



Challenge Newsletter

Being Christ in the Workplace

Galatians
2:20

July, 2014

Christ in the Workplace

"Make It a Great Day!"

by: Rich Preuss

Our business has four core values: Do the Right Thing, Love Wins, Be Better, and Make It a Great Day. Each focuses on action. We chose "Make It a Great Day" instead of "Have a Great Day" because we have a choice each day to make it a great day or passively let the day happen to us.

We have all experienced people who are life-giving. They radiate a peace in their lives that makes us want to be around them. Jesus was that way. If we are to be Christ in our workplaces, we need to be the salt that brings out the flavor of life (Matthew 5:13).

It is important that all employees embrace the value of making it a great day. We want everyone who enters our building each day — client, colleague, supplier, or service person — to experience an environment that enriches them through the joy and peace they experience from our employees.

Many days begin with the owners wandering through the building, visiting with our employees, catching up, joking, or exchanging pleasantries. It is a time to encourage each other and begin the day with a positive outlook. Throughout the day we all see each other, creating a joyful work environment.

I jokingly tell people Friday is the worst day of the week because we will not see each other for two days. I really think our people enjoy walking through the front door on Monday.

Daily we have vendors coming through our doors engaging in conversation with our people. Copier repairmen, computer people, cleaning people, and many others enter our environment and experience the "salt" of our life at work.

Once, our cleaning lady asked me to handle her financial matters. She wasn't my ideal prospect. Talk about salt; she had the saltiest language I had ever

heard from a woman! Over time, we became good friends and I was able to encourage her in her faith. At her funeral, her son told me how much she had cherished our relationship.

Last year a physician friend told me he gave each of his employees money prior to Christmas, telling them to help someone with it. The idea fit in well with making it a great day for someone. So last November, at our monthly birthday celebration time, we gathered all 34 of our people together and gave each an envelope with a \$100 bill inside, telling them to do something for someone during the Christmas season. The joy in the room was palpable. Some employees made comments like, "This is the best place I have ever worked."

There was no tracking what the employees did with the money. We were on the honor system. We asked people to be open to sharing what they did at our Christmas party. Incredible stories came from this. Making it a great day became real. The word was made flesh. The goodwill it generated was tremendous.

We love God because he loved us first (1 John 4:19). Encouraging this type of attitude in our office helps us to see the reality of God's love in our coworkers throughout each workday. The sense of caring transforms our environment; we enjoy our daily work. We are choosing to make each day great and experiencing the presence of God in the ordinary circumstances of work.

Make it a great day!

Rich Preuss is the owner of the Healy Group, an independent insurance and financial firm. He is a member of the CIC Board of Directors, and also serves on the board of the LaSalle Company. He and his wife, Beth, have ten children and reside in Granger, IN. Rich may be reached at richpreuss@healygroup.com.

Upcoming Events

Men's Weekends

Greater Phoenix Area

July 26-28, 2014,
September 26-28, 2014
November 14-16, 2014

South Bend/Elkhart

September 19-21, 2014

Salinas Valley

November 14-16, 2014

Women's Weekends

WCIC-Fresno

August 22-24, 2014

Annual Conference

October 17-18, 2014

Christians in Commerce News

Remembering Chuck Wagner

Monterey Challenge Weekend

Please send your stories to:

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Life Pleasing to God

week 1

"An Excellent Spirit"

by: Frank Marshall

Then this Daniel distinguished himself above the governors and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king gave thought to setting him over the whole realm. (Daniel 6:3, NKJV)

Daniel lived his life in such a way that others said of him, "He has an excellent spirit." Why did they say that? How did he conduct his life?

Daniel influenced the life of his boss. *But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. (Daniel 1:8, NKJV)* Daniel committed his life to God first and foremost. He asked his boss for permission to live up to his personal commitment to God. Daniel was blessed for his faith and dedication to God. His boss observed the favor on Daniel's life and gave him a promotion for it!

Daniel influenced the lives of his peers. In the third chapter of Daniel, we read these words from the mouths of his closest friends: *If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up. (Daniel 3:17)* The way that Daniel lived his life was so influential on his friends that they were willing to sacrifice their own lives rather than compromise that which they had dedicated to God.

