



Challenge Newsletter

Being Christ in the Workplace

Galatians 2:20

October, 2015

Christ in the Workplace

Salt of the Earth

By: Rich Preuss

Jesus says, "You are the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13). We ordinary people are salt to the earth. When we are "salty" we become extraordinarily good food!

In my lifetime, I have been blessed to know people who truly are salt to the world. When I am around these people I always come away the better for it. Not only that, but I want to be in the presence of those people as much as possible. I think most of us have had that kind of experience with someone in our lives.

Christians in Commerce has really helped me to see how I am salt in the marketplace. As I venture out into the world of work each day, I have encounters with all sorts of people. Most of these encounters involve the other 37 people with whom I work.

I also have daily encounters with clients, suppliers and customer service employees. In each encounter, these people are going to get a "taste" of me. Is that taste going to be salty? Is it going to be such that they want to encounter me again? Will they be better off for having encountered me?

Every conversation I have during the day is a point of connection with someone. In that connection, am I moving the kingdom of God forward or am I hindering its growth?

It's not that I need to preach the gospel to everyone in every encounter. My colleagues at work would find that oppressive and it would actually undermine my efforts at building the kingdom. But if my encounters allow the other person to experience love, patience, joy, kindness, humility, hope, respect and all those qualities of love found in 1 Corinthians 13, it allows me to connect

in a deeper way with them. It also allows them to connect with Christ dwelling in me, though they may not articulate it that way.

They may just say something like, "Rich is a good guy." But the reality is that Rich is filled with the Spirit of God and I am having an effect in each personal encounter throughout my day by being salt.

Recently, I went to buy bread for our family Lord's Day meal. The bread shop was empty and the girl at the counter barely looked at me when she asked me what I wanted. I pointed out a loaf and she sliced it for me. Then, she asked if there was anything else. Another loaf struck my fancy and I asked for it. Again, she sliced it for me.

It was a totally uneventful encounter with a person who was not unfriendly but didn't exude joy or enthusiasm either. She rang up the total and I paid her. As she gave me the receipt, she looked me in the eye for the first time. I smiled and said, "Thanks, and make it a great day!" A big grin came over her face as I turned to leave. At that point, I knew that was exactly what she needed to hear that morning.

Go and be salt to the world. When you are, the ordinary becomes extraordinary.

Rich Preuss is the president of the South Bend/Elkhart Chapter and serves on the CIC Board of Directors. He has been married to his wife Beth for 32 years, and together they have ten children. He, along with three others, is an owner of the Healy Group, a full service financial and risk management firm. Rich may be reached at richpreuss@alumni.nd.edu.

Upcoming Events

Annual Conference
October 16-17, 2015

Men's Weekends
Fresno
November 13-15, 2015
Greater Phoenix
November 13-15, 2015

Salinas
November 13-15, 2015
Orange County
January 15-17, 2016
Greater Phoenix
April 1-3, 2016

Women's Weekends
WCIC-Gilroy/Morgan Hill
April 16-17, 2016
WCIC-Fresno
April 29-May 1, 2016

Christians in Commerce News

Uganda Conferences

Greater Sacramento Challenge Weekend

2015 Annual Conference, pg. 4

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

Life Pleasing to God

week 1

Influence

By: Andrew Svorinic

Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. (Daniel 6:3)

The book of Daniel tells the story of a young man taken to Babylon following the conquest of his nation by the Babylonian Empire. It records the actions, prophecies, and visions of the prophet Daniel. Daniel earned great influence over his leaders, peers and competitors. He is best known for being cast into a lion's den, where God placed a muzzle on the big cats.

In this particular chapter, King Darius decrees that no one may pray to anyone but him for a month. Daniel refuses and is thrown to the lions. He survives and converts the king to praise God.

Last Father's Day, my family gave me a DVD called *The Intentional Man* by Dr. Randy Carlson. Dr. Carlson talks about the five most influential people in his life and describes the impact they have had on him. He demonstrates how each influenced him towards living an intentional life and how he learned to be of influence to others in turn.

