



Challenge Newsletter

Being Christ in the Workplace

Galatians 2:20

March, 2015

## Christ in the Workplace

### The Millennial Generation

by: Greg Aitkens

At our recent Annual Conference, I participated in a workshop designed to look at responding to God's call across generations. A large part was on how the Baby Boomer generation (born 1946-1964) can reach out to the Millennial generation (born early 1980s to early 2000s).

Gabrielle Jackson, author of "5 Millennial Myths", helped us learn about many of the Millennial characteristics. Some might engage in certain multi-tasking behavior, such as constant texting, making them seem rude or discourteous; others are tenacious, entrepreneurial, tolerant, and team/goal-oriented, making me want them on my team.

(Learn more on Gabrielle's website at [www.millennialsolution.com](http://www.millennialsolution.com) or by watching the workshop video: <http://tinyurl.com/kuh3ay5>.)

I work in a financial advisory firm with a large number of Millennial employees. I'm now the "old guy" surrounded by coworkers half my age. For many good reasons, I need to learn to work successfully with all these young people.

I admit, I've had some frustrations. One coworker regularly did not respond to my e-mails. Another seemed to react slowly to client service situations I saw as urgent. Through careful communications and re-establishing some commonly agreed upon ground rules, these relationships are growing and improving.

As I've attempted to get on their wavelength (which did include texting!), I've become more of a mentor and coach to several of my Millennial coworkers. One of them accepted a recent invitation to attend a Day of Renewal. Many have expressed interest in attending a Challenge Weekend.

One of these young people is an outstanding golfer. I'm an avid player myself. Interestingly, he's agreed to provide some coaching to me—the old guy! Likewise, since he is new to the financial advisory world, I am mentoring him in our business. He is a devout Christian. We'll have lots to talk about!

I've been praying about trying to organize a new chapter or Challenge Group right here in our office. Most of the attendees would be Millennial workers. Most of them are already Christians. To my knowledge, none of them have anything like CIC in their lives.

I'm thinking that very few of them will ever attend a normal CIC chapter meeting—especially if the vast majority of fellow attendees are of the Baby Boomer generation like me. Most current members have a similar opportunity and call to invite the Millennial generation into the mission of CIC.

We Baby Boomers might deny, ignore or even criticize these younger men and women as part of a generation we just do not (or will not) understand. Gabrielle's book dispels some of the myths and preconceived notions that they are unmotivated, addicted to technology, independent, disloyal, and entitled. In my own experience now in working with them, I can say these are indeed myths!

The Baby Boomer generation has a profound opportunity and call to work well with future generations. If we are going to continue in our mission, we need them actively involved. It's possible that our destiny, as well as God's ministry, depends on our willingness and ability to embrace the Millennial generation.

*Greg Aitkens has been involved in CIC since 1986. He is a long-time member of the Orange County Chapter, which he helped to start in the mid-90s. He is married to Ginny, with whom he has three adult children and one grandchild. Greg is an avid golfer and cyclist. He can be reached at [GAitkens@fmncc.com](mailto:GAitkens@fmncc.com).*

### Upcoming Events

**Men's Weekends**  
**South Bend/Elkhart**  
March 6-8, 2015

**Palm Desert**  
March 20-22, 2015  
**Greater Phoenix Area**  
March 27-29, 2015  
**Greater Sacramento**  
March 27-29, 2015

**Santa Cruz**  
April 17-19, 2015  
**Greater Phoenix Area**  
May 1-3, 2015  
**Monterey**  
May 15-17, 2015

**Women's Weekends**  
**WCIC- Sacramento**  
March 6-7, 2015  
**WCIC- South Bend/Elkhart**  
March 6-7, 2015  
**WCIC-Gilroy/Morgan Hill**  
May 1-3, 2015  
**WCIC-Phoenix**  
May 1-3, 2015

### Christians in Commerce News

**Santa Cruz-Salinas Valley**

**Uganda 2015 Couples' Weekend**

Please send your stories to:  
**Terry Cassell**  
Fax: 703 205-0485  
[cassell@cicintl.org](mailto:cassell@cicintl.org)  
7515 Lee Highway  
Falls Church, VA 22042

# Life Pleasing to God

week 1

## Generosity

by: Bart Tesoriero

*In contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. (Galatians 5:22-23, NABRE)*

At our Annual Conference last October, Steve Becker shared a brief word that God was giving us a spirit of generosity; the anointing to be generous as he is generous with us.

