Today’s business environment requires relevance. Without it, a business and the jobs that go with it will disappear. Customers won’t pay for a product or service that isn’t helpful to them. An entity must adapt and change with the times. This doesn’t mean changing one’s core values, but to make them attractive in relevant terms.

In my case, I am involved in two succession plans. The first is my business. In 1987, my business partner and I started a wealth management firm with $10,000 and one employee. We believed our plan of putting the client first (rather than ownership or employees) would be successful. Our hard work and taking some risk has paid off. Our firm continues to place the interest of the client first, and we know from experience everything else will take care of itself.

For any business, if there isn’t a succession plan the entity will die. To ensure the firm remained viable we set out to establish a succession plan to focus on three areas: clients, management, and ownership. As we studied the challenge, we were told it would take a minimum of 10 years.

We consulted with several of our clients that have multiple generations involved in the business. We asked founders what they could share that might help us. They all said we had to give the next generation the opportunity to fail. However, through mentoring, committing resources, and trust, the odds improved greatly.

My business partner and I are now well into implementing our succession plan and our clients have voiced their approval. You see, they each have a succession plan themselves.

The second succession plan involves you. Christians in Commerce has impacted my life in powerful ways. I am a better employer, husband, father and community member. I can’t bear the thought of losing it because we have failed to attract the next generation. Yet without them, CIC will pass away.

I attend two chapters per week and the National Conference where the average age is 60, if not older.

As a general rule, we are not attracting and keeping younger members. Why? One reason is they don’t identify with men and women who could be their grandparents. They don’t see us as relevant. We don’t speak their language. But there is hope.

The Working for Our Father series targets the next generation. We know the need for Christ to be alive in them is as great as ever. Their workplaces need Christ more than ever. Faith, integrity, and excellence are always relevant.

As part of our succession plan, we have engaged some young leaders and we are generating new content. We need more! Frankly, what is needed now is funding for the next two years. The current annual campaign keeps the lights on for now. But it won’t be long before we have lost our opportunity.

Together a group of business people can fund the future of CIC—to fall short would be poor stewardship. In John 14:12 Jesus says, “I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.”

As his followers, will you join me in implementing this succession plan for his glory? Building the Kingdom requires action. Pray to the Holy Spirit, and ask him what resources you can provide for the next two years.

Tim Rowland has been a member of CIC since 1990. He is married to Celesta and lives in Phoenix. They have three grown sons, two daughters-in-law, and three grandchildren in Baltimore, New York City, and Phoenix. He can be reached at timrowland@gmail.com

Paul tells the body of believers in Corinth that they need to be taught how to use the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. He does not want us to be uninformed about these spiritual gifts. Henry Blackaby says, “The Old Testament is our ‘kindergarten’ for understanding the pattern of the Holy Spirit’s gifting and work. That pattern is: God gives an assignment to a person; then the Holy Spirit is given to equip him or her for the assignment. The proof of the Spirit’s presence is that the person is able to complete the assignment effectively through the supernatural enabling of the Holy Spirit.”

God’s ultimate aim for all of us is our sanctification in him, and part of that sanctification process has to do with the Holy Spirit transmitting specific divine qualities and attributes into our personalities.

May all of us in CIC complete this assignment!

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**Baptized in the Spirit**

*By Luke Cahill*

Seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.” (Jeremiah 29:7)

The Holy Spirit always intimidated me. I grew up in a charismatic household where the Holy Spirit was talked about, praise/worship and spiritual gifts were visible, and I had been prayed over for more of the Holy Spirit. My experience seeing the Holy Spirit inspire people to speak in tongues, give prophesies, and fall over as they’re slain in the Spirit, left me with a fear of losing control if I opened myself up.

As I entered adulthood and started to raise a family, I kept my faith life traditional and avoided charismatic interactions. I was a diligent church goer who greatly struggled with maintaining a prayer life and one who had secular priorities in my work life and home life.