Daniel influenced the lives of his competitors. For many years, Daniel benefitted from his dedication to God. His competitors saw it and sought to undermine him. Have you ever had a similar experience? What did Daniel do? ... He knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days. (Daniel 6:10) What was the result? They threw him in the lion's den! Wow, I thought dedicating myself to God meant that bad

things wouldn't happen to me. Have patience... God is working, though we do not yet see the final result.

God honored Daniel's commitment and shut the mouths of the lions. Daniel got out of the trap his competitors set for him. God got the glory! Daniel always gave God the glory. You and I should do the same.

Daniel was honored by his boss, appreciated by his friends, and despised by his competition. In all circumstances, good and bad, Daniel kept his eyes on the Lord. He trusted God every day. He did the right thing. He led by example. It was a powerful influence on others. It still is!

We often feel we are not spiritual "leaders". We say things like, "I am not a priest. I am not a pastor. I am not a deacon or an elder." We underestimate the importance of our influence on the lives of others. We miss the fact that God wants to use each of us — spiritually — to influence other people. The way you live your life speaks much louder than the words you use! Live in such a way that others will say, "There is something different about you; something good, something holy; something right. I want that for myself too!"

Will you be purposeful like Daniel? If you have invited Jesus Christ to be Lord of your life, then the Spirit of God lives in you. Therefore, you have an excellent spirit, just like Daniel. Embrace it. Proclaim it. Live it! By God's grace and through the power of the Holy Spirit, you can do it! I challenge you to yield to the Holy Spirit and say, "Let it be to me according to your word."

If you have not asked Jesus to be Lord of your life, pray and ask today! There are people here who will help you. They will pray with you. God will hear you and give you an excellent spirit! This is a life pleasing to God!

Pastor Frank is an assisting minister at Desert Chapel in Palm Springs, CA. He has been a member of the Palm Springs Chapter since March, 2012. He and his wife, Dorinda, have four grown sons and one grandson. He can be reached at Pastor.FrankMarshall@gmail.com.

Pray: Father, help me live my life in such a way that others will come to know and love you.

Reflect: When you are under pressure, what words do you use? How do they influence your actions? What impact do they have on the lives of others?

Discuss: What can I do that will make me know God is in charge of my life? In what ways can I humble myself as Daniel did?

Men's July Reflections

week 2

Personal Sacrifice

by: Gary Brown

But seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. (Matthew 6:33)

I dislike difficult times as much as the next person. However, since the day Jesus and I forged a relationship, struggles have always brought us closer together.

Struggles give us greater insight into our faith. They strengthen our relationship with Jesus. They restore any diminished appreciation for his love. Though our hope and faith may get dinged during serious struggles, we are reminded that his love never waivers.

A lack of challenges in life can cause us to become complacent. At a seminar, one speaker, a millionaire many times over, said he rarely experiences life struggles. But this man realized that a lack of struggle could be spiritually unhealthy. Whenever he recognized this occurring, he would pray for God to give him struggles so as to avoid spiritual complacency.

When life is going great and everything is rosy, let us not stray from seeking his Kingdom first. The next part of the above verse mentions righteousness, which the dictionary defines as morality.

This scripture is a success formula for spiritual balance. When we seek his Kingdom first and strive to live a moral life, it can help us to encounter fewer difficulties. Even when challenges come our way, we will weather them with greater strength and faith. Straying from this formula is when we fall into trouble.

Pray: Help me, Lord, to seek first your Kingdom and your righteousness every day.

Reflect: How much of my day is spent seeking God? Am I striving to live a moral life? Where do I fall down?

Discuss: When or how do I stray from seeking his Kingdom and his righteousness?

week 3

Making a Difference in the Workplace

by: Gary Brown

... our hope for you is firm, for we know that as you share in the sufferings, you also share in the encouragement. (2 Corinthians 1:7)

A couple of months ago I believed the Holy Spirit planted in me the idea to start a business prayer group at the real estate office where I work.

Real estate is commission-based earnings. Some wildly succeed, but the vast majority is likely struggling. Financial struggles can easily trickle down and negatively affect other parts of our lives. It was my hope that a business prayer group would encourage and bring hope to those in need. The office manager was contacted for her approval. Honestly, I half expected to be shut down. It's corporate America, after all. However, she responded with approval.

A conference room was reserved. Invitations were printed and deposited into over 200 realtor mail slots. The day arrived and I sat in the conference room, waiting for the flood of people who needed prayer, support and encouragement. No one showed up.