When I first heard the message, I was taken aback. At times in my life I had prayed for the grace to be more generous as an individual, but I had never before heard of the Lord giving the gift of generosity to a group of people. I do believe that when God speaks to us through a prophetic word, it is both a gift and a responsibility. Jesus calls us to respond to his word through our actions.

Generosity is mentioned in several scriptural translations as one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. The dictionary defines it as "a readiness or liberality in giving."

Now for a bit of a confession here... I am not generous by nature. As the only boy in my family, I somehow cajoled my three sisters to cook and bake for me, lend me money, and generally take care of me growing up!

When I married my wife, one of her nine siblings told me I had married the baker of the family. As you can see, I hadn't changed much!

Over the years, brothers in CIC have challenged and invited me to "get in the way of God's grace" by serving others. Responding to that challenge has helped me to grow a bit more generous, as have the everyday responsibilities and challenges of my vocation as a husband and father.

Even so, at times I've balked at this gift and calling of generosity.

Since the conference, it seems the Lord has given me more opportunities to be generous. Recently at work, my manager asked for my help on a project. My initial thought was that I already had too much to do. Couldn't she find someone else? But wait a minute; God had given me a gift of generosity. Was I going to use it?

So, I agreed to work on the project. And guess what? I was able to apply some things I had learned from a past project and the task took much less time than I had anticipated. I felt a joyful relief in my heart when I realized the Lord had helped me.

Then I began getting calls from one of my sisters asking for assistance. I would get a sinking feeling in my stomach whenever I saw her name blinking at me on my cell phone. But God had given me a gift of generosity. Was I going to use it? "Okay, Lord," I prayed, "PLEASE help me to serve!"

The next thing I realized was that although I was serving, I was not being very gracious about it. I was holding back inwardly. Again I felt that little tug on my heart from the Holy Spirit. It was like the Lord was saying to me, "Can you let go and let me love through you?" Oy vey!

Friends, I'm a work in progress. But since the conference I have noticed a very gradual change in myself. I find myself more willing to help out when there's a need. I find myself more willing to give something, whether it's a homemade muffin to a homeless person or a gift to someone "just because", and I feel a bit lighter inside—a bit freer.

The gift of generosity is just that: the ability to be generous, to be liberal, and to give freely without having to run the request through all sorts of mental filters and screens. As I give, I'm finding that generosity is a gateway to the Kingdom. Generosity opens my heart, as do love, forgiveness, and sacrifice.

The only way to know this truth is to live it. I encourage each of you to use the gift of generosity that God gave to EVERY member of CIC, whether or not you were able to attend the conference. As Paul says, *To each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the good of all.* (1 Corinthians 12:7).

*Bart Tesoriero is a long-time member of the Phoenix Chapter. He and his wife Brenda are the grateful parents of Josh, Teresa, Paula, and Hannah. Bart is the Book Editor for Christian Brands Company in Phoenix, Arizona, and can be reached at [bart@samaricy.com](mailto:bart@samaricy.com).*

**Pray:** Dear Lord, thank you for the gift of generosity. Please give me opportunities to serve others with a joyful heart.

**Reflect:** How do I feel when the opportunity to be generous at work presents itself? How willing am I to give to others and make myself useful to them?

**Discuss:** What is one way you can be generous this week at work? What is one way the Lord may be inviting you to be a blessing to someone you encounter during your work week?

# Men's March Reflections

## week 2

### Personal Sacrifice

by: John Sloan

*For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. (2 Timothy 1:7)*

Over the past 45 years, my sales career has taken me from selling flower seeds, through cookware, vacuum cleaners, television and radio airtime, print media and now to residential real estate. You would think with that kind of a sales background, I would be the last person to experience timidity when inviting men to a CIC meeting or a Challenge Weekend. Unfortunately, my flesh has stopped me from being bold for the Lord.

For two months, I wanted to invite a church member to CIC. It appeared he was on an active spiritual journey. I couldn't seem to muster up the courage to invite him face-to-face. However, thanks to the CIC invitation card, this problem was finally resolved. I walked up to him one day, handed him the card, telling him to check it out, and pretty much scurried away! Yes, he did come to CIC and has now been a loving, contributing brother for several years. God used me in my weakness.