There are many people who have influenced me and helped me to lead an intentional life. I would like to share my five.

The biggest influencer on my life is Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ has instructed me on how to live as a man and, more importantly, a human being. He has demonstrated to me his grace, mercy and peace in both my business and personal life. What has amazed me is that every time I fall into sinful ways he is there to pick me up, never leaving my side, and continues to love me unconditionally.

Second is my wife Carolyn. Carolyn is my high school sweetheart. I have known her almost 30 years and been married to her for 21 of them. She has influenced, motivated, and believed in me when nobody else did, including myself. Carolyn is a trusted partner, wonderful mother, and was the most influential person in my developing a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Third is my dad. He taught me how to lead my family and do whatever it takes to support them in every way possible. Growing up, he attended all my sporting events and was the loudest cheerleader in the building. He worked the graveyard shift and overtime to make sure that his family had the basics. Most importantly, he loved us!

Fourth are my three older brothers. I am the youngest of four boys in our family. My older brothers were always there for me. They demonstrated loyalty and leadership growing up. As we became adults they showed me how to be a good husband and father.

Last, but not least, is my father-in-law Mike. He taught me in my early adulthood about dreaming big, pursuing my goals, and that I can be successful at anything I set my mind on. He showed me how to take care of my wife and lead my family.

All of these people have helped me develop into the man I am today. Their influence, guidance and modeling have assisted me in continuing to be a good man and a man of faith in order to lead an intentional life.

Andrew is a member of the Mesa Chapter in Arizona. He has been a member of CIC since June, 2002. He is married to Carolyn, and they have two children, Elizabeth and Matthew. Andrew is a sales representative for a distribution company serving the hospitality industry. He can be reached at svorinic@cox.net.

Pray: Jesus, help me to utilize your grace, mercy, and peace to influence others to believe in you. Help me to be a beacon of light for you.

Reflect: What does influence mean to me? Whom do I influence? How do I use my influence in the world?

Discuss: Who has influenced your life? How have they influenced you to live an intentional life? Whom are you influencing to live an intentional life? How?

Men's October Reflections

week 2

Personal Sacrifice

By: Clem Richardson

A man's pride brings him low, but a man of lowly spirit gains honor. (Proverbs 29:23)

For the past sixteen years I have coached high school golf as a second occupation. When I was in high school, I wasted many years that could have been spent in the Lord's service as a result of the poor choices I made. I knew Jesus wanted me to be engaged with these young people and show them a better way.

The team had achieved many successes and this year's group looked to be the best ever. Halfway through the season, I was convicted that I was making a mess of things by trying to manipulate some of the outcomes in the player selection process. Only six students could make the top group, and I had foolishly seized ownership over the team.

I repented of my pride and prayed, asking Jesus to take back his rightful authority over the team. It was always his team. Through the end of the season I continued to communicate to the team and their parents that it was Jesus' team and I would pray to discern and do whatever he had in store for us.

God always hears and answers our prayers. Thankfully, the mess I'd made was cleared up. The triumph over our team's early struggles was truly magnificent. The bonds of love that were formed made it our best season yet, ending just one stroke short of a spot in the state championships.

The lesson for me was that although I may have grown more competent as a coach, the real purpose of my engagement has always been as Jesus' servant. Pride can sneak its way into even godly work, so we must check our motivation and humility to see that we remain on the proper track.

Pray: Lord Jesus, please help me to recognize the situations and relationships into which I have allowed pride to enter. Help me to always seek your will in all my life and service.

Reflect: In what circumstances have I relied on myself without considering Jesus' desires for me?

Discuss: When or where have you allowed the subtle snares of pride to enter into relationships or circumstances? What should you do about them?

week 3

Making a Difference in the Workplace

By: Clem Richardson

There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. (1 John 4:18)

For the past few years, I have worked as a Research and Development Consultant for an agricultural company that is owned by my longtime friends and former partners. I have reported to many managers but have primarily been under the authority of the V.P. of Marketing and Business Development.

