

# A CLEAN START

It was a busy Saturday at the cleaners. The lobby was filled with mostly women and a man holding a small child. Joe was called to the front counter. Finding out that Joe was the owner, the man threw a pair of pants at him, hitting him in the chest. Then he unleashed a torrent of expletives, and began to scream about what a lousy business Joe operated.

The child in his arms began to cry and the customers and employees were wide-eyed with fear. The pants had a large iron burn in one of the legs. Joe's cleaners did not use dry irons so they couldn't have caused the damage. That information only infuriated the man even more.

Joe asked the value of the pants. The man said they were worth \$565 since they were part of a suit. Joe went to his office, wrote a check, and took it to the man. He snatched it out of Joe's hand and stormed off. About 20 minutes later, Joe was called to the front counter to meet a lady with a concerned look on her face.

She introduced herself as the wife of the angry man. With tears in her eyes she held out the check Joe had written moments earlier, and asked, "Why did you do it?" Joe told her that he served a mighty God who would have been disappointed in him if he had allowed her husband to leave in that state of mind. He was concerned for the safety of other drivers and for their baby.

"He went to the wrong cleaners," she said.

"No," Joe said. "He came to the right cleaners."

Joe has experienced much forgiveness from his past. He is indeed a new creation. He is more than just a virtuous man doing good deeds; he is a member of the family of God manifesting the characteristics of Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

This new life that Joe is living manifests the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. The fruit of the Spirit was not new to Paul's first century audience. Every good Greek or Roman admired them.

Paul's letters were saying something radical. It is the power of the Holy Spirit that is expressing the life of the Creator in his people.

Because they shared in Jesus' death and resurrection, Christians were not imitating him but alive with the very characteristics of God himself.

The implications are huge. Without the Holy Spirit and the characteristics of Christ, we cannot glorify God in our jobs or transform the world.

God does not promise us wealth or status, but he does promise to share his very life in us. As we share in our Father's work, we draw on this life. We can be ready and willing, but our ability comes from the Holy Spirit at work within us.

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The fruit of the Spirit is God being manifested in us as it was in Joe. This is incredibly good news. This life is ours, in Christ Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The epilogue to the cleaners story is that the man later called Joe and asked if he was welcome to return and be a customer. Over the next nine years, the man shared how his encounter and Joe's mercy was a turning point for him. It played a big part in his healing from anger issues.

*This is one of 20 Snapshot Podcasts. To hear more go to [workingforourfather.com/podcasts/snapshots/](http://workingforourfather.com/podcasts/snapshots/)*



CIC has really helped me to merge my spiritual life and my business life. Many people live separate lives when it comes to their spiritual life and what they do in the workplace. CIC has helped me to develop a mindset to be a better person to my coworkers. It has made me a happier person too. I start out Mondays with my Challenge Group and enjoy laughing and talking about God. It's a good start to the week.

**Steve Lieser**

# COWORKERS IN CHRIST

How many times had I missed the opportunity to be his disciple in the workplace? If I know the Lord, why don't my colleagues know? The Lord had blessed me with a Christ-centered childhood, yet I found myself being selfish with my knowledge. Somehow, I became so consumed with my own faith journey that I was keeping the Good News all to myself.

I can't keep Christ to myself; souls are at stake. The Great Commission must come first on my daily checklist.  
What's on the top of your to-do list today?

**Sophia Norman**



**“CALLING IS THE TRUTH THAT GOD CALLS US TO HIMSELF SO DECISIVELY THAT EVERYTHING WE ARE, EVERYTHING WE DO, AND EVERYTHING WE HAVE IS INVESTED WITH SPECIAL DEVOTION, DYNAMISM, AND DIRECTION LIVED OUT AS A RESPONSE TO HIS SUMMONS AND SERVICE.”**

OS GUINNESS, *THE CALL*