

THE

FLAME

WORKLIGHT™
July 2022

Good Relations Take Work

By Rich Preuss



We worship a triune God. The three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have a dynamic relationship of love. Central to that is their desire to bring each of us into that relationship.

Many years ago, we had an ownership change at work. We went from six owners to three when half of the owners retired together. The three remaining owners were very serious Christians. Despite that, a lot of contention developed. For me, it was embarrassing. How could this be? Through prayer, patience, and the intervention of the Holy Spirit, the problem was resolved.

I learned many things during that difficult time but developing and maintaining good relationships was central. First, I learned that daily prayer is important. Prior to that, my prayer time had been sporadic and often short. I was a good person who was coasting.

As my prayer life was reinvigorated, the Holy Spirit was able to change me.

Second, I learned that relationships with coworkers need constant care and attention. I must work hard at listening to and understanding my associates. I must work hard to create a culture of accountability where both I and my associates communicate what we want, what our expectations are of each other, and when tasks will be accomplished. I must assume the best of my coworkers. When difficulties arise, usually due to poor communication, I need to make sure I personally work through the difficulties with those involved and not do it via email. Personal communication is much richer and clearer than email. We have run afoul many times because of incorrectly interpreted emails that unfortunately evoke terse responses.

Continued on page 6

INSIDE: REFLECTIONS

Building Good Relationships

*Love one another, deeply from the heart.
(1 Peter 1:22)*

A core value of WorkLight is building strong brotherhood and sisterhood. We've pledged ourselves to join together to be Christ in our relationships and workplaces.

In Christ, we've taken an interest in each other's welfare in good times and bad. We don't always get along perfectly. However, because we are committed, we hang in there and begin to see God's love break through. And so, we start seeing Christ in each other.

Is God doing this just for our own benefit? Or does he have something bigger in mind? Together, we are to be a part of the life of Christ in the world. In Christ, his life is meant to pour out through us and impact others.



Let us build on what he's given us. Let us be filled with love and compassion for others. Let's say "Come and see. Hang with us. Join us on a weekend. Come to our Small Group. Come experience the life of Christ."

July Reflections: Pages 2-4

REFLECTIONS WEEK 1

Friendships Change Lives

By Steve Lieser

... Go in peace, for we have sworn friendship with each other in the name of the Lord...
(1 Samuel 20:42)

Throughout the majority of my life, I walked in my Christian faith with very little community. I didn't surround myself with other authentic Christians and I kept my faith very private in my personal and professional life. I had few people in my life I could share the joys, sorrows, and challenges of living a life with Christ. Then one day I began a friendship that changed my life forever.

In 2016, I started a new job and met Aaron. We had many things in common and quickly became close friends. After a few months of getting to know each other, he asked me if I wanted to go to his Christian Small Group meetings. Before attending my first WorkLight meeting, I was nervous to be vulnerable and share my life and faith with these men.

Once I attended my first meeting all those worries washed away. I quickly developed a deep connection and love for these new men in my life and felt the Holy Spirit in our conversations. We dive deep into vulnerable topics without apprehension, drawing upon the Holy Spirit and our personal experiences to provide one another advice on how to be better coworkers, husbands, and fathers.

We share a meal together, drink some fantastic coffee, and laugh at each other's stories. We pray for one another and check in on each other when one of us is struggling. We have shared our lives together through the joys of bringing new children into the family to the sorrows of losing close family members. We have walked together in our journey with Christ, and it makes navigating through challenges so much more fruitful. Now after 5+ years I call these men who were once strangers my brothers.

Living an authentic Christian life is full of many joys and challenges and the Lord wants us to experience this life within a community. My prayer life is stronger, the courage to live authentic Christianity in the workplace has grown, and my love for Jesus has

become deeper and more intimate because of the knowledge imparted to me and the love given to me by my Challenge Group brothers. I pray that everyone will have these bonds of love that help them on their path to Heaven.

