Representing Christ
By Jon Cassady

Working for Christians in Commerce as operations manager has made me realize the importance of right speech and being Christ at all times. As we read in Scripture, “Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Colossians 3:17).

Recently, our office had an issue with the delivery of our mail. We were not consistently receiving our mail from the United States Postal Service (USPS). This issue became a concern for the office, since we were not receiving ongoing mail correspondence and communications from our membership.

This issue was discussed with the local post office station manager, and he assured us that it had been resolved. However, even though he thought it was solved, that was not the case.

Next, I completed an online complaint form with the USPS Office of Inspector General. I then spoke to the station manager again. I discovered that the mail carrier who had our delivery route recently retired. The route needed to be reassigned, and it would take at least thirty days to find her replacement. So, in the interim our office would be serviced by temporary carriers. Once again, it appeared as if we had a solution, yet our mail was still not delivered daily.

Becoming increasingly frustrated, I next brought our concern to the local postmaster. I did not get any response to my online complaint or phone messages. However, I was able to speak to the postmaster general’s administrative assistant and expressed my concerns.

I received a call back from the postmaster (let’s call her Pam) immediately. During that conversation Pam listened attentively. She apologized for the service delivery issues and assured me that she would address the issue.

Yet, during the conversation, I noticed myself getting anxious and becoming concerned about my speech and behavior. Was I being too aggressive in my language and my actions? Was I being charitable and appropriate in my approach? Was I being Christ to Pam and the USPS?

This caused me to pause and keep myself in check. I expressed to Pam that as a business whose name is Christians in Commerce, we have a high standard for excellence, faith, and integrity. I was concerned that I may not be demonstrating a very Christian and charitable approach while addressing our mail delivery issue. She assured me that my speech and approach were very appropriate, and she thanked me for bringing this to her attention.

Pam committed to monitor our mail delivery personally and would request that the post office log our mail daily, recording what was to be delivered and what was delivered. Pam mentioned that she would be out of the office and thus not available if there were any issues for the next week. She informed me that she was having her four wisdom teeth pulled out. She stated, “You can pray for me.”

I informed her she would be added to our CIC office daily shared prayer. I then asked her if I could pray with her. She agreed, and we prayed right then. She was blessed with our conversation and apologized again for the problems with the mail service to CIC.

Our daily postal service has been restored, and once again I’m reminded that we are about being Christ and doing our Father’s work 24/7.

The following proclamation was made by Governor Bradford in 1623, three years after the Pilgrims settled at Plymouth:

“Inasmuch as the great Father has given us this year an abundant harvest of Indian corn, wheat, peas, beans, squashes, and garden vegetables, and has made the forests to abound with game and the sea with fish and clams, and inasmuch as He has protected us from the ravages of the savages, has spared us from pestilence and disease, has granted us freedom to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience.

“Now I, your magistrate, do proclaim that all ye Pilgrims, with your wives and ye little ones, do gather at ye meeting house, on ye hill, between the hours of 9 and 12 in the daytime, on Thursday, November 29th, of the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred and twenty-three and the third year since ye Pilgrims landed on ye Pilgrim Rock, there to listen to ye pastor and render thanksgiving to ye Almighty God for all His blessings.” Amen.

Happy Thanksgiving to all!

Jon Cassady has been a member of the Northern Virginia Men’s Chapter of CIC for over twenty-five years. He lives in Vienna, Virginia, and serves as the operations manager for Christians in Commerce. Jon was a sales and marketing executive with IBM for over twenty-seven years and served as the senior director of marketing for a non-profit in the D.C. area. Jon may be reached at cassady@cicintl.org.

cassell@cicintl.org • (703) 205-5600
No long after retiring from teaching, I attended a church conference with a friend. We were seated at a table with a beautiful young woman and struck up a conversation with her. Her name was Leah Rogers, and much to our surprise, she was the guest speaker at this conference, there to share her personal story of sex-trafficking. After many years of sexual slavery, she desperately called to God to help her get out of that life—and he did! She now has a steady job, has regained custody of her children, and speaks to groups about the problem of sex-trafficking and how to end this injustice.