Going through the Working for Our Father series helped me to understand the Holy Spirit and his power to influence daily life, especially at work. I tried to remember each morning to ask the Holy Spirit to fill me and guide my decisions, actions, and thoughts. My work and home life was benefiting, but there lacked the consistency and all-in commitment.

That all changed at the 2017 Annual Conference. One evening, there was a prayer meeting and an opportunity to get prayed with for baptism in the Holy Spirit. Louie Grams, one of the CIC founders, and a group of other brothers and sisters prayed with me and I left full of peace and joy.

I feared that I might have to give up something if I fully opened myself to the Holy Spirit. Would he make me quit my job and my comfortable existence and move across the world to serve him? God in his infinite love gave me a scripture passage that eased my concern. In my hotel room, my “dusty” Bible app miraculously opened to Jeremiah 29: 4-7, with God telling the exiled Israelites to plant gardens and be content to stay put there for a while. God was telling me he will use me right where I am.

Since then, I have craved prayer and connection to God. I feel a tremendous void if I don’t make time for prayer first thing in the morning. My four young boys know that before we can do anything in the morning (even watching hockey replays), we must first spend time in prayer.

Seeking wisdom has enabled me to clearly discern the right way to handle difficult work situations. It’s been easier to see clients, coworkers, and suppliers through the eyes of Christ, and therefore treat them with dignity and respect. As an introvert, there are situations where social fears have impeded me. The Holy Spirit has helped me be an extrovert in those moments.

Being baptized in the Holy Spirit has changed me permanently. To borrow the words of another CIC founder, John Mooney… “nothing has changed but everything is different.”

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**2018 Annual Campaign**

**BOLD VISION**

**BRIGHT FUTURE**

We continue 2018 with a BOLD VISION for a BRIGHT FUTURE. With a goal to influence 20,000 lives by 2020, let’s invest in our mission together with prayers, financial support, and personal effort.

We’ve opened doors to thousands of Christians at several large corporations. We continue to grow our social media outreach. The Annual Conference provided inspiration and a sense of renewal for attendees to face future challenges. We have launched a new monthly podcast series. Join us in realizing this bold vision to support others in being Christ in their workplaces.

**How can you help?**

Encourage a new generation of Christians to meet the call to align their careers with God’s mission by donating online at [www.cicintl.org/agc18](http://www.cicintl.org/agc18). Thank you for your continued prayers and support!
Invoking the Spirit at Work

By Chris Dietz

“Is anyone among you sick? Let them call for the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.” (James 5:14)

I work in an office that has become increasingly virtual, with employees working in locations throughout the country. As a Christian man, I’ve earned a reputation as someone people can trust and put their confidence in. This has led to many opportunities to pray in person and on the phone with coworkers.

PRAY:

Holy Spirit, guide my interactions with those who reach out to me for help.

Reflect:

How do I best approach someone who may be uncomfortable with my gifts?

Discuss:

Trust in the Holy Spirit to be present even when relationships are long distance.

Sharing the Gifts of the Spirit

By Cathy Glover

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. (John 14:26-27)

At my office, we have a wonderful example of a faithful servant leader. Mary, my branch manager and business coach, is filled with many of God’s gifts of the Holy Spirit. I rarely see her without a smile on her face and people surrounding her. No matter how busy she is, Mary takes time to counsel agents on working smarter, not harder.

She goes out of her way to pair agents together to help them rise to the next level. She develops programs and solves a myriad of problems on any given day.

Mary encourages agents to oversee and participate in annual Christmas Adopt-a-Family programs, Toys for Tots, Breast Cancer Walks, Hikes for the Homeless. She instituted monthly birthday cards for agents and encourages everyone to sign them.

As a part-time worker, I find that Mary is the person I turn to for advice and direction. Although there are others in the office I could approach, I (and most other agents) choose to wait for Mary. Her wisdom, understanding, knowledge, and reverence for God, her thoughtful counsel, and genuine concern for everyone who reports to her comes through in everything she does.