Steve Lieser is a business consultant in the Twin Cities in Minnesota where he raises four children with his wife, Kristina.

PRAY

Lord, bless me with genuine love and friendship to guide and strengthen me on my Christian journey.

REFLECT

What people has God brought into your life to share the joys and challenges of living an authentic Christian life? How do they help you grow in your faith?

DISCUSS

What are some ways that you can build Christian community in your personal and professional life? Are there people that you feel the Holy Spirit is calling you to invite into your life with Christ?

OCTOBER 14-16 • PHOENIX, ARIZONA • • • •



Our Annual Conference will be a National Challenge Weekend. Let's mark our 40th year as a ministry by fostering a movement of the Holy Spirit for the next generation of igniters.

NATIONAL CHALLENGE WEEKEND

Learn more at WorkLight.org/2022NationalChallengeWeekend

REFLECTIONS WEEK 2

Redeemed

By Jim Ingram

Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. (Hebrews 13:1)

Aaron was once labeled a thief, a felon, and a drug addict. The Lord has given him a new name: Redeemed.

I first met Aaron at Teen Challenge (a Christian drug and alcohol recovery program) when he approached me because he heard I was an electrician and asked if I could teach him how to become one. His request inspired me to accept the Lord's call to become an electrical instructor.

During the time when Aaron was my student, he also graduated from Teen Challenge and started living in a halfway house. I would pick him up on my way to the projects and drop him off on the way back, which allowed

us to put into practice what he had learned at Teen Challenge.

Soon, Aaron began coming to Chapter meetings, where he loved the camaraderie with other Christ-centered men who accepted him, despite his background. They were supportive, which encouraged him to share freely his struggle with drugs and crime and how God was working in his life.

Aaron was good for us, too. He enthusiastically helped his Challenge Group plan and implement seminars and a Challenge Weekend. When the National Conference came to Minneapolis, Minnesota, Aaron was one of the speakers and shared his success story.

Aaron and I talk regularly, and recently he shared how the Lord used a thread to weave the tapestry of his redemption which included Teen Challenge, Christians in Commerce (WorkLight), and a loyal girlfriend who never gave up on him.

Jim Ingram lives in Burnsville, Minnesota, with his wife Brenda. In addition to Worklight, Jim leads students on service projects in Minneapolis and goes wherever someone needs help.

PRAY

For the broken and wounded in our society and for an end to the evil of drugs.

REFLECT

Are there people we consciously avoid out of fear? How do we react to those society considers worthless?

DISCUSS

How has addiction to drugs and alcohol affected us, our families, or those we know. How can we be part of God's plan for the addict's redemption?

REFLECTIONS WEEK 3

Wisdom and Perspective

By Clem Richardson

... but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. (Proverbs 18:24)

I have participated for many years in Small Groups and found brothers who are in for the long haul. As such, we recognize that when two or more are gathered in his name, Jesus and his Holy Spirit guide us to strive to be a better version of ourselves. We have become friends and brothers and know one another increasingly better.

We pray, study, and discuss using The Flame newsletter lessons. We share the ups and downs of our lives; family challenges, work relationships, and our inspirations on how we can better be ambassadors for Jesus.

Recently, we worked through the articles on trials and trusting in God in

seemingly unfair circumstances. At work there have been so many challenges brought on by COVID-19 rules, fears, and isolation. Coworkers are moving on, not showing up, and likely dealing with all sorts of physical and mental health issues with their families.

After years primarily in sales, I became a consultant for my former partners in many areas of the company. My daily mission has been to care for and build relationships with my coworkers while helping make our company better each day. I went to work on a Monday to find that my new manager in my primary area of responsibility had restructured our department and no longer needed my services. Naturally, I was hurt and wondered if this was the beginning of my retirement?

The following day at my Small Group, I received wisdom, love, and perspective from my brothers. I was encouraged to treat the manager with the love and respect of a child of God and to get past pride. My brothers prayed for me and helped me put my trust in God even in this. God bless our Small Groups.

