



# Christians in COMMERCE

Challenge Newsletter

Being Christ in the Workplace

Galatians  
2:20

January, 2010

## Christ in the Workplace

### A Dental Office that Prays for its Patients

by: Bill Dalgetty

"Our office will be praying for your husband," said Dr. Bill Nanna to Helene, wife of one of Bill's patients, Tom. Bill had performed a root canal on Tom the Friday before Memorial Day a few years ago. On Sunday, Helene called Bill to report that her husband was doing very poorly. From all that she described, Bill thought it was certainly something more serious than a possible infection from a root canal and he suggested that Helene take Tom immediately to the emergency room.

After a couple of days of tests Tom was diagnosed with acute lymphatic leukemia. Bill informed his six person staff and they all started praying for Tom both collectively and individually. "Tom began to undergo treatment for several months and we continued to pray for him," Bill said. "We arranged for a local pastor to call on them to offer his prayer and support. Helene was very appreciative and would stop by the office to give us updates and bring us flowers from her garden. Tom's leukemia later went into remission and Helene asserts that it was a miracle which she attributes to our prayers."

This is not an unusual occurrence for Bill's office. Over the years Bill and his staff have included prayer for patients as a part of their dental practice whenever the opportunity arises and the circumstances warrant. "In the course of treating patients, they will often share certain needs or problems they are experiencing," said Bill. "We will often respond with an offer to pray for them, sometimes on the spot. Other times we will pray for them later."

"A couple of years ago, I arranged for the entire office to attend a Hope for the Workplace seminar conducted by the Northern Virginia Chapter of Christians in Commerce. During the seminar we saw a video of a chemo therapy nurse from California who described how she would pray for each of her cancer patients as she administered chemo therapy, and also serve them in various ways even outside the office.

"Our staff loves to serve. We have a senior independent living center nearby and someone from the office will often pick up our patients for their appointments. We frequently bake them cookies and conduct an annual bingo night for the center.

"Recently Helene called to advise that Tom had come down with the H1N1 flu virus, and because of his weakened immune system, he was hit very hard and went into a coma for four to five days. We immediately began praying for Tom. Several people in the office prepared meals to take to Helene. Tom was barely responsive for almost two weeks. Helene reported, "He is fighting a mighty battle - he just wants to come home. The bed of prayer and support sustains us both." Fortunately, Tom survived and seems to be recovering. Helene is calling it 'another miracle.' She said, 'Without your prayers he would have never survived.'

"What stuck out to me was as soon as Tom came down with the H1N1 flu, Helene called us, a dental office, to ask for prayer."

### Upcoming Events

#### Men's Weekends

- Orange County**  
January 15-17, 2010
- Salinas Valley**  
February 5-7, 2010
- Sacramento**  
March 12-14, 2010
- NoVA**  
March 12-14, 2010
- Salinas/Monterey**  
April 23-25, 2010

#### Women's Weekends

- WCIC-Central Coast**  
March 5-7, 2010
- WCIC-Sacramento**  
March 19-21, 2010
- WCIC-Santa Cruz**  
April 23-25, 2010

### Christians in Commerce News

Phoenix  
Challenge Weekend

Salinas Valley  
Challenge Weekend

South Bend  
Challenge Weekend

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# Life Pleasing to God

## week 1

### Coping With Adversity

by: Greg Aitkens

*"O people of Zion, who live in Jerusalem, you will weep no more. How gracious will he (God) be when you cry for help! As soon as he hears, he will answer you. Although the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, your teachers will be hidden no more; with your own eyes you will see them."* Isaiah 30:19-21

2009 was quite a year! All around us we've seen banks and major financial institutions fail. We've seen staggering unemployment or under-employment for many. We've seen our personal real estate holdings plummet in value. Many of us are "re-thinking" when we can or will retire due to the investment debacle (worst year in 70 years) in 2008. Many of us are experiencing real financial hardship. Money is tight. We may be angry, frustrated and confused about what is happening all around us. For many, these are tough times! Many of us ARE experiencing the "bread of adversity" and the "water of affliction." And if we plug into network news on TV or on the web, we might be exposing ourselves to more negativity. We might be thinking: "when does this end?, how do I retain hope in my (our) future?, how do I not slip into a deep funk or depression about the conditions all around us?."

In John 16:33, Jesus tells us, *"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But be of good cheer (take heart)! I have overcome the world."* Our Lord reminds us that we are not alone. He does not abandon us to our struggles. Jesus has won the victory for us!

But let's say we are thinking that "all this Jesus' victory for us is one thing, but I need a job, and there are none to be had in my area of expertise!" Good question! Despite all the difficulties, the Lord wants us to stay prayerful, and calm. Is the Lord asking us to be open to new opportunities "outside our expertise?" Is he asking us to consider moving to another area to find work? Is he asking us to re-think how we live for him?