Then a CIC brother arrived. He had come to support and encourage me. We talked and prayed. In the following weeks, discouragement hit as I considered the idea a bust. But here I am, writing and sharing about it.

Perhaps the idea will give CIC brothers and sisters the encouragement to organize a business prayer group at their places of employment. I made plans to host another event at my office in the near future and will invite several CIC brothers to join.

One lesson I learned is to not worry about success or failure. The Holy Spirit and Jesus are in control. Our purpose and role is simply to do as they ask, be available and let them work out the details behind the scenes.

Pray: Lord, help me to let go of fear and worry so I can step outside myself to serve you in ways greater than I currently do.

Reflect: Am I letting fear, worry or doubt stop me from hearing the call of the Holy Spirit to serve in new and greater ways?

Discuss: Am I willing to organize a prayer group where I work or socialize that will help bring encouragement and hope to others?

Men's July Reflections

(continued)

week 4

Holding Each Other Accountable

by: Gary Brown

We give thanks to God always for all of you, remembering you in our prayers, unceasingly calling to mind your work of faith and labor of love and endurance in the hope of our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father. (1 Thessalonians 1:2-3)

Members of our chapter organized an appreciation dinner for Darren Handy as he prepared to transition from his role as Arizona Regional Director. We were served a good meal and treated to wonderful and funny stories, both past and present, by his friends and family. The message from every person in attendance was to thank him for his tireless service, availability and leadership.

It was right and good to show appreciation for all Darren has done. Our Christian faith needs men and women like him: capable and able to lead. The evening reminded me that as Christians, we should take time to thank one another for all that we do in service to the Kingdom, for our roles large and small - even the foot soldiers.

There are members who served at the appreciation dinner in varying capacities - organizing, hosting, setting up tables and chairs, preparing food, serving the meal, cleaning up and washing dishes. An enjoyable evening required the dedication and service of many.

There are a lot of Christian men and women who faithfully serve the Kingdom but never receive thanks or acknowledgement because their roles are small, behind the scenes or not entirely visible.

Thanks to all those who serve in various capacities in CIC to make the organization operate, especially those whose service goes unnoticed and unrecognized. Thanks to all who serve at their churches and other organizations in service to the Kingdom. Thanks to those who serve Jesus by being Christ to others when no one else is looking. Every role is important and every servant is vital. Let us remember to express our appreciation and thanks to one another!

Gary Brown is a Past-President of the Mesa Chapter. He has been a member of CIC for seven years. He is married to Tracy, his wife of 25 years, and has two children ages 24 and 19. Gary is the owner of Choice Insurance of Arizona, an independent insurance agency and a realtor with West USA Realty. Gary can be reached at his office (480) 659-0229, cell (480) 600-3259 or via e-mail at gary@choicearizona.com.



2014 Annual Conference: October 17-18, 2014

... and that life was the light of all mankind. (John 1:4)

Join with us as we grow in living the life of Christ - a life that is the light for those we meet in the marketplace. There is a new wave of the Spirit and evangelization sweeping across our land! We are a part of this as we build his kingdom and share his Gospel in our workplaces.

The 2014 Annual Conference will take place October 17-18th at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in San Jose, CA.

Go to christiansincommerce.org/2014EarlyBird to register now and get the Early Bird discount!

Pray: Lord, help me to remember to express thanks and appreciation to all who cross my path that are in service to your Kingdom.

Reflect: Do I take time to thank others for serving me, whether it is at CIC, church or elsewhere?

Discuss: In what ways do others serve me every day? How can I show my appreciation?

Women's July Reflections

week 2

Personal Sacrifice

by: Caren Demetre

For I know the plans I have in mind for you... plans for your welfare not for woe... when you call me, and come and pray to me, I will listen to you. When you look for me, you will find me. (Jeremiah 29:11-13, USCCB)

Over Easter weekend, I had plans: Attend services on Good Friday, celebrate my quadriplegic son Josh's 40th birthday on Saturday, and on Easter Sunday, attend church and then a family dinner. My plans were changed dramatically.

At noon on Good Friday, an ambulance took Josh to the ER. He was having a very difficult time breathing, even with his ventilator. His breathing got worse in the ER. They tried changing his trachea tube, but couldn't get it back in. Josh stopped breathing, which is a "code blue". Thanks to the heroic efforts and ingenuity of the ER staff, he finally started breathing again. He had pneumonia with complications.