When I met her, Leah mentioned that she was writing a book about her experience of being forced into prostitution. Her story was so powerful that I wanted to hear more about it, so I heard myself offering to edit her book for her. Immediately I regretted that offer. I'd never edited a book before, only elementary school essays and my own children's papers. I figured she'd forget the offer, but she didn't.

After many hours of editing and messaging back and forth, Leah's book, Game Over: The Story Behind a Sex-Trafficking Victim, is now available on Amazon. I now know more about prostitution than I ever wanted to know. Indeed, I am humbled by the people caught in this present-day slavery and their strength in trying to escape it.

Here's the bonus for me: through working on Leah's book with her, I realized that editing could be a side job during my retirement. I've always been good at catching mistakes in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Now I get paid for it! I call my service The Polished Apple, and my tagline is "providing you the opportunity to shine." I strive to understand my clients and love them as Jesus does.

God gives us opportunities every day to learn more about loving like he does. As a teacher, I've always regarded mistakes as teachable moments, often asking, "What have you learned from this?" A few weeks ago I was about to say that to my son when I distinctly heard God ask me what I had learned from this particular situation. I was appalled. I hadn't messed up—it was my son! Yet that question hung in the air, "What have I learned?"

I began to reflect on my response to my son's mistake rather than on his learning from the mistake. I realized that God wants me to love my son in spite of his mistakes, just like God loves me in spite of my mistakes and shortcomings. God wants me to love my son through his difficulties, helping him learn to set boundaries as well as goals. Admonishing him does not help; assisting does.

It can be hard to see past the mistakes of those close to you. Leah was a stranger when I first met her, so looking past her mistakes was easier. It is harder to look past the mistakes of my son, or anyone else in my family for that matter.

It's nearly impossible to look past my own mistakes, let alone learn from them and love myself in the process. But loving my neighbor as myself assumes that I do love myself. God knows all about each one of us, and he loves us anyway.

Micah 6:8 says, "What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." I trust in Christ and desire to receive the treasure he holds out to me, the treasure he held out to Leah: the fullness of life in him. He offers you that treasure as well.

Time for us to get to work on loving our neighbors and ourselves, shortcomings and all!

Life Pleasing to God
By Debi Wiskirchen

"Love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:39b)

Not long after retiring from teaching, I attended a church conference with a friend. We were seated at a table with a beautiful young woman and struck up a conversation with her. Her name was Leah Rogers, and much to our surprise, she was the guest speaker at this conference, there to share her personal story of sex-trafficking. After many years of sexual slavery, she desperately called to God to help her get out of that life—and he did! She now has a steady job, has regained custody of her children, and speaks to groups about the problem of sex-trafficking and how to end this injustice.

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Time for us to get to work on loving our neighbors and ourselves, shortcomings and all!

Debi Wiskirchen is retired from thirty-four years of teaching in the public school system. She now does freelance editing through her company, The Polished Apple. She and her husband, Bruce, have been members of the Scottsdale Women's and Men's Chapters of CIC, respectively, for five years. They have three grown children and two grandsons. Debi does volunteer work for her church, speaks at women's groups, and enjoys spending time with her dog and watching backyard birds, bunnies, and lizards. Debi can be reached at debimyeditor@google.com.
**WEEK 2 • MEN’S REFLECTIONS**

**Personal Sacrifice**

By Dan Farrar

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. (Colossians 3:23-24)

Procrastination is my nemesis. There are the usual excuses of having too much going on today or planning to get to it later in the week, the month, or even the year. Sometimes procrastinating has worked in my favor since projects can change or get delayed. One such incident for me was the introduction of a new software tool to streamline the production of meeting materials for our company. Those associates who started early faced many technical issues, while those who waited benefited from all the updates and corrections. Of course, this was an exception to the rule.

Usually, though, procrastinating results in having to work twice as hard, staying late, or missing opportunities. I can think of many times when I missed dinner at home and precious family time in order to finish a project and, in some cases, facing glitches with our computers. This caused more aggravation, stress, and missed deadlines—all because I didn’t jump on the project when I should have.