When I reflect on 2 Timothy 1:7, it is clear to me that if we walk with the Lord, the Spirit of God has the power to take us beyond our brokenness. The Spirit is the driver of the love and self-discipline we all have inside of us, if only we will believe and ask for it.

How do we get this power? For me, it wasn't until I turned my life over to God's providence, trusting in him, asking for the power and desire to glorify him, unashamed of my spiritual life and relationship with Jesus.

**Pray:** Lord, give me a heart to be bold in asking for the power of your glory so I can share you with others.

**Reflect:** Am I serious about wanting the power of the Holy Spirit to build God's kingdom God's way? What holds me back? What compels me forward?

**Discuss:** How do you want the power of God to operate more in you? How can you yield your life more to him at work and at home? Pray together for a greater release of his power.

## week 3

### Making a Difference in the Workplace

by: John Sloan

*And the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all. (Luke 6:19)*

Jesus spent his time healing, curing, caring for the poor and feeding the hungry. People were drawn to him and tried to get close enough to touch the tassels of his garments. Who in your lifetime has moved mountains like Jesus? For me, people like Martin Luther King, Mother Teresa, Billy Graham and Pope Francis come to mind. These individuals have stood their ground on behalf of doing what was right, loving people and showing them the right way to live.

I have had the blessing of teaching and mentoring new real estate agents. Whenever I teach a class these days, I open with a prayer. This startles some agents, while others are openly relieved to see a colleague stepping out on behalf of his spirituality.

Recently, I prayed and asked God to "increase my territory" (see 1 Chronicles 4:9-10). That same morning, a fellow agent knocked on my door and asked to talk. She asked for my assurance that I would not share our conversation with anyone else. I agreed.

She proceeded to describe her frustration with her financial struggle. She also said that a year ago, when I taught a class for new agents, she was blown away when I said a prayer before we began. (Wow! That blew me away because it was the very first time I had ever said a prayer before teaching!)

I asked if she wanted me to pray with her. She said, "Yes". I then asked for God's blessings on her, her family and her situation.

God used me as an instrument of his love that day; what a blessing. Thank you, God, for allowing others to see your power through all of us. Let us continue to be the light to all!

**Pray:** Heavenly Father, through your Son and the Holy Spirit, allow me to move mountains in ordinary ways.

**Reflect:** Am I shining my light for others to see, or am I timidly hiding it?

**Discuss:** In what practical ways can you develop greater strength to be a light to others and exude the power of the Holy Spirit? What situations or circumstances has God put in front of you at work where he wants to use you to shine his light? How should you go about that?

# Men's March Reflections

## (continued)

week 4

### Holding Each Other Accountable

by: John Sloan

*If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. (Mark 8: 34-35)*

The chief character in this scripture is possessiveness. To allow this enemy of our souls to live means losing everything in the end. The only effective way to conquer possessiveness is, as stated in the scripture, to take up the cross and follow Christ. It is easy to be a slave to our things and possessions. Many times we replace God with the gifts he has given us.

In the story of Abraham, God gave him a child in his old age. However, he was then tested by fire and asked to sacrifice his only son. Abraham was faithful in following God's instructions and was rewarded for his obedience. He had been willing to give up his precious gift.

I have contemplated on many occasions how I would respond if I lost any of my loved ones or was faced with a job loss that resulted in financial ruin and losing my home. How would I respond to a major catastrophe?

Recently, I was faced with the potential loss of a large real estate transaction, and for three days I allowed myself to be emotionally sick. Through prayer, God spoke to me, showing me that this transaction was not my "possession", but a gift that was his to give or take. My heart was not in the right place.

Abraham **had** everything though he **possessed** nothing; he was willing to give up his son. Possessively clinging to anything is one of the most harmful habits in life. Because it is so natural, however, it is rarely recognized for the evil that it is. We are hindered from giving up our treasures to the Lord out of fear for their safety, especially if they are loved ones.

We all know men and women of faith who have gone through these terrible losses. Often, their experiences can be a great help and guide for us.

*John Sloan is the Palm Desert Chapter President. He has been married to his wife Paula for 41 years. They have four grown children and two grandchildren. John has been a real estate agent with Keller Williams Realty for ten years. He can be reached at [john@sloanrealtygroup.com](mailto:john@sloanrealtygroup.com).*

### Workday Reflection Writers Needed

This year we want to put a special emphasis on expanding the contributions to our Workday Email Reflections. We especially are looking for personal stories related to fulfilling our mission in the workplace. If you have a story that fits the format of our daily reflections, please send them to [info@cicintl.org](mailto:info@cicintl.org). We will edit them as needed.