When Josh was stable enough Saturday afternoon, he was transferred to the ICU. As the staff was settling Josh into his room, his ICU nurse said, "God bless you." We thanked him, and he added, "Do you think of all the ICU rooms in this hospital that your son was sent to my room by accident?"

As Josh became more stable on Sunday, he was worried about my energy and level of stamina. He organized a schedule for the family members to be present with him at all times. His biological dad would have the early morning shift, my husband and I would have the day shift, and Josh's girlfriend would have the night shift. Here he was, barely able to breath, yet his concern was for others.

From the beginning I was praying constantly, "Lord God, help." My CIC sisters and brothers were also praying. Josh was released from the hospital in four days because he has 24-hour nursing care at home. At this writing, he is recovering. We found God in the ER staff, in the Christian ICU nurse, and in the love, prayers and support of all who surrounded us.

week 3

Redeeming Our Father's Creation

by: Caren Demetre

You have heard that it was said, "Love your neighbor and hate your enemy." But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5: 43-45)

I am a transaction coordinator for my husband, Doug, who is a real estate agent. We also have a national lease option company through which we assist buyers and sellers with a process that enables buyers to purchase a home.

While Doug and I were out of town recently, we received a call from home saying we had been served with a court summons. The buyer and seller of one of our lease option properties were having a dispute that escalated into a law suit and included our company in the litigation. The first words out of my mouth were, "Are you kidding me, after everything we have done for these people?" Doug and I had been mediating with the buyer and seller for months, negotiating and trying to settle their disagreement. We had worked hard to create an environment of trust to enable each party to work through the friction toward a positive outcome.

My husband's serene composure prevailed and we started praying right away, both for the person who instigated the suit and the other party involved. My WCIC weekly meeting was the afternoon we returned home. I shared my story and added that we did not want to be involved in a lawsuit. My group prayed with me. When Doug and I saw an attorney, he was reassuring and advised us that we could be removed from the case, which he did. We were successfully deleted from the suit.

It was difficult to pray for the instigator and not to worry about the uncertainty of a lawsuit. But we immediately put our confidence in our Father, who took care of the results.

Pray: Father, help me to trust the plans you have for me, to rely on you to know what I need, and to be content in any situation.

Reflect: Think about your most recent difficult or despairing situation. How did you manage?

Discuss: Describe what you do when circumstances change your plans.

Pray: Father, when things are at their worst, help us to always remember that you can overcome any difficulties and show us the path you want us to take.

Reflect: Think about a situation in which you are not praying for someone who has wronged you or who is your "enemy".

Discuss: What is in the way? What can help you to start praying for and loving that person?

Women's July Reflections

(Continued)

week 4

The Fruits of Our Relationships as Sisters

by: Caren Demetre

Rejoice in the Lord always... The Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:4-7)

My WCIC group meets in my home on Mondays. While out of town, I encouraged my group to meet in my absence. I praise God that they did, because one sister needed our group that very week, as you will read in her story below, which she has graciously allowed me to share:

"A few weeks ago I had an upsetting confrontation at the end of my work day that left me feeling discouraged, defeated and privately shedding a few tears. It happened on a Monday afternoon, which is also the day my WCIC group meets. When asked how my day went, I responded, 'It stunk, stunk, stinks.' Then I started crying again. I told my group what had happened. During our discussion, one sister asked, 'Don't we know any verses about anxiety?'

"Immediately the words 'be anxious for nothing' popped into my head. At that moment, God was using his Word to begin to give me a release from the pain of the situation I kept clinging to. We prayed together and I went home at peace. I knew the scripture because I had committed the verse to memory many years ago. Peace comes after prayer and supplication with thanksgiving. I did have peace in the situation after we had prayed together. I also needed to confess sin about the self-centered attitude I had. Putting God's Word into our hearts allows him to speak to us through the Spirit.

"Without my WCIC group to challenge, encourage and pray with me, nothing would have happened. We need others praying for us, reading Scripture with us, and holding us accountable for our actions. Through Jesus we can 'rejoice always'!"

Caren Demetre has been a member of CIC since 1998. She and her husband Doug have been married for 29 years and have three adult children. Caren works with Doug in real estate as the transaction coordinator. She is the current co-chair of the WCIC Board. Caren can be reached at demetre2@hotmail.com.

Pray: Father, help me to continue trusting in you. Thank you for showing me that you are always present through my sisters.

Reflect: How or when have you supported someone in a trial or tribulation?