Look at the vast richness of resources available to us within CIC. God is at work! Are we plugged into CIC Chapter life in our area? How about a Challenge Group? Have we attended a Challenge Weekend lately? Have we attended a CIC Annual Conference in recent years?

The Lord has poured out his gifts to us in CIC. He pours out his wisdom, discernment, encouragement, support and intercessory prayers to us and for us. He pours out fellowship and friendship to us in our CIC brothers and sisters in Christ. He pours out practical and helpful advice to us especially in troublesome times. He pours out the gifts of his Holy Spirit to provide us vigilance, steadfastness, and sound counsel in tough times. And despite an occasional feeling that this is "only happening to me," we need to look around and count our blessings. There are many far worse off than we!

Perhaps the Lord is asking us now to be even more generous with our time, talent and treasure to assist those around us in dire need. He might be asking us to abandon our "too worldly" ways of thinking and behaving and to seek to live in him in more committed ways. And if we are facing real adversity now, maybe its time to rely and trust more in Jesus and the people he sends us through CIC.

**Pray:** *"Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; say to those with fearful hearts, 'Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you.'"*  
Isaiah 35:3-4

**Reflect:** *How are you coping in these troubled times? Do you rely upon the Lord and your CIC brothers and sisters or are you going it alone on your own power?*

**Discuss:** *Talk about practical steps you are taking now to cope with adversity. Is the Lord asking you to make some changes in your approach?*

# Men's January Reflections

## week 2

### Personal Focus

by: Timothy Rowland

*"Then the king placed Daniel in a high position and lavished many gifts on him. He made him ruler over the entire province of Babylon and placed him in charge of all its wise men." Daniel 2:48*

The Book of Daniel provides good examples of how Christians should respond to our secular government. Daniel was a steward in a foreign land, yet he was faithful to God and his commands. Christians have been marginalized and demonized by many in the media, government, and certainly by Hollywood. Yet, as Christians we have been lavished with many gifts from the King himself. Why does God lavish me with so many gifts? As a good steward, how am I to use these gifts? Does God really make me a ruler over these gifts? What about the "wise men?"

Considering the living standard of the entire world, the poorest Americans have it quite good. This is not to diminish the hardship some people face. So why these gifts? So that I/we can build up his kingdom. The gifts are our time, talent, money and possessions. This is a call to action – a call to be in prayer and to listen to what the Lord is asking each of us to do to restore his kingdom. In my life, CIC has been central to my call. CIC receives much of my time, talents and money. Why? Because it makes a difference in my life, the lives of my fellow CIC members and extends to their workplace, neighborhood and family, and I believe, to our cities, states and country. Where is your call?

Now what about those "wise men?" One view the Lord has shared with me as I have prayed about this passage is my "vote." We are blessed to live in a country where we can periodically pick our leaders. Of course depending on your perspective, we can debate how wise they might be. They are, however, put in positions of authority by us, the voters, and we entrust to them the opportunity to be wise. If in our opinion they fail in their responsibilities, then we periodically have the opportunity to vote for someone else.

I encourage you to read the Book of Daniel with an eye on how he was able to influence a government to do the right thing in the end by his adhering to the Lord's law. We must live our lives in this world considering the eternal kingdom of God. By doing, so we will help restore his kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

## week 3

### Marketplace Focus

by: Timothy Rowland

*"Then Job replied to the Lord: I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted." Job 42:1-2.*

At a recent Challenge Weekend the level of pain from the economy was palatable and reminded me of Job and his trials. I can count at least twenty individuals from family members, CIC members and friends who are unemployed or underemployed. Each one must feel like Job asking where is God in this pain. God never revealed to Job why all of his pain was happening and I suspect for most of my friends going through such difficult times they also want to know "Why?". As Job did, we are living out our days continuing to trust in God.

So what is our role with all of this suffering? We can't take their place nor lessen the pain. In fact, a mature Christian view would suggest we would never want to get in the way of God's plan, especially if there are lessons to be learned. We know that God is in charge and he can do all things and we should not want nor try to thwart his plans. This doesn't mean we can't empathize...we should. We are to walk with our brothers and sisters by praying for them, encouraging them and help when and where possible. The carrying of them is up to Jesus.

There are many grace-filled opportunities for each of us to reach out and walk with brothers and sisters. How? In part, by helping them praise God in spite of and through the hard times – not with trite words, but with genuine love and service. Let us begin!

**Pray:** Come Holy Spirit...show me how I can use my time, talent, money, and possessions to build your kingdom. Grant me the wisdom of Daniel to know how to stand my ground when challenged by the world or to be more generous with that which you have lavished on me.