When a change occurred, my new manager decided to hire a young Ph.D. with the title of Research and Development Director. Even with the assurance that the new hire was not intended to be my eventual replacement, my fears and anxieties were telling me otherwise! I was hurting physically and emotionally and every future mental scenario was a negative one. I had to apologize more than once for un-Christian responses that were born out of fear.

Having undergone a recent spiritual awakening while coaching, I was again led to prayer. I received a similar sense that Jesus was in charge and had always had a good plan for my life. I remembered all the past times that the fears I was experiencing had been lies and half-truths twisted by the evil one. However, whenever I had put my life in God's loving hands, things had always worked out better than I could have imagined.

My trust in Jesus was restored and the fears went away. The new hire turned out to be a very nice young man and we became friends immediately. We are now working together to make the company even better. The icing on the cake was that I wound up being named Employee of the Quarter!

Anxiety and fear can take on a life of their own if we let our imaginations run. Jesus' plan is always the best one; we need only to trust.

Pray: Lord Jesus, when worries, fear and anxious thoughts arise, please bring me the comfort that comes from trusting in you and your plan.

Reflect: When have I let my imagination run away with negativity born from fear and doubt? How did I get through it?

Discuss: Share about times when you have let your imagination run to a place of negativity. What were the results? What did you learn?

Men's October Reflections

(continued)

week 4

Holding Each Other Accountable

By: Clem Richardson

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.
(John 14:26)

Christians in Commerce provides many tools for personal spiritual growth. The Annual Conference, Challenge Weekends, weekly Chapter and Service Council meetings, our local "First Saturday in the Spirit" gatherings, and weekly Challenge Group sessions have helped me to learn and improve. In particular, Challenge Groups have consistently been my foundation for behavior modification.

Sometimes a brother will seek guidance from the others concerning a specific issue in his life. Other times, he may follow up with someone who has asked to be held accountable for following through on a certain resolution.

However, the primary source of my own growth in Challenge Groups is the Holy Spirit's guidance in two main areas: inspiration and conviction.

Often, as I listen to a brother's sharing on one of the discussion questions, I am inspired to imitate the speaker's good works. For example, I was encouraged during one such sharing to foster a prayer life with my wife. We succeeded after a few failed attempts, and the rewards have been abundant for us both. Recently, we met the wife of a friend who had been undergoing chemotherapy. There was a wonderful moment of connection when we were able to share honestly that we were both praying for her every day.

The Spirit also convicts me during these meetings. While a brother is sharing about his struggles to stay on the right path, I might become convicted of some of my own mistakes that need correction. I usually put up some kind of a fight initially, trying to rationalize or justify my behavior. However, I am eventually led to some apology or other action that is needed in order to remedy the situation. The apologies mentioned in last week's article came about from such a conviction.

The Holy Spirit always guides us to a better us!

Clem is a member and past president of the Salinas Valley Chapter. He works in R&D primarily making salads for a fresh produce grower/processor. Clem also coaches high school golf. He and his wife, Barbara, have three adult children and two grandchildren. He can be contacted at clem@churchbrothers.com.

2015 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

October 16-17, 2015

Doubletree by Hilton Hotel Phoenix Tempe



Four General Sessions

- A Call to Make a Difference at Work
- Influencing Our Work and the Workplace
- Touching the Lives of Co-workers
- Living Extraordinary Lives in Ordinary Ways

Register now at www.cicintl.org/register2015

Pray: Lord Jesus, please keep us together with open ears and hearts to strengthen our willing spirits. Through your Spirit lead us to increasing acts of love.

Reflect: Do I recognize the Holy Spirit's guidance in my life, especially when I am gathered with others in the name of Jesus?

Discuss: How have you allowed the Holy Spirit to inspire you to good works? Talk about a time of blessing that followed from obeying an inspiration or conviction from the Holy Spirit.

Women's October Reflections

week 2

Personal Sacrifice

By: Sandra Paiva

"If you can?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for one who believes." Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" (Mark 9: 23-24)

I have to admit that I am like the father in this passage from the Gospel of Mark. I have faith that Jesus can and will act in the power of God but often struggle with the belief that he will act on my personal behalf.

