Game

In the Gospel of Matthew verse 22:21, we see Jesus in the midst of another controversy. This time it is the Pharisees that are seeking to catch Jesus in a moral quandary by posing the question, "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar?" Jesus replies, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." Apparently, they thought that Jesus might be one of the many leaders seeking to make a political or popular name for themselves by opposing the oppressive Roman regime that ruled their people. However, Jesus' concern is much more lofty, yet much more practical. In his brief response, he rejects their notion that to recognize human authority is to deny Godly authority. Instead, he says that each is to be given the acknowledgement it deserves.


When they had heard these words, they marveled, and left him, and went their way.

Matthew 22:22 (KJV)

In a society that teaches us absolute right vs. absolute wrong, blue states vs. red states, and win at all costs, there is not much room for paradoxes. A paradox is a seemingly contradictory idea that actually points to a higher truth. In this instance, Jesus takes the Pharisees' question of Government vs. God and points to the higher common truth of authority. The reality is that Jesus is not a partisan for many of the persons who invoke his name to justify their policy opinions or even personal opinions for that matter. There are a number of lessons here that I feel we, as believers, should learn to practice.

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Stepping Up to the Plate

By Jamaal Piper

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; be not frightened, neither be dismayed; for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go. (Joshua 1:9)

My older cousin invited me to Power Lunch over a year ago. He was constantly telling me how much he enjoyed the service and how it would be a blessing to me if I attended. Around the same time, my family was in the process of building a nonprofit organization focusing on youth that had been a vision of ours for a long time. During this process, my mother took a leave of absence from the company she built and ran for over 15 years to take an appointed position with Prince Georges County, MD government. The responsibility to proceed with the vision of the nonprofit so that it wouldn't die, fell on me.



Jamaal Piper

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January's Monthly Focus is Mind & Spirit

It is God's desire that we prosper and be in good health even as our soul, the convergence of both mind and spirit, prospers (3 John 1:2). This month, Power Lunch will focus on aligning our renewed mind or way of thinking with the life force of God that indwells our spirit. We will also highlight mental health, which oftentimes is a health issue that goes ignored in the African-American community.

Founder & DC Host Minister



The Rev. Matthew L. Watley

Happy New Year!



Behold, I will do a new thing... (Isaiah 43:19)

The Lord is doing a new thing for the Power Lunch Ministry. To begin 2005 with a new and fresh look, *The Power Lunch Newsletter* has undergone a radical transformation. This is just the beginning. Look forward to more awesome transformations this year!

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

Founder's Message
Don't Play Their Game
By The Rev. Matthew L. Watley

Stepping Up to the Plate
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January's Monthly Focus

Power Lunch's 2005
Calendar of Events

You Get Double Credit

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First off, Jesus is obviously suspicious of any question posed to him by the Pharisees. Oftentimes, we give the benefit of the doubt to individuals and persons who have already proven that they are not trustworthy. The reality is oftentimes we don't have a choice in having to interact with them, but we can choose the extent to which we let down our defenses. As you begin this new year, it may serve you well to consider who within your immediate sphere of influence might sometimes operate from a Pharisaic perspective. Unfortunately, many persons operate with less than honorable motives. Your awareness of their true agenda is often sufficient to dampen their effectiveness.

The second thing I like about Jesus' response is that it rejects their premise. They set up an "A" or "B" scenario and Jesus chooses "C." Jesus refuses to play their game. Many times in life we are presented with issues that seem to require a choice between equally bad options. We must always be careful to ask if these are really the only options that are available to me. Do I really have to work for someone I can't stand, or can I work for myself, which I'm afraid to do? The answer is no. You can do both at the same time, or you can find a job that allows you more entrepreneurial freedom. You could also invest in and create income that is not defined by the hours that you serve at your desk.

Thirdly, I like the fact that Jesus has nothing to prove. When you read the entirety of the passage, you'll discover that the Pharisees had spent a considerable amount of time and energy creating the question posed to Jesus. Their question is like the one question your teacher always posed on your final exam that required a three-page essay to answer, and you still got it wrong. The reason why the question is so tricky is because if he said it was not lawful to pay taxes, he would be at odds with the Roman government, but if he said yes, he would be at odds with the religious community. Because Jesus feels he has nothing to prove to either party, he does not confine his answer to trying to please a particular group. His self-assurance allows him the freedom to see a larger possibility and a higher truth.

That brings me to the fourth and most important reason why I love Jesus' response. It tells us that we can be good Christians and good citizens, and that we should not allow the classifications of others to define us. Whether those labels are liberal, goodie-two-shoes, or naïve, we know that our character is not affected by the words of others. Moreover, it reminds us that we have an obligation to our fellow man (the purpose of government) and to God, the creator of everything.

Continued from Page 1 **Stepping Up to the Plate**

I was not fearful or apprehensive about it. However, the biggest question I asked God and myself was, "Where do I start?" Attending Power Lunch weekly gave me timely leadership lessons from a Godly perspective on how to deal with the rigors and frustration of attempting to birth something as well as the trials, tribulations and setbacks that come from dealing with circumstances and people that I cannot control. One of the key components of anyone in a leadership position is problem solving. No matter how much of a master plan may be in place, things can happen where one is forced to adjust and move quickly to find resolution. Power Lunch and Rev. Watley's teachings have helped prepare me for when those times come and have helped me to understand that I am not by myself and things will get better.

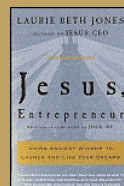
Today, things are moving forward with the nonprofit and God has shown me not to put a ceiling on where it can go. I have faith that God will put the people and resources around me to insure that it will happen. I have recently joined to Leadership Team of Power Lunch, and I am looking forward to the blessing I can be to the ministry. I know that serving will be a blessing to me. Being connected to a dynamic ministry that is moving forward is exactly where I need to be. The Lord wouldn't have it any other way.

Jamaal Piper serves on the Leadership Team of Power Lunch.

Announcements**Pick Up Your Copy Today!**

Rev. Watley's latest series in leadership lessons comes from Laurie Beth Jones' *Jesus, Entrepreneur!* Copies are now available at Power Lunch. Visit our sales table today and purchase your copy.

STAY TUNED FOR FEBRUARY'S EDITION OF THE POWER LUNCH NEWSLETTER!

**2005 PL CALENDAR****DATES OF SPECIAL SERVICES ARE TO BE DETERMINED****January**

Mind & Spirit Month

February

Black History Month

MarchPL's 2nd Annual Small Business Conference**April**

Family & Friends Day

May

Crusade for Christ

June

Men's Month

JulyPL 3rd Annual Home Buyers Seminar**August**

Spirituality & Leadership Month

SeptemberPL's 4th Anniversary**October**

PL's Centurian Celebration

November

PL Focuses on Health

December

Women's Month

Save these dates!**You Get Double Credit!**

If you think I'm done talking about why Matthew 22:21b is so important, think again. There is another curious thing about this text. It appears that there are two separate ledgers to which we are held accountable, governmental and godly. However, in the economy of God, there is now an opportunity for overlap. When we give to God in our tithes and offerings, the government must also acknowledge our gift and give us credit on our taxes. It's like you get double credit. I'm happy to say that we have completed our year-end statements, and they are ready for you to share with Uncle Sam the "Good News" of your stewardship with Power Lunch. If you'll be paying more taxes for last year then you are happy about, you should start now to give regularly with Power Lunch. You'll be surprised by the end of the year, how it can help lower your bill and raise your harvest in the kingdom at the same time.

PL is held Wednesdays in Union Station's AMC Movie Theatre 50 Mass. Ave. NE DC 11:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.