Clem Richardson has been an active member of the Salinas Chapter since 1988. He and his wife, Barbara, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in September. He's a consultant in the fresh produce industry.

PRAY

Lord Jesus, thank you for the people you put in our lives who walk beside us, care for us, and encourage us to be our best for you.

REFLECT

Am I willing to invest the time with others in a Small Group to learn and grow in love for Jesus and one another?

DISCUSS

What is it that brings me to this group? Am I willing to branch out and start another Small Group, either as a temporary guide or a permanent fixture?

REFLECTIONS WEEK 4

God Squad

By Diane McGinty

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)

The Gilroy, California, WorkLight sisters have a unique way of building relationships with an extensive and ever-constant prayer chain.

We pray for one another for every kind of need—from finding a more suitable job, meeting the right spouse, finding the right buyer for a house that is being sold, a stronger faith for our loved ones, and many health issues. Within minutes, prayers are shared via text, email, in person, or on the phone.

One of our sisters has a daughter who calls from across the country to ask her mother to have the “God Squad” pray

for her needs. Our sisters forward the prayers from our group to the people and families in need of prayer, and soon 16 texts and 35 emails potentially reach 50–100 people. Even nurses, hearing the prayers read to their patients, have been touched by our prayers.

A few years back, one of our sisters was involved in a mild collision with a bicyclist while driving to our meeting. The cyclist dropped his grocery bag, and many of the groceries were damaged. She drove him back to the store and bought him new groceries. Another one of our members drove him and his bicycle home. During all of this, the rest of us were praying fervently that these outreach efforts would help the young man and that this wouldn’t escalate to something more serious. In the end, the young man said that he had never had so many people reach out to help him, and hearing that we are members of Christians in Commerce said he was inspired to go back to church.

It’s important to ask for prayers and open up our hearts to help those in need because it brings God’s healing, increases our faith, and builds healthy relationships while also providing comfort. It’s authentic. It allows us to

trust and love, just like Jesus, and bring the gospel into his Kingdom. The sharing of prayer bonds us closer together as a community of love.

Diane McGinty lives in Gilroy, California, with her husband Kevin, and has been involved with CIC/WorkLight since the 1980s. They are blessed with five grown children and 15 wonderful grandchildren.

PRAY

Thank you, Father, that you are always ready to hear our prayers. Help us stay in communion with you all day long.

REFLECT

When was a time that prayer was your only option?

DISCUSS

Share an experience when the prayers of your WorkLight friends in Christ made a difference in your life.

PRESIDENT'S NOTE



Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters. (Colossians 3:23)

Relationships as blessings, work, and ... ministry?

What are the most significant relationships in your life? Starting with Jesus Christ, perhaps you also have a spouse, children, neighbors, small group, and colleagues. Or you have lived a life where your earthly relationships are currently great-grandchildren, friends with whom you volunteer, church committee members, a long-standing CIC chapter, and the staff at your favorite coffee shop.

We all know relationships can be blessings and require work to build and maintain. But could relationships also be ministry? When we answer the call to be stewards of God’s creation, then the answer is “yes.”

Scripture shows us in myriad ways that the light and presence of Christ is within us. Just look at Romans 8:10, 2 Corinthians 4:6–7, and Galatians 1:15–16. Still not convinced? How about Galatians 2:20, Galatians 4:19, Ephesians 3:17, Colossians 1:27, and 2 Thessalonians 1:10?

When two people with Jesus within them come together, ministry happens. Any one of us can shine the light of Christ into the lives of others, as described in Matthew 5:16. Together we can share in the goodness,

righteousness, and truth of Ephesians 5:9. As the hands and feet of Jesus we come together to serve God and bear witness to the great light in the darkness of Matthew 4:16. Emmaus walk, anyone?

As the Apostle Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 13:15, “... do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you?” Let us be encouraged that relationships are ministry, and that the Lord blesses you with the power of the Holy Spirit to shine the light of Christ through all relationships.