**PRAY:**

Lord, help me to work on my projects, assignments, and any opportunities you give me with my whole heart, since it is you, Jesus, that I am serving.

**REFLECT:**

When have you procrastinated on something that you should have done much earlier? What was the outcome? How did it feel?

**DISCUSS:**

What are some of the ways you can fight procrastination? What has worked for you in the past? What can your brothers and sisters in Christ do to help?

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**WEEK 3 • MEN’S REFLECTIONS**

**Making a Difference in the Workplace**

By Dan Farrar

For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose. (Philippians 2:13)

As manager of a homeowner association, I oversee renovation programs. One recent project I managed was repairing our streets. We selected a very reputable firm to do the work; however, when it came time to start work, the company’s owner called, explaining they had made a mistake and had given us a quote for only a third of the area of the project. So, the revised proposal was now about three times the cost originally budgeted.

The vendor suggested we meet, and when we did, they offered to complete the project at their cost, but that was still too high. I asked our vendor to check with the material supplier and see if they could help out. She said that the supplier never reduces their price and that it wasn’t worth asking. However, she said she could tell the supplier we were looking at a competitor’s product and ask if they could match the lower price.

Contemplating this passage in Colossians that whatever we do, we should do it as “working for the Lord” has given me new incentive to change my ways. I now start out my day with prayer to ask the Lord for his guidance and direction in planning and to give me the strength and motivation to take the first step. Just starting the ball rolling in this way keeps me focused to do a little more. Next, sharing my progress with my associates is critical for keeping me on point. Finally, once I have finished the task, I give thanks to the Lord for his providence and savor the feeling of accomplishment so I can take on the next project.

**PRAY:**

Lord, teach me to include you in all aspects of my life, even the challenges. Open my heart to be like you even in the midst of these obstacles.

**REFLECT:**

Think of a situation where you were involved with a costly mistake. How did you react? Could you have done things differently?

**DISCUSS:**

When you run into major hurdles with others, what can you do to act like Christ? What experiences have you had that can illustrate a Christian approach?
Holding Each Other Accountable
By Dan Farrar

“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:14-16)

It had been more than a few weeks since I had attended my last CIC meeting. Summertime was here, and with family issues, vacations, and adjusted work schedules, I found myself drifting away from the fellowship of my brothers.

PRAY:
Father, thank you for renewing my desire to follow your call to live in Christ and as Christ. Lead me, through your Holy Spirit, to honor your name and build your kingdom in the marketplace.

REFLECT:
Have you been drifting away from the call of serving God? Are you working to expand his kingdom in all aspects of your life?

DISCUSS:
What gets in the way of your stewardship to the Lord? How can your brothers and sisters in CIC call you on?

2016 MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Thanks and appreciation go out to our local Chapter Membership Administrators who assisted our Home Office in cleaning up our Christians in Commerce (CIC) membership database. Our CIC database now consists of new Chapter Membership Types: Active, Intermittent, Inactive, Friend of CIC*, and No Chapter.

This information was discussed at our 2016 Leaders’ Workshop. Here’s a recent view of the current membership based on the input from our local Men’s and Women’s Chapters.

<table>
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<th>Chapter Membership Type</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>% of Chapter Members in Database</th>
<th>Financial Membership Type</th>
<th>% of Financial Giving</th>
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<tr>
<td>Active:</td>
<td>831</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermittent:</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>13</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friend of CIC:</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Chapter:</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>12%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>3,154</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Friend of CIC designation is for those individuals who contribute to CIC but are not associated with a local chapter.
Personal Sacrifice

“When [the Lord] is at work in the north, I do not see him; when he turns to the south, I catch no glimpse of him. But he knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I will come forth as gold.” (Job 23:9-10)

I met Chris at the cathedral adjacent to my office building. I often saw him sitting on the steps. One day we shared our stories with one another. He was a college graduate and had previously worked for the federal government. He retired early due to cancer. He had lost one kidney, with the remaining kidney only functioning at twenty percent. His kidney required dialysis three days each week. We became great friends; I would pray for his health, and he would pray for my family.