Last February my husband had a medical emergency. As his health started to improve, I began to experience feelings of depression. I could not handle the stress and anxiety of caring for him, my grandchildren, and problems at work, as well as dealing with financial insecurity. I kept asking all the "What if's", telling myself that if this bad thing happens, then this other will bad thing will happen, and so on and so forth, sending my thoughts into a downward spiral of negativity.

At the next WCIC meeting I asked prayers for the depression I was experiencing. One of the sisters reminded me of a little book she had given me called The New Bible Cure for Depression and Anxiety by Don Colbert, M.D.

After the meeting I found the copy and decided to bring the book along with me on a trip to read on the airplane. As I read, I realized that by feeding myself negative thought patterns, I was contributing to my own depression. Instead, I learned to recognize that when I am anxious I can read God's word and experience his peace.

Pray: Father, all things are possible for those who believe. I surrender my negative thinking. I realize that negative thoughts and words destroy my faith and without faith it is impossible to please you. I refuse to dwell in negativity. Instead, I will meditate on your word.

Reflect: When have I struggled with unbelief? How has this affected my life, relationships, or work?

Discuss: Share about a time in your life when you experienced negative thinking. How do you speak the word of God into your life?

week 3

Redeeming Our Father's Creation

By: Sandra Paiva

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?" This too is meaningless— a miserable business! (Ecclesiastes 4: 8)

I work on a college campus. It is a challenge to be Christ in a workplace where being openly Christian is not considered "politically correct". Sometimes, like the author of Ecclesiastes, I feel that the work I do is utterly meaningless because I am unable to share my faith in the mist of unbelievers. However, I have come to realize that God has placed me here to be not just a witness of faith, but also an encouragement to those employees and students who are brothers and sisters in Christ.

For example, when a coworker received a layoff notice, we were able to join together in prayer that God would provide for her and her husband. At various times we have encouraged one another and prayed for other staff members. A student intern with whom I work was able to talk about her faith with other students who had at one time been believers. It was amazing to watch her share her faith without any hesitation.

Another time, I visited a colleague who was very ill and in the hospital facing surgery. I felt the nudge to ask him if he wanted prayer but I didn't follow through. That night, he called me to express how fearful he was about undergoing the procedure. I asked him if we could pray. He said yes, and my husband and I prayed together for his healing. My friend made it through the surgery and we continue to pray for his recovery.

Pray: Lord, continue to use me in the marketplace, and help me to be of service to others. I pray that I may be a light that shines in the darkness so that others can see you in my life.

Reflect: How do I see myself in the marketplace? When have I obeyed God's prompting and allowed him to use me? What was the result?

Discuss: Give an example of how God has used you in your marketplace.

Women's October Reflections

(continued)

week 4

The Fruits of Our Relationships as Sisters

By: Sandra Paiva

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4: 6 – 7)

When my husband Harold had an aortic aneurysm and was hospitalized, I immediately sent out prayer requests for his recovery to the CIC members (men and women) in the Santa Cruz and Gilroy chapters. God heard our prayers! When Harold went back to the doctor six weeks later, he was told that the vein in his heart was completely healed.

One of my greatest challenges during this time was the medical bills. At the time of the emergency, Harold and I did not have health insurance. As you can image, the total in hospital bills, medical fees and doctors' bills was high. My husband and I live on a budget. We could not afford to pay all of these bills, so we continued to pray for God's provision.

We were encouraged through reading a CIC article by a lawyer whose client had been involved in an accident. The client's attitude was to "wait and see" what God would do in his case. We decided to "wait and see" what God would do for us in our own situation.

As we waited, many of the medical bills were reduced and we able to pay them off. We were still to hear about the hospital bill, but no word came. Finally, after more than four months of waiting on the Lord, we received a letter from the hospital informing us that they had reduced our bill by 90%! As of this writing, we have paid all our medical debts. Praise God!

We both want to say "Thank you" to all our brothers and sisters who faithfully prayed for us.