Mary has taught me that being a Realtor is not about how much money you make or how many homes you sell (although everyone is encouraged to set annual and monthly goals). She has taught me that it is about respecting and honoring and valuing all people—even the difficult ones. Through her words and actions, Mary has taught me that being Christ in the workplace can be achieved with love and fortitude.

PRAY:

Give us, good Lord, the grace to work for the things we pray for. (St. Thomas More)

Reflect:

In what ways am I using the gifts God gave me to build up my coworkers, clients, family and friends?

Discuss:

Which gifts of the Holy Spirit are you aware of using regularly?
Thank you Lord for your intense and all-knowing love for all your children.

MAY 2018

PRAY: REFLECT: DISCUSS:

Do I give myself time to be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, or do I constantly run from one task to the next?

Are there steps you can take to deepen your relationship with the Holy Spirit?

The theme of this year’s Annual Conference focuses on bringing God’s good order into our lives. Registration is now open. Early bird registration rate is $205 and runs through September 6. Beginning September 7 the rate is $225. The spouse rate is $155.

The Annual Conference will be held on October 5-6 at the Embassy Suites Bloomington, MN. Please mark your calendars!

Room reservations are now being accepted at the conference hotel.


Or call them at 952-884-4811 or 1-800-Embassy.

Ask for Group: Christians In Commerce or Group Code: CIC.
Humility in the Workplace

Humility of the heart is considered the greatest Christian virtue. Is there a place for it in our work culture? Could it be that the lack of humility is at the root of the problems we encounter, whether it be in us, or others?

What is Christian humility? It is recognizing our true position in God's creation and our dependence on the power, providence, and mercy of God. Humility keeps our eyes on two things. We see our own lack and do not attribute good to ourselves; while, at the same time, we recognize our own need to serve the Lord and attribute all good to him. Humility is not a sickly virtue, timid and weak, it is courageous and generous because it is the very character of God who humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death. Humility is first about humbling ourselves towards God. It is also about humbling ourselves to others for the love of God.

Humility can be challenging in a competitive workplace focused on personal contributions. It’s easy to trivialize the humanity of others. The dignity of the worker can be lost in the role they play, and the impact their abilities or lack of them are having on the company’s efforts or us personally.

Our coworkers have different roles as our superiors, our peers, or our subordinates. It is easier to show humility to those over us or whose qualities we aspire to. It is more challenging when we don’t respect those who are in roles of authority over us.

What about our peers? Do we wish to be above them, or over them? Do we compare ourselves to them in order to foster greater self-esteem, while creating only envy or pride? Are we content with our position?

How about those who work for us, or have less expertise or experience than we do? It’s important to remember that although they may be inferior in their abilities or experience they are equal to us before our Father. We both have the same Lord and with him there is no partiality.

God bestows many graces on the humble because he knows they will make good use of them. They will also use them in a manner that pleases him, giving all the glory to him without reserving any for themselves.

The reward for good humble work is more work, as the good stewards discovered when they were told, “Well done good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness.”

DO NOTHING FROM SELFISH AMBITION OR CONCEIT, BUT IN HUMILITY REGARD OTHERS AS BETTER THAN YOURSELF.

PHILIPPIANS 2:3
“POWERLESSNESS AND HUMILITY IN THE SPIRITUAL LIFE DO NOT REFER TO PEOPLE WHO HAVE NO SPINE AND WHO LET EVERYONE ELSE MAKE DECISIONS FOR THEM. THEY REFER TO PEOPLE SO DEEPLY IN LOVE WITH JESUS THAT THEY ARE READY TO FOLLOW HIM WHEREVER HE GUIDES THEM, ALWAYS TRUSTING THAT, WITH HIM, THEY WILL FIND LIFE AND FIND IT ABUNDANTLY.”

HENRI J.M. NOUWEN, IN THE NAME OF JESUS, NEW YORK, NY. (CROSSROADS PUBLISHING, 1989)
John was a new employee with the company and had been thrown into the middle of a major technical crisis. He had no experience, no training, and no resources for the IT work that he had just been hired to do. He was on his own.