Chris suffered more than anyone I had ever encountered. Due to illness and extensive medical expenses, he was homeless for two years. Several people falsely accused him of selling opiates to make money. He survived two comas. When coming out of his second coma, he felt a strong desire to be God’s warrior for others undergoing dialysis. Chris would encourage fellow patients to persevere and fought for their dignity in countless ways. He testified to God’s unique plan for them.

One day, Chris experienced terrible leg cramps. We prayed to our Father in heaven, but there seemed to be no glimpse of him. We visited a pastor known for his gift of healing. While praying, the pastor sensed something shining like silver above Chris. Chris explained that when he was young, his aunt gave him a silver religious medal, but it was stolen and never recovered. The pastor prayed over Chris, left the room, and then came back with a gold medallion. “Here,” said the pastor, “you now shine like gold.” “God is great,” Chris said, and he thanked us for spending time with him in the Spirit.

Chris would spend more than fifteen years in dialysis. He built God’s kingdom there. I was blessed to spend time with him in his last weeks, and his final prayer was for a peaceful journey to the Father. Chris died this year, coming forth from his trials as gold.

PRAY:
Father, please bless me with grace and perseverance during difficult times, that I may come forth as gold.

REFLECT:
Describe a time of tribulation when you initially felt forsaken, only to experience an outpouring of God’s grace meant just for you. How did the Lord work through that situation?

DISCUSS:
How have your CIC brothers and sisters reflected Christ’s love for you during times of distress? In turn, how can you reflect Christ’s love to others who are undergoing difficult times?

Redeeming Our Father’s Creation

“Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.” (Luke 10:41-42)

I was once offered a position to head a housing institute whose revenues had been declining. The job title, the salary, and the opportunity to rebuild it appealed to me. I believed the Lord wanted me to accept the position but, unfortunately, did not spend sufficient time discerning this decision. Unlike Mary, I did not sit quietly in the Lord’s presence but chose instead to go about my business and accepted the offer.

My selfish ambition to be in charge and the absence of spiritual discernment resulted in disastrous outcomes. As I continued to push my own agenda, I became worried and upset about many things. Obsessed with net income results, I fostered a culture emphasizing performance over relationships. The institute nearly collapsed, my agreement ended, and I joined the ranks of the unemployed during the Great Recession.

PRAY:
Father, help us to choose what is better—spending time in your presence and getting to know you—that our workplaces may reflect your image.

REFLECT:
Compare days when you place your work demands on hold to make God your first priority with days when you rush into your daily routine. How does making prayer your first priority affect the rest of your day?

DISCUSS:
Describe a time when your workplace was transformed through your fervent prayer. How did it change?
The Fruits of Our Relationships as Sisters

By Gail Cardwell

Success as consultants. The brainstorming discussion was energizing, with answers ranging from learning new communication vehicles to using time efficiently. During lunch, I sat with a new group of women. Our table continued the discussion as we joked about our own weaknesses. Toward the end, one student asked a shy woman to identify her potential obstacle to success.

The woman replied, “Pricing. It will be hard to ask for money from clients.” Tears welled up in her eyes. She said she didn’t feel worthy to charge much since she was raised as a foster child. “You will be great because of this,” I said. “Students will be drawn to your humility and compassion.” We departed as friends and agreed to exchange contact information.

After a break following a class on learning disabilities, another woman asked me if we could speak together quietly. She told me she had children with disabilities and she believed her husband had similar, undiagnosed challenges. She said they were struggling as a family, yet she was determined to get them assistance. I grabbed her hands and gently said, “Don’t give up. You are a blessing to them. Call me anytime.”

I felt so grateful for these encounters, for the Lord’s wisdom, and for his love for these women. I want to make the most of these opportunities with others to share the Lord’s love for them. I will tell them about the fruits of my relationships with my CIC sisters, so they may know they are never alone.

**PRAY:**

Father, we pray that you will provide opportunities for us to meet “outsiders,” so they may know of your incomparable love for them.

**REFLECT:**

Have you made the most of the opportunities the Lord has given you to share his good news and the vision of CIC? To whom can you reach out with love and compassion?