**Reflect:** How grateful am I for the gifts that have been lavished upon me and my family? Do I express daily my gratitude to the Creator?

**Discuss:** Do you agree we are the Daniel in our place of influence? If so, why? If not, why not? What should you do now?

**Pray:** Lord, allow me to see those in need of my service and love – especially those impacted by the current economic situation.

**Reflect:** Who this day should I reach out to and offer to serve? Write that persons name down and act today.

**Discuss:** Is pain part of God's plan? In your life how has such pain equipped you for life? In hind sight, was Jesus carrying you? What role do others play?

# Men's January Reflections

## (continued)

week 4

### Challenge Group Focus

by: Timothy Rowland

*"With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be."* James 3:9-10

Lately, I have noticed an increase in teasing among the brothers. It may be to let off steam from the stress of the current economic situation. Regardless, it is destructive and frankly, not wise. Throughout the Book of James, we are warned about the power of the tongue. From our mouth we can in one sentence praise and then tear down by teasing.

Teasing is defined as "to make fun of or attempt to provoke in a playful way." When you are on the receiving end of teasing it is most often not "fun." Teasing by its very nature requires some degree of put down or is negative. Sometimes it is used to defuse a situation. Would there be a better way?

- Some suggest teasing is harmless...would you agree or not?
- Have you ever said, "I only tease you because I love you."?
- We most often tease those closest to us. Is this correct in your life?
- Is teasing ever constructive or uplifting?
- Should you stop teasing if you currently do tease?
- Would it be appropriate for you to grant permission to your spouse, if you are married, to bring to your attention when you are teasing or using negative humor?
- Would it be appropriate for you to ask your fellow CIC members to bring to your attention when you are teasing or using negative humor?

I encourage myself and you to become more aware of what we are saying to each other. Words of encouragement and honor are preferred. Can you accept the challenge and hold each other accountable in your Challenge Groups or other gatherings?

**Pray:** Father, thank you for the warning about the power of my tongue. I ask you to make me more aware of my words, especially when they are destructive.

**Reflect:** Do I find myself teasing? If so, when and with whom? When I hear others tease, especially my brothers in CIC, do I have the duty to bring it to their attention in a loving but candid way?

**Discuss:** Has teasing found its way into our Chapter and Challenge Group meetings? Is it helpful or innocent? Explain.

# Women's January Reflections

## week 2

### Personal Focus

by: Jennifer Ellis

*"He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly." Acts 10:2*

Our family has been called to pray together. For years we have been hearing this message at Church on Sundays. Other than saying grace before meals, our prayer time has been more of a one-on-one activity. Recently one of our children's school-mates became ill and we were asked to pray for her. It was the perfect opportunity to begin a new habit in our home. Before the bedtime routine, we all gather on our bed, hold hands, voice our intentions and join in the Lord's Prayer.

Since our children are eight, five and two, this prayer time is not without challenges. There is a lot of wiggling, fighting, giggling and wrestling on the bed. Even while we are praying, we are far from stillness, but it is very fruitful time. We add to our list of intentions and are able to give thanks as we see prayers being answered. Like any prayer routine, if we get off schedule, we can forget to do it. This time in our family has been such a blessing. Nothing unifies people like prayer. We are growing together. There are few things more precious than hearing children pray. We are thankful for the ability to gather in prayer and ask the Lord to strengthen us in Christ.

**Pray:** Lord, thank you for unifying us in prayer. Send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us and keep us faithful to our prayer time.

**Reflect:** During your prayer time, what do you find most fruitful?

**Discuss:** For you, what are the blessings of dedicated prayer time and what challenges do you face in keeping that time?

## week 3

### Marketplace Focus

by: Jennifer Ellis

*"The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful." Matthew 13:22*

I work in the newspaper advertising industry. It has been a turbulent year in our business. Although I work in a Christian environment and for a niche paper, not a daily, we are still not completely immune to industry changes. It is challenging not to feel anxiety. Will we abandon print for the internet? Do we have a sustainable model? Will our advertisers continue to advertise? If my job ends, where will I go from here? What skills will I need in a new industry? Many of us have already had to face these questions as their jobs have disappeared. How much of this questioning is fruitful and how much is just anxiety?

Recently, I was in a rut of anxiety. It's something that is a struggle for me. Thankfully, I recognized it and went to prayer. I had a CIC Challenge Group meeting that evening, too. During this prayer time and our meeting, I became aware that anxiety is not of God. It draws me away from trusting him. It also takes my focus away from doing the best possible work each day. He has me exactly where he wants me for now and calls me to put forth my best in my job, a job that I love. He has plans for me in this workplace and whatever workplace might follow this one. It's all in his hands. Lord, let me not choke out your word by worrying; may your word take root in my heart.