With you in Christ,

Wes



Mirroring God's Love

By Steve Becker

Our Small Groups build strong relationships when fanning the flames of brotherhood and sisterhood. The stories we are telling this month didn't happen without personal commitment, life in Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit.

It's helpful to understand what Paul means when using the phrase "in Christ." What's being emphasized is its three critical dimensions—life in Jesus Christ, life as members of the body of Christ, and life in the Holy Spirit.

Our life in Christ is not without warts and flaws, but it is an amazing life when we stand back and look at it. It is not all it can be and it's not all it will be, but it is so much more than we imagined.

We pour ourselves out in our love for God and one another, not without personal effort and sacrifice. We pledge ourselves

to be together in an outreach to those in the workplace. In an age that celebrates independence and individuality, we are doing something radical together in love—in Christ who is love.

Drawn together in the power of the Holy Spirit, with Christ and as Christ, the Father gives us an actual experience of his nature—which is love. Our brotherhood and sisterhood transforms us from an abstract idea into something very concrete—the love of Christ.

And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with an ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit. (2 Corinthians 3:18)

The Greek word Paul uses for reflect invites us to think of our images in

a mirror. The transformation Paul is referring to though can be seen and will become clearer and over time, it becomes more visible and noticeable. It's the Spirit taking relationships in Christ and making them brighter images of the Lord.

As we share our lives in Christ, the love in our brotherhood and sisterhood begins to mirror the love of our triune God. Now, when we look at our brothers and sisters, we see that the Holy Spirit has been at work. We see it on their faces. It's the reflected glory of the Lord.

That's what we want others to see in us. We do them a disservice if we don't say to them, "Come and see." See our lives together in Christ. We are people like you. We're not free from the struggles and pain of the world. Our loved ones die. We have sickness and lose jobs. Not everyone or everything cooperates with us. Resisting temptation is an ongoing battle. Relationships don't always go well. We don't always agree on everything.

But we have hope, we have faith; but, most of all, we have the love of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. It transforms us to reflect the very glory of God.

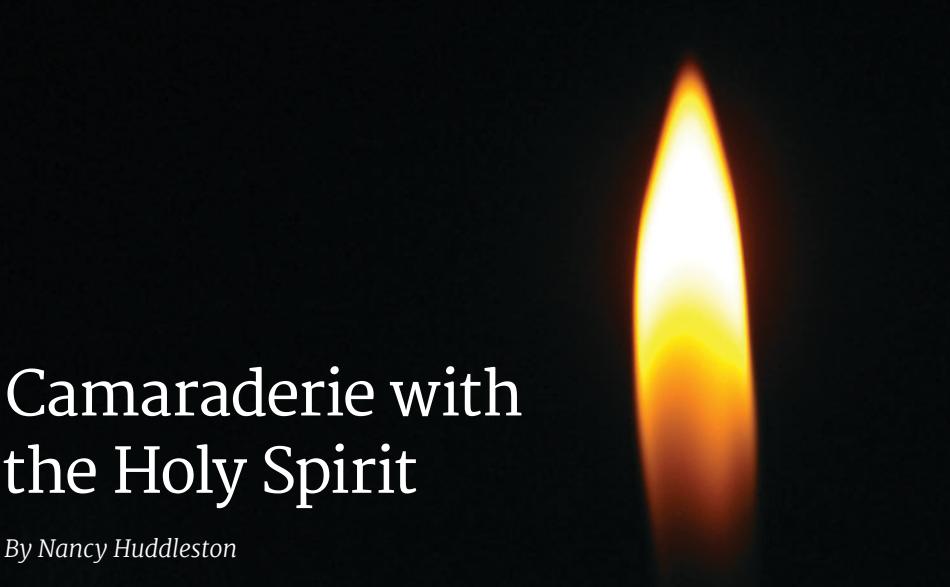
Come and see. Hang with us. Join us on a Challenge Weekend. Sit together in one of our Small Groups. Join in WorkLight and share in our brotherhood and sisterhood. It is the life of Christ.