**DISCUSS:**

When has the Lord placed someone the world would consider an “outsider” in your path? How did you engage with this person, and how did he or she respond?

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The Fruits of Our Relationships as Sisters

By Gail Cardwell

Gail Cardwell currently serves as the president of the Women’s Chapter of CIC in Northern Virginia. She worked in the financial services industry for twenty-five years and is in the process of becoming a college consultant. She and her husband, David, have been married for twenty-seven years and have two sons. Gail can be reached at gailcardwell@cox.net.

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The Christians in Commerce (CIC) Home Office is increasing our social media presence!

If you haven’t already, we encourage you to like our page on Facebook, add us on LinkedIn, subscribe to our YouTube Channel, and follow us on Twitter and our newly-established Instagram account. This helps us stay connected with our members and chapters, encourages chapters to stay connected with one another, and makes it easy for you to share about CIC with your family and friends!
WOMEN’S CHAPTER ADVISORY BOARD WELCOMES CATHERINE PINGEL

The Women’s Chapter Advisory Board is pleased to welcome Catherine Pingel! She is serving as the secretary for the Board.

Catherine is a member of the South Bend/Elkhart Women’s Chapter, where she currently serves on the Service Council. She credits her first exposure to Christians in Commerce to her former boss and longtime CIC member, Jim Ganther (current president of the Tampa Men’s Chapter).

Catherine is the oldest of seven children and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in History from Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. She currently works as a commercial real estate broker and property manager in South Bend, Indiana. She is active on the Trinity School at Greenlawn Alumni Committee and serves in other capacities in the People of Praise Christian community.

Catherine can be reached at catpingel@gmail.com.

THE MOVE OF ECUMENISM THROUGH CIC IN UGANDA

By Aloysius Mugisa

When CIC was invited in 2005 to bring our message to Fort Portal, Uganda, it was through Bishop Robert Muhiriwa on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church. At that time, it was not possible to bring different denominations together at the same CIC events in Uganda. And in our early years in CIC, the only denomination to host our events was the Roman Catholic Church.

Recently, though, a number of Anglican priests have requested that CIC Uganda do spiritual programs with them at their Anglican establishments. This is a result of the open invitation extended by the CIC team in Uganda to all people of God to take part in our pastoral ministry.

During the Home Office team’s visit this past May, a number of Anglicans attended some of the CIC functions which were hosted by Roman Catholic churches. In particular, the couples’ talks that were given in Virika, Kitumbi, and Yerya had a ripple effect on the leaders of their respective churches. An Anglican priest by the name of Ezra began the move to invite CIC to minister to the Anglican Church. In a conversation with the team, he said, “Your ministry is very good and very much needed in our church. We ask that you come and help especially the marriage and family institution in our church.”

Since then we have done five missions to the Anglican Church; much thanks to the CIC Board and members who have made this financially possible. The Anglican priests fully attended these events and made contributions from time to time as well.

MEMBER GIFT CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Thanks to the generosity of many CIC brothers and sisters and friends of our ministry, we’ve almost attained our 2016 Member Gift Campaign (MGC) financial objective of $235,733. We are only $20,000 short of our goal. There is still time to complete a 2016 MGC online or mail in your gift to the CIC Home Office.

Through everyone’s generosity, either financially or through your prayers, we’re able to continue to change lives throughout the United States and Uganda with our 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. Thanks again, as we can continue to transform the marketplace environment here and abroad.

We will be kicking off our 2017 MGC in mid-November. We thank you in advance for your financial and prayer support.

MEN’S CHALLENGE WEEKENDS

Greater Phoenix
November 4-6, 2016
Fresno
November 11-13, 2016
Santa Cruz
November 11-13, 2016
Salinas
November 18-20, 2016
Mission Viejo
January 13-15, 2017
Orange County
January 13-15, 2017

WOMEN’S CHALLENGE WEEKENDS

Gilroy-Morgan Hill
May 5-7, 2017

Please send your events and stories to:

Terry Cassell
Fax: 703 205-0485
cassell@cicintl.org
7515 Lee Highway,
Falls Church, VA 22042
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