Discuss: What happened while you were ministering to that person and what were the results?

Hope for the Workplace – Christ in You by Bill Dalgetty

Bill Dalgetty, former Christians in Commerce President and Chairman of the Board, draws from his extensive experience in business and ministry to examine the challenges faced by Christians seeking to live out their faith in today's workplace. Readers will discover practical tips for:

- Dealing with a difficult boss or colleague
- Maintaining integrity and ethics in business decisions
- Balancing family and career
- Seeking excellence in one's work
- Caring for co-workers

To purchase the book, visit the Zacchaeus Publications website at www.zacchaeuspublications.com.

* Bill has generously offered to donate all profits from the sales of this book to the ongoing ministry of Christians in Commerce.

Christians in Commerce

NEWS

**Christians in Commerce
Prayer**

Remembering Chuck Wagner



On May 4th, long-time Mesa Chapter member and former CIC Board member Chuck Wagner went to be with the Lord. The following is part of the obituary that was printed in the Fort Dodge local paper, Messenger News:

Charles "Chuck" Wagner, 53, of Humboldt, IA, passed away May 4, 2014 at his home with his family by his side. Chuck is survived by his wife of 29 years, Michelle; his sons, Josh and wife, Rachel of Humboldt and Kody and fiancée, Alyssa of Humboldt; his mother, Janelle Wagner of Humboldt; his brother, Bob Wagner of Humboldt; and a grandson who is due in August. He was preceded in death by his father, Frank Wagner; his grandparents; and his mother-in-law, Virginia "Jenny" Freel-Houghton.

Charles Franklin Wagner, the son of Janelle and Frank Wagner, was born September 12, 1960 in Algona, Iowa. Chuck received his education at St. Cecelia's and Garrigan High School, graduating with the class of 1978. Chuck then attended and graduated from Des Moines Area Community College before returning to work in the family's business, Blacktop Service Company. In 1984, Chuck met

Michelle Freel and on March 23, 1985, the couple was united in marriage. They made their home briefly in Fort Dodge until moving to Mesa, Arizona where they started their family. In 2011, the family returned to Humboldt.

Chuck enjoyed sports and the outdoors, participating in golf, basketball, running, and exploring the Three Rivers Trail with his dog, Mercedes. He will be remembered as a devoted husband and father who loved caring for Michelle and a generous man who would help anyone who needed it. In recent years, Chuck enjoyed his involvement in Christians in Commerce, which helped strengthen his faith. He served on CIC's Board and enjoyed the fellowship and life lessons it gave.

Monterey Challenge Weekend

By: Nelson Gomes

The Monterey Chapter held a Challenge Weekend May 16-18 at Mission San Antonio in Jolon, CA. There were 20 men in attendance, five of whom were there for the first time. The weekend was enjoyed by all and full of faith-filled sharing. Attendees expressed how much they enjoyed being prayed over and receiving the Holy Spirit, along with the great group discussions and openness of the sharings.

Some of the comments included, "Wow, truly comforting!" "I experienced enlightenment to a very high degree", and "I got connected to God on a new level."

Praise God!

Father,

You are my Lord and Creator.

You entrust me with a place of stewardship in your creation.

Fill me with your Holy Spirit:

That he may teach me to pray and live in Christ and as Christ;

That he may teach me love for family, friends and all people. A love that is selfless, humble, and wise;

That he may teach me stewardship of the talents, time, money and possessions you have given me. A stewardship that serves, is generous and brings honor to your name;

That he may teach me faithfulness to your call to Christians in Commerce. A call that unites us and builds your Kingdom in the marketplace.

Through Jesus Christ who is Lord.

Amen

Vision

Expanding the Kingdom by being Christ in the workplace.

Mission

We encourage and equip Christians to live the life of Christ by releasing the power of the Holy Spirit that is in them. We challenge them to be Christ to the people and circumstances in their workplaces by bringing his truth, love, healing, justice and excellence to the marketplace.

Values

As Christians in Commerce, we are an ecumenical organization united with the body of Christ to:

- Know, love and serve God and others
- Embrace the beliefs of the Nicene Creed
- Release the power of the Holy Spirit in worship and work
- Share the time, talents and resources God has entrusted to us
- Enrich member participation in prayer, scripture, family and church life



Christ ALIVE!

Galatians 2:20

“...I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.”

www.christiansincommerce.org



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