Steve Becker is on WorkLight's Board of Directors and currently volunteers as the Managing Editor of *The Flame* newsletter and *The Spark* emails.



FORWARD ➤ a spark

If a Spark Reflection reminds you of someone, that's a Holy Spirit nudge. Forward it on and ignite a movement of the Holy Spirit in their life.



Camaraderie with the Holy Spirit

By Nancy Huddleston

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." (John 15:5-6)

If you've ever wondered where the Lord is leading you, maybe it's time to attend a Challenge Weekend.

The providential way that 41 men gathered at Tonto Rim Christian Camp in Payson, Arizona, in late February reminded Bart Tesoriero of Saint Paul's injunction to "not forsake meeting together, but to encourage one another all the more" (Hebrews 10:25).

Although Bart has attended numerous other Challenge Weekends, this one was different because of the mix of young and old men, first timers and veterans. "That inspired those who have been to weekends to give what we have learned and help the younger generation grow," he said, "I found myself called to be an example to others."

As a result, Bart said he received a special gift during the time of praying over one another. "A brother told me the Holy Spirit was giving me the word of knowledge. He said, 'I see a vision of a tree with fruit on it, and I see you giving this fruit to others. God is calling you to pick the fruit and give it to others.'"

Listening to the call of the Holy Spirit, building relationships, and

sharing the good news all speak to the Challenge Weekend's call to action.

President Wesley Farrow shared WorkLight's new goal is to get 500 mid-career igniters on Challenge Weekends by 2025. These igniters are projected to launch 250 new Small Groups and engage 1,250 brothers and sisters as active WorkLight participants. As each of these go on to impact their workplaces, the reach climbs to 10,000 professionals becoming aware of this movement of the Holy Spirit.

Wes saw the possibility of fulfilling that goal during his first Challenge Weekend in Arizona. He was moved by the relationships that developed out of the trust that was built in just a few days. "As humans, we have a profound pattern of trying to understand, plan, question, and pull clarity out of everything," he said, "But at the weekend, we all learned to hold on—that you don't have to figure it all out and that God is in control. There is a profound peace to that."

What's more, Wes said, "the solid backbone of the weekend is based on the Challenge Weekend basics (speakers guide, participant guide, etc.), handled logistically by a group of Christians eager to spread the fire of this ministry, and lit up into transformative flames by the power of

the Holy Spirit. Something comes alive when a group gathers to hear these talks, consider how they reflect in the lived experience of another human, and then reflect on how they shine light into each of their own lives."

Nancy Huddleston is a member of WorkLight's editorial team. She and her husband Mike live in Burnsville, Minnesota, and she is a freelance writer and editor.

Good Relations Take Work

Continued from page 1

Third, I have found in the two great commandments the underlying notion of love of self. Central to our happiness is good relationships. Much depression can be traced back to relationship problems. When I began to see myself as God's beloved son, which is so evident in the scriptures, it changed my world. That is a hard thing for us to grab on to. I'm very aware of the parable of the weeds and wheat. The world is that way; very messy. So are we.

Because we are imperfect, it is so easy for us to get off kilter in our self-perception. How can God love me, a person with so many imperfections? But God is patient and merciful and totally in love with each of us. He relates to us! And he does so in total love. The more we can grasp that, the more we can love God and neighbor. The more we understand that just as bad relationships create imbalance in our lives, a flagging relationship with God creates an underlying imbalance and restlessness in our lives. When we begin to sell out for the notion that we are beloved sons and daughters of God and then begin to see everyone around us in the same light, it changes us.

Rich Preuss is chairman of Worklight's Board of Directors. He can be reached at richpreuss@alumni.nd.edu.

