

Chairman of the Board Update

Recently, Christians in Commerce initiated a new effort to reach and communicate effectively with the “next generation.” It is driven by our desire to be faithful to our mission and pass it on. Over the last two years, this new direction has been brought to life in the Challenge Newsletter, Annual Conference, workday emails, new videos, podcasts, and more.

Technological advances are expanding the opportunities to reach, engage, and organize young Christian men and women. We are launching a new movement of the Holy Spirit by equipping the next generation with practical content, spiritual insights, and first-hand accounts to make their faith active in their workplaces.

In 2016, we created a ministry plan to guide us. A long-time CIC member funded it out of a love for our mission and a desire to reach the next generation. It identified:

- The message needed to engage a younger generation.
- The ministry model to deliver this message effectively.
- The needs, skills, and technology to execute, and
- The costs and time needed to fully implement this project.

TRUSTING IN THE LORD

When presented with this proposed ministry plan two years ago, we took it seriously. Our financials allowed us to invest in the new efforts even knowing it was only sustainable for a few years.

The alternative was to continue to live on our current resources, and slowly die out as we aged out. After much prayer, we discerned that the Lord wanted us to step out in faith. If we were faithful to what we felt he was asking us to do, we believed he would supply the resources. We would move forward, a step at a time, trusting him to guide us along the way.

Our initial efforts are bearing good fruit.

ENCOURAGING RESULTS

The first year we were able to produce the new “Working for Our Father” video series. I’ve experienced its impact first-hand. That series added 35 new members in the South Bend/Elkhart chapter, doubling the size of our chapter in two years.

Our *Nine to Five Podcasts* have grown in popularity since first introducing them in January 2018. Each month, they receive more than 2,000 listens. Almost 3,000 people receive our Workday emails and the new format has more than doubled our readership.

Our redesign of October’s Annual Conference was enthusiastically received. We had engaging outside speakers. Visitors from local companies in the Twin Cities registered as guests for a specially-formatted first day. We featured representatives from Christian employee groups at Google, Exxon Mobil, Medtronic, and Ameriprise who told us about their own experience. We’ve been featuring the talks, “Christ at Work” stories, and panel discussions on our podcasts.

Jermy Jamison from Exxon Mobil shared that over 100 employees attended the video series. You can hear account on the Nine to Five podcast titled [Faith in the Fortune 500 \(Part 2\)](#).

At the local level, the new materials are engaging younger people and they are joining us. They are involved in chapter leadership and are moving our evangelistic efforts forward in bringing Christ into the workplace. Seeing lives change has been an inspiring catalyst for growth.

THE HARD TRUTH

We are at a serious financial crossroads. The financial support must come in this year or we will have to make significant changes and cuts, and step back planned efforts. Last year, we had to make a significant staff reduction to balance our budgets.

In 2018, 390 participants donated \$290,000. This has been our primary source of funding. We have been able to supplement this with additional fund-raising efforts over the years, but it is challenging and time consuming.

Our best estimate puts our membership at 600 to 700 people. Unfortunately, many people who participate in our Challenge Groups and Chapter meetings are not in our database. We also have almost 3,000 who receive our Workday Reflections, thousands who listen monthly to our podcasts and visit our web sites. It's clear that only a portion of the people who use our materials are actually funding the ministry.

We want our resources to be readily accessible, adaptable, and free of charge. We want to give the gospel away. We need to upgrade our website, create an app for easy access, and generate new videos. We need to reach the next generation.

SHINE BRIGHT! LIGHT THE DARKNESS.

This theme captures well our mission to the world. Jesus tells us that we are the light of the world. Matthew 5:14

He goes on to say: "Let your light shine before others that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:16

Will you help us inflame a new generation of Christians with the power of the Holy Spirit?

- The Lord has given you stewardship of his money. How does CIC fit into that?
- Young people are checking out of churches. It's with co-workers and friends that they are most likely to experience Christ. This is where Christians can best shine and let the light of Christ be seen.
- Be specific and ask the Lord point blank, "How much do you want me to give?"

If you've already increased your pledge for this year, we thank you. If you are a current contributing member and haven't yet made your pledge, please prayerfully consider increasing your contribution by \$10 or \$25 a month.

If you are a non-contributing participant consider becoming a contributing member with a contribution of \$25 a month.

Please prayerfully discuss this with the Lord. For some this ask may be a stretch. But for some, the Lord will put it on your heart to give significantly more.

OUR MOST IMPORTANT INVESTMENT

When all is said and done, our most important investment is building the kingdom of God. The Lord has given CIC a great mission to bring Christ into the workplace. These are the stories of men and women, like you, whose lives have changed dramatically because of their intersection with CIC.

We are at a critical turning point. Important choices will be made based on our projected financial situation. If you haven't pledged, it's important you do so now. Please spend time with the Lord and determine how you can respond to this critical need.

Thank you for your consideration.

Glory to God!

Rich Preuss
Chairman of the Board