One by one, he began calling employees in the company looking for help. And one by one, they refused. They all had their own pile of work and did not want to take time to walk the new guy through something he had been hired to do. It was not their job.

The last call John made was to Ed, whose reaction was different. Ed viewed his job in light of the sacred purpose of work. He was working for his heavenly father. This was just another normal day’s event to do just that. Together Ed and John spent hours on the phone walking through and solving the problem. It’s been several years since that encounter. John has since left the company, but he has kept in contact with Ed from across the country.

John always brings up the experience. He describes the rejection and the isolation he felt, making call after call, until his last hope, Ed. John remembers Ed as being understanding, welcoming, kind, friendly, and, most importantly, that Ed hung in there with John until the job was done, never losing patience.

The Gift of Lowliness

What was an ordinary event for Ed was an extraordinary experience for John. It was a powerful moment for which John was grateful. It has led to many other conversations and a friendship.

Lead a life worthy of your call, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love (Eph. 4:1-2, RSV).

“It was about being a good steward of the gift of lowliness.” Ed told me. “Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, modeled lowliness and meekness, wrapping a towel around his waist and washing his disciples feet (Jn. 13:1-7).

“I’m convinced that without practicing this gift of lowliness, we obscure our other gifts at work and render them pointless.

“I’m a good communicator and I have strong technical and organizational skills. If I had not chosen to practice lowliness that day and had convinced myself I was too good for this person, my other gifts would never have gotten a chance to shine through.

“The people I encounter each day are not ‘speed bumps’ along the path of my personal to do list.” Ed concluded. “I’m called to use my talents to serve others. I just need to make sure I keep this in mind. Getting my daily prayer in helps a lot.”

Sacredness of Work

And the life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20)

Work is God’s gift. Our own self-centeredness and selfishness pollute it. But in Christ, we are called to live out the sacred purpose of work. This seems abstract and theological until we encounter a true-life parable like Ed and John.

Ed’s welcoming actions were fresh air in a work culture contaminated with rejection. Ed’s interaction with John reflected Christ in the midst of a toxic culture.

Observing what was going on between Ed and John looks ordinary, at the least, it was kind and considerate. But Ed and John’s interaction became more significant as Ed modeled the humility and meekness of Christ.

When everyone turned their back on John, Ed responded in love and service. He was cooperating with the Holy Spirit in the work of renewal and restoration.

Stewards of Creation

God calls us to be stewards of creation. This includes stewarding our relationship with God, our workplaces, what we do, and those we encounter.

We are called to be other Christs in our workplaces. This is only possible if we are filled with the Holy Spirit and being transformed by him. The “lowliness” that Ed talked about is the way we cooperate with the Holy Spirit’s work in us and let our individual gifts and talents be put to the work of restoring God’s creation.

When the other workers turned their backs on John, leaving him to his own devices, it was not what God intended. Their actions only added to the desecration of the true purpose of work.

Ed did the opposite. He lived in light of his sacred calling in the workplace. Because Ed kept himself in a “low place” following Christ’s example of humility, he received John and welcomed him with the love of God, reflecting the true holiness of his calling.

As usual, the Holy Spirit was proficient; he revealed the sacredness of work, moved in John’s heart, and transformed Ed with “on-the-job” training. But Ed had to be willing to cooperate with the Spirit for that to happen.

This posting has also been published on The Institute of Faith, Work and Economics website. To follow their blog go to https://tifwe.org/blog/
If we are to be faithful in responding to God’s call, three critical areas should be incorporated into our lives.

**Daily Appointment with God**

Our relationship and friendship with Jesus is our doorway to a relationship with the Father. We need regular conversations together. We need to grow in understanding and affection.

“I am the vine, you’re the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them will bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5)

If we are to live in Christ and he in us, we must come to a new level of intimacy with him and our Father. The Father and Son want to engage us in their conversation, the Holy Spirit gathers us into the conversation. They want us to speak openly and freely with them.