NEWS

WORKLIGHT.ORG—REBUILT FOR IGNITERS AND CHALLENGE WEEKENDS

What does it mean to direct our prayers, attention, and efforts toward igniters and Challenge Weekends? Learn more by checking out the new and improved worklight.org, coming in early July.

NATIONAL CHALLENGE WEEKEND – OCTOBER 14–16 IN ARIZONA

The 2022 Annual Conference will be held this year in Phoenix, Arizona, from October 14–16. Christians in Commerce International was founded with a Challenge Weekend in 1983. In this 40th year of ministry, WorkLight is going back to the basics to bring this movement of the Holy Spirit to the next generation of igniters. If you're interested in staying with one of your Arizona brothers and sisters in Christ, please reach out to nationalchallengeweekend@worklight.org.

WHO IS YOUR IGNITER?

Whether you're 29 or 92; if you're still living then God ain't done with you yet! Is Jesus working within you to build

a relationship with an igniter? Ask the Lord to guide you to conversation with a next-generation igniter. Is it your cousin's middle child? Friend from church? Brother-in-law? Favorite barista at Starbucks? With increased remote work and digital distraction, folks in the middle of their careers are hungrier than ever for mentorship. Who is your igniter?

\$200K IGNITER CHALLENGE WEEKEND FUND

Do you remember your first Challenge Weekend? Has Christians in Commerce had an impact on your faith, work, and life? The home office is working with our National Growth Council, Fundraising Committee, and Board to identify major donors who might be called to invest in the Igniter Challenge Weekend Fund. To operationalize our strategy we need to raise \$200,000, hire a divinely appointed program director, and build a national movement. Did you know that over half of all WorkLight revenue comes from Minnesota and Indiana, but almost 75% of our members are in California and Arizona? Please join us in prayer to find new major donors so we can move

our faith into works as described in James 2:14–26.

DAN CLITES' WORK CONTINUES

Salinas and Fresno led the way with Dan Clites visiting monthly by Zoom to fan the flames of Small Groups and Chapters. The momentum of the Holy Spirit at both chapters was powerful this spring at their Challenge Weekend. Dan's coaching supports the health and function of your community so that it can flourish into engaging Igniters and hosting a Challenge Weekend. Interested? Contact dan@worklight.org to schedule a free consultation.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

God has used our resident tech genius Bryan Beck yet again to provide a remarkable gift to the Christians in Commerce family. Videos that were trapped on VHS tapes in storage for years have been digitized and made available for viewing at a click of a button. Did you know that a group of men biked cross country in 1995 to promote awareness of Christ in the workplace? Click here to be inspired by their faith alongside some solid '90s nostalgia. [WorkLight \(CIC\) - YouTube](#)

Fan the Flame

By partnering with the National Christian Foundation, WorkLight is able to accept planned and complex gifts from donors. Business owners, property owners and families have multiple options to fan the flame for future generations through their generous giving.

Learn more at WorkLight.org/Legacy

2022

JULY

"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me."

Galatians 2:20

THE FLAME

WORKLIGHT PRAYER

Father,

*Fill us with your Holy Spirit
that we may be made new
and bring the presence of Christ into all we do;
That we may grow in love for you, and for all;
That we may be humble and wise stewards of your creation;
That we may bring your light into our workplaces;
That we may lead all to unity in you;
Through Jesus, our 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 WorkLight is an ecumenical workplace ministry committed to:

- Growing and being transformed in Jesus Christ
- Working for our Father, 24/7, 365 days a year
- Building strong brotherhood and sisterhood
- Serving God and expanding his Kingdom in all aspects of our lives

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NEWSLETTER STAFF

Managing Editor: Stevan Becker
Editor: Nancy Huddleston
Editorial Team: Greg Aitkens, Bill Dalgetty, Paula Lent, Annie Stutley
Design/printing: Andy Grams Design Solutions

For further information about WorkLight
call or write:

WorkLight
5775 Wayzata Blvd #700
St Louis Park, MN 55416
Phone: (612) 552-5656
info@worklight.org