We are also looking for individuals in the local chapters who would be willing to be Workday Reflection stringers/ghost writers for others in their chapters who have inspiring stories to tell. If you're willing to fulfill that role, please contact the office at the above email or by calling 703-205-5600.

**Pray:** Lord, help me to understand and accept that all I have belongs to you. The only thing I want to possess is you in my heart.

**Reflect:** Can I let go of those things that I perceive to be mine? What do I hold most tightly to? How can I seek God's help to loosen my grip?

**Discuss:** What things are you clinging to that hinder your relationship with God? What fears do you have? Share your stories of God's faithfulness through trials, especially in great loss.

# Women's March Reflections

## week 2

### Personal Sacrifice

by: Kathleen Shaffer

*Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Ephesians 4:32)*

I needed to hear those words this past week. I had been lied to more than once by a coworker regarding a situation in our office. I kept asking if there was an issue. The response was always "No", but I knew there was something that wasn't being said. It was causing me great difficulty in working together because I had lost trust and confidence in the honesty of our relationship. My heart was also hurting because we had known each other for years and had a history of such good, faith-filled times.

Weeks had passed, but I was still resentful. I had also built up quite a large wall between the two of us, trying to keep my feelings from being hurt. But all this accomplished was to steal my peace, joy and serenity. I was very uncomfortable and knew I needed God to intervene. I asked for prayer during church on Sunday and was consoled by a word from the Holy Spirit: "I have already forgiven him; now you need to forgive him."

If you have been hurt, consider forgiveness. It's really the only way to begin true healing. Thanks to God's grace and that word from the Spirit, I have begun my own healing process.

**Pray:** Dear Lord, thank you for showing me that humility and forgiveness are always the best ways to improve our relationships with others.

**Reflect:** When have you experienced dishonesty or loss of trust and had to give it to God to heal your broken heart?

**Discuss:** Is there anything you need to pray about and embrace forgiveness, so that you can move on and show love, patience, and kindness to someone who has hurt you deeply?

## week 3

### Redeeming Our Father's Creation

by: Kathleen Shaffer

*I will place on his shoulder the key to the house of David; what he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open. (Isaiah 22:22)*

We as Christians in Commerce have the responsibility of being gatekeepers, so to speak, of God's Kingdom. Everyone we encounter in our day should know they are welcomed visitors of our God and that our desire is for them to get to know this man named Jesus. We should be proud to be his friends and to share our stories of time spent with him and his Holy Spirit. Sadly, many opportunities slip through our fingers due to fear, lack of knowledge or impatience.

I have tried to share my love of the Lord as simply as I share my weekend adventures. I want to be able to refer to God the same way I would refer to a close friend, and to talk about my faith as naturally as I would talk about a good book or a new restaurant. My friends and coworkers should never question whether I am a Christian.

Recently, our receptionist brought a new customer into my office. She said the woman had asked to speak with a "Christian Realtor". I was blessed when the receptionist said, "You are the only one in the office I know is a Christian."

After meeting this customer, I was further blessed by her faith story and her love for our God and Savior. Thank you, Lord, for reminding me of the blessings I receive every time I am not ashamed to be one of your gatekeepers.

**Pray:** Dear Lord, please continue to bring me opportunities to share your love with others. I will remember to rely on your strength, not mine.

**Reflect:** When have you been hesitant to share the love of Christ for fear you might be judged?

**Discuss:** Share stories of success when you pushed through and spoke openly to others about the benefits of following Jesus Christ.

# Women's March Reflections

## (Continued)

week 4

### The Fruits of Our Relationships as Sisters

by: Kathleen Shaffer

*The Lord said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by." Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. (1Kings 19:11-13)*

This month my women's Bible study is examining the power of prayer. Many of us have felt some conviction due to our lack of prayer time. I had always felt I had a good, solid prayer life with my Savior, as I found myself speaking to him often during the day. But what I have come to realize through this Bible study is, while I have been doing lots of talking to God, I have done very little listening. I wanted to hear from him, but could he even get a word in edgewise?