Sandra Paiva is a member of the WCIC-Santa Cruz Chapter. She is married to Harold, with whom she has three adult children and three grandchildren. Sandra works as part-time faculty member at a community college and is also a part-time ROP instructor. She can be reached at sapaiva1@yahoo.com.

Workplace Stories Needed

This year we want to put a special emphasis on expanding the contributions to our Workday Reflection emails. We especially are looking for personal stories related to fulfilling our mission in the workplace.

Don't worry if writing is not your talent! We will edit all submissions as needed. If you don't even know where to start, simply tell us your story over the phone or via email and we will take care of the rest.

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.

To serve in this capacity or to share your story, please contact Therese Rosenthal at info@cicintl.org or 703-205-5600.

Pray: Father, thank you for your mercy and grace in our lives. Thank you for your provision.

Reflect: Sometimes in our circumstances we have to wait on the Lord to get answers to our prayers. What is my attitude when I am waiting for his answer? Do I trust in God's provision? Do I trust in his guidance?

Discuss: How has God answered your prayers lately?

Christians in Commerce NEWS

Christians in Commerce Prayer

Uganda Conferences

By: Aloysius Mugisa

Recently, we held two conferences in the same month, both of which were a great success!

The first took place August 20th-23rd. We held it in the town of Fort Portal. We asked a priest to lead this weekend, which was attended mainly by people who work with government and NGOs. He gave us the go-ahead saying, "You have come to give me a hand in my own work, how dare I refuse help?"

So, we started inviting individuals to the weekend. We would reach out to them personally or call them on the phone. In the end, we had 32 attendees.

At the end of the weekend many people gave testimonies as to how they had been touched. One man said, "I do not remember when I last attended a spiritual function apart from going to church on Sunday. And I can't imagine how CIC came to think of inviting me to this weekend. God must have decided to go after me, his lost sheep."

Our second conference was held in a place called Kamwenge. It ran from August 27th-30th. The word of God was powerfully proclaimed and the Holy Spirit was mightily present. Miracles of healing and deliverance were worked. About 1,800 people attended this second conference. Praise God!



Greater Sacramento Challenge Weekend

By: Doug Demetre

The Greater Sacramento Chapter held its most recent Challenge Weekend from August 28th-29th. There were a total of 28 attendees present, 8 of whom were first-timers.

It was clear from the men's feedback that the participants greatly valued the fellowship they shared during the event. One brother commented that the best part of the weekend for him was "the group discussions, which allowed me to share my feelings." Several others expressed that the sharings and personal stories had deepened their faith and brought them closer together, with one participant remarking how much he appreciated "connecting with like-minded brothers".

The talks were also a home-run! Attendees described them as "excellent", "heart-felt", and "very personable" and expressed admiration for the speakers as well.

Just one day after the weekend ended, one of the new attendees was in a restaurant with his family. Out of nowhere, a man walked up to him and said, "My grandmother just died." With that, the stranger walked away. The new CIC brother went after the man and prayed with him in front of the entire restaurant. He said he never would have done this prior to the Challenge Weekend.

One brother summed it all up when he said, "After this weekend, I feel challenged to be a better Christian at work, at home, and in society." After all, isn't that what it's all about?

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



Christ
ALIVE!

Galatians 2:20
“...I no longer live, but
Christ lives in me.”

www.christiansincommerce.org



The Challenge Newsletter is published monthly by Christians In Commerce International (CIC). All material in the Challenge Newsletter is copyrighted by Christians In Commerce International and should not be copied without explicit prior written permission. All scripture taken from the Holy Bible: New International Version ©1978 by the New York International Bible Society, used by permission.

Founders

Louis Grams
John Mooney
Cyril Rose

Board of Directors

Terry Cassell (President)
Kirby Falkenberg (Chairman)
Stevan Becker
Art Klaum
Dan Kuplic
Rich Preuss

CIC Office

Terry Cassell, President
Jon Cassidy, Operations Manager
Therese McNichol, Director of Administration
Emily Hunt, Administrative Assistant

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

www.christiansincommerce.org



7515 Lee Highway, Falls Church, VA 22042