**Pray:** Lord, thank you for the journey we have in the marketplace. We ask that you especially bless those who are out of work. Provide for us and fill us with your peace.

**Reflect:** What are the areas of your life where you may be experiencing anxiety and worry?

**Discuss:** Share a time when God has provided for you and brought you peace when you were worried.

# Women's January Reflections

## (Continued)

### week 4

### Challenge Group Focus

by: Jennifer Ellis

*"Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching."*  
Hebrews 10:25

Life is busy. What we have found in our Challenge Group is that there are a core of women who meet regularly, but it's not exactly the same women each week. As we approached Christmas, those numbers seemed to dwindle. It was discouraging. Our service council met to discern the transitions of the new year. Because we were in the midst of a hectic season, I had asked that we pray about taking a break from meeting for the month of December. One of our service council members said "no" right away. The next day this scripture came in the daily reflection. That was a confirmation for all of us to continue to meet. Thank you, Lord!

Although I knew we were to persevere in our meeting, I noticed how difficult it was to prepare and leave for the Challenge Group meeting that week. It had been that way for weeks. Why was I so indifferent about going? Why had it become more like a chore instead of a date? In prayer, the Lord revealed to me that we need to keep meeting despite any obstacles that might be put in front of us. The enemy does not want us to gather, he wants to scatter us. Our Challenge Group meetings are powerful and fruitful. We have a notebook of prayers that have been answered and we have experienced the Holy Spirit at work in all of us. Life is busy, but let us never be too busy to keep our date with our Lord and our sisters.

**Pray:** Lord, give us the strength to persevere in meeting together.

**Remove all obstacles that keep us from our time together with you.**

**Reflect:** What obstacles keep you from meeting? What does that say to you about your journey with the Lord through CIC?

**Discuss:** What are the challenges you have with meeting? Discuss ways to support and help each other to gather.

# Christians in Commerce NEWS

## Christians in Commerce Prayer

### Phoenix Chapter's Challenge Weekend

The Phoenix Chapter hosted their annual Challenge Weekend November 13-15th at the Living Waters Retreat Center in remote Cornville, Arizona. They were assisted by the Mesa, Scottsdale and Tempe Chapters. Twenty-four men attended the weekend and six of them were first-time attendees.



One of the men had been on a Challenge Weekend in 1983 but never joined the chapter until recently. He shared "Although I went on a weekend in 1983, the timing of this one was perfect in my life. The talks seemed like they were directed at me personally. The discussions were intense and Jesus was definitely in the house. As always God's timing is perfect." Another brother commented that he could "turn over my reluctance, funkiness, moodiness and obstinacy to Jesus and he will get me back on track with him!"

One of the new brothers shared how he was "given new direction about how to recharge my faith and how to communicate with Jesus through the Holy Spirit."

### Salinas Valley Chapter's Challenge Weekend

The Salinas Valley Chapter sponsored a Challenge Weekend November 13-15th at the beautiful Mission San Antonio de Padua, attended by 23 men, 10 of whom were first-timers. Mike Conley, Administrator for the weekend, shared how the weekend was characterized by the themes of 'having child-like faith' and 'yielding to the Holy Spirit,' which was set by the team of speaker's

throughout the weekend. "The power of the Holy Spirit on this weekend was confirmed by the spirit's overwhelming presence in the comments made on the evaluation forms. Lives were radically changed on this weekend."

A few of these comments from the men included: "God lights our path one step at a time, requiring us to walk in faith." "I am taking my first step - this is the best thing I have done in my life." "I realized my personal mission...to the homeless." One brother described the group discussions "were an opportunity to be honest and to gain perspective...into Christian life in a man's world." "It woke up a passion I had lost." "I realized I had been dead and now I feel so alive!"

### South Bend Challenge Weekend

The South Bend Chapter held their annual Challenge Weekend November 13-15th and it was attended by 27 men. They ranged in age from 21 to 80 and 8 of them were attending their first CIC weekend.

There were many blessings from the weekend. One new brother asked for three things when he was prayed over for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. He needed a job, healing from an addiction and desired to be reunited with his two children. Seventeen years ago he had to put them up for adoption and hadn't been in contact with them since that time. Two days after the CWE, he received a phone call from his 19 year old son who wanted to get reconnected with him.

One of the younger attendees, a budding entrepreneur, shared that the Lord called him to be a servant in the marketplace and turn his business over to him. A more seasoned brother was struck by new spiritual insights and a renewed realization of God's love for him.

*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](http://www.christiansincommerce.org)

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