**Seeking God’s Will**

Living as Christ takes courage, obedience, and humility. Jesus surrendered all in response to the call of the Father. The apostles did it as well. We can expect no less.

“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” (Romans 12:2)

Seeking God’s will isn’t about obtaining a detailed plan. God responds to what is happening around us. He doesn’t always operate in a straight line. Often we’re afraid of making a wrong turn, or bad choice, and being left out, missing the boat. It’s more about trusting God and responding to the choices in front of us.

“And we know in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:28)

There’s a lot of free will going on we can’t control. There’s a lot happening behind the scenes we’re not aware of. Remember God is bigger than our jobs, bigger than our worries and bigger than our challenges.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insights. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.” (Proverbs 3:5)

Finding God’s will is more about learning what God desires and pursuing that. If we do, our decisions are going to line up with his plans. And, we can trust the outcome to him.

**Joining with Others**

Join with others who share the same commitment and dedication to working for our Father. It’s good to be mentored by others. It’s important to have objective perspectives. We want others to help who know both our abilities and our liabilities. People who can help us be sure we’re hearing God, and not just ourselves.

It’s critical to be supported in challenges. We need the encouragement, support, and experience of others. We need to hold each other accountable to fidelity and steadfastness, in good times and bad. We should stand together in prayer.
OCTOBER CONFERENCE TAKES FRESH APPROACH

If you want less business and chaos in your lives and more focus on faithfulness and effectiveness, this year’s Annual Conference in Minnesota is just for you. Join us at the Embassy Suites Bloomington on October 5-6 as we take a fresh approach to experiencing God’s peace in the midst of life’s challenges.

It’s increasingly difficult to live our faith when facing the daily demands of work and modern life. We’re often pulled in conflicting directions, and the ensuing chaos can easily control us.

This year’s conference focuses on learning to live a life of peace and freedom in the Holy Spirit. We’ll explore what that means and the type of peace that results.

A wide range of “TED-like,” practical presentations along with short, first-hand stories will be mixed in with panel discussions, breakouts, and a few surprises. Plenty of time for fellowship and worship will be included.

We are also planning special modules to attract outside attendees. The Minneapolis-St. Paul area has a strong and active Christian community. We have reached out to a number of employee resource groups (ERGs) at several local corporate headquarters.

Our goal is to present practical ways to work for our Father, 24/7, 365 days a year to keep our lives in good working order. We join together to be good stewards of all our Father has entrusted to us—at work and in our daily lives—as we grow in faith, integrity, and excellence.

Our hope is to have many new attendees join us. In addition to the Embassy Suites, some local hospitality housing will be available for those with limited resources. Details to come.


Special thanks to the conference committee, already hard at work to make the conference one of inspiration and renewal: Marcus Curl, Portland-Beaverton; John Daly and Luke Cahill, Minneapolis-St. Paul; Sophia Norman, Fresno; Tom Kueneman, Palm Desert; Rich Preuss, South Bend-Elkhart; Terry Cassell and Therese McNichol, Northern Virginia.

RENEWAL IN MONTEREY

Kathy Torres from the Monterey Women’s Chapter shared that in February, the Monterey Men’s and Women’s Chapters held a Day of Renewal that featured the Working for Our Father series. Forty four attendees participated. Terrence Gargiulo led a discussion asking attendees to share their testimonies on how the Holy Spirit is working in their life.

Please send your events and stories to:

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CHRISTIANS IN COMMERCE PRAYER
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: Being Christ in the workplace
MISSION: To encourage and equip Christians to be God’s presence in the workplace by the power of the Holy Spirit, exercising faith, integrity, and excellence
VALUES: Christians in Commerce is an ecumenical organization committed to:
• Growing and being transformed in Jesus Christ
• Manifesting the gifts of the Holy Spirit
• Building strong brotherhood and sisterhood
• Serving God and expanding his Kingdom in all aspects of our lives

2018 MAY

“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.”
Galatians 2:20