We find ourselves so busy with work, family and church that we usually squeeze our prayer times into a quick 5-10 minutes during the day. It is good that we stop to pray, but do we really stop to listen? When our children were small and wanted our attention, did we take the time to stop and "hold their face"? Did we take that time to make them feel special?

Remember to take time to just reflect and listen. In the silence, God is wanting to "hold your face" and whisper his love for you.

*Kathleen Shaffer is a member of the WCIC-Gilroy/Morgan Hill Chapter. She lives and works in Gilroy, CA as a residential Realtor. She also leads a 12-step recovery program at her church and volunteers with the local pregnancy resource center. Kathleen and her husband Steve have been married 34 years and have two grown children and three grandchildren. She can be reached at [Kathleen@kathleenshaffer.com](mailto:Kathleen@kathleenshaffer.com).*

### **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](http://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.*

**Pray:** Dear Lord, thank you for coming down from your throne to humble yourself for me, even though I may seem too busy to spend time with you.

**Reflect:** How often can you honestly say you stop and listen to hear God speaking to you during your prayer time?

**Discuss:** What can you do differently that will give you more time to just sit and listen for his still, small voice?

# Christians in Commerce NEWS

## Christians in Commerce Prayer

### Santa Cruz-Salinas Valley Challenge Weekend & Evening of Renewal

By: Al Parolini

On November 14th, twenty men arrived to spend two days listening, meditation and sharing at the beautiful Mission San Antonio de Padua.

Equally gathered from the Santa Cruz and Salinas chapters, with one arriving from Gilroy, each of these men brought their personal stories, hopes, dreams, and a genuine desire to grow in their spirituality. At the closing ceremony, five first-time attendees shared their original concerns, their progress and amazement, as never before had they shared with men who were so open, of such deep spirituality, and who demonstrated such a level of love and acceptance.

Led by Chuck Fratangelo, the team spent six weeks prior to the weekend meeting, praying and discerning the Lord's will as they accepted their individual presentation assignments and began the process of developing their personal stories.

Locating a musician to join the team proved to be the greatest obstacle and when all else failed, the team went a cappella. After spending Saturday singing together, the group harmonized almost perfectly!

On November 25th, most of the attendees reunited to re-ignite their spirits. Sharing pizza, salad and fruit, the room was filled with a consistent roar of voices, as each table talked, laughed and ate.

We are a very blessed group of men who are walking with the Lord!

### Uganda 2015 Couples' Weekend

by: Aloysius Mugisa

For the last five years, our men's and women's chapters have been doing an annual week-long marriage and family renewal conference for couples every January.

When we started in 2010, there were only 25 couples. This past January, 135 couples attended our fifth annual conference. Praise God!

We used our contact people in different locations to publicize the event.

We also used our most effective tool, the radio. About half of the couples who came have not been involved with CIC, but were devoted listeners of our evangelical radio talk shows.

The participants were divided into four classes depending on the number of times they had attended the conference in the past. Most of the instruction materials we use in these conferences are obtained from the CIC Offices. We put this material into the local context.

The participants were very evidently moved and transformed by all the activities at the conference. These activities included talks, general group discussions, male group discussions, female group discussions, praise and worship, couple time, and reviews of past activities.

At this conference, four couples who had lived together for a very long time legitimized their marriages and were married at a wedding feast on Saturday evening. What a colorful celebration it was!

On the last day, many couples testified how they had been transformed by the conference. One man said, "I have been a very poor listener to my wife. I did not believe she had something constructive to tell me. Now I have learned to listen to her and I will always sit down when she wants to talk to me." This man's wife said amidst tears that for the first time in their twelve-year marriage, her husband had asked her for forgiveness.

One woman confessed that she had sacrificed her marriage at the altar of church mission: "I have been more concerned about church work than my marriage and family. I have now changed my attitude; my marriage should come first, for that is what builds the church," she said.



*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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#### Challenge Newsletter Staff

Managing Editor: Therese Irene Rosenthal  
Editorial Board: Stevan Becker, Therese McNichol  
Desktop Publishing: Mary Lu Barrett

#### For further information about CIC call or write:

Christians in Commerce  
7515 Lee Highway,  
Falls Church, VA 22042  
Phone: 703 205-5600  
Toll Free: 877 205-5600  
Fax: 703 205-0485  
[info@cicintl.org](mailto:info@cicintl.org)

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



7515 Lee Highway, Falls Church, VA 22042