

And the Storm Came

By Dave Mazanowski

The storms are coming. No one escapes them. By our own hand or by things totally out of our control, the storms are coming.

The workplace is full of storms, and it is not for the faint of heart. But no matter how brave or prepared you think you are, there are some things that will sink you if Jesus isn't in the boat.

I got a call Friday afternoon with the worst news you can get as a business owner. A young man recently joined our team as a landscape professional. It was his fourth day on the job. The weather forecast called for a very hot week, so we took special measures to ensure his safety, but he collapsed due to heat stroke and died in the arms of his cousin. His father and several relatives have worked for us for many years. They are part of the Mainscape family.

On Monday, we arrived to console the family and the team, but we knew that no words could soothe what had just happened. I needed Jesus to wake up and calm the storm for all of us. We weren't sure who would show up

to work that day, but to our surprise everyone was there, except for the father. It was a very somber and awkward moment as we discussed what had happened. We offered everyone the day off with pay but only one accepted—the cousin who held his relative in his arms while he passed. I was asked to pray over the entire team and asked Jesus to calm the storm. Then, everyone went to work.

A few hours later, we spent some time with the father and several other relatives in his home. We laughed, cried, and talked about how to move forward. The father expressed fear about how he would get his son back to Mexico for the funeral, and the financial impact of not working at this tragic time. We told him we would pay for all the expenses to get his son home as well as pay his wages through the rest of the season so he could stay and support his wife. We ended by sharing the love of Jesus, telling the father that he was our family, and praying for the peace that passes all understanding.

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INSIDE: REFLECTIONS

Navigating Storms at Work

Mightier than the thunder of the great waters, mightier than the breakers of the sea – the Lord on high is mighty. (Psalm 93:4)

The turbulent seas of modern life create mighty breakers on our own shores; but God is mightier still.

It's good to remind ourselves of the experience of Jesus' disciples recorded in Matthew's Gospel as a furious storm came upon them, and the waves began to sweep over their boat. Awaking Jesus, they cried out, "Save us! We're going to drown!"

With confidence, he rises and rebukes the waves. Everything becomes completely calm. All they can say is, "What kind of man is this? (Matthew 8:24-27) Like them, we know the answer now. Jesus is Lord!



When stormy weather comes our way, we wish the same calm. Our reflections this month focus on how God can take us and others from the restlessness and anxiety of stormy weather, into the calming peace of God's loving care.

Out of our own experiences of his great faithfulness and power, we are able to bring Christ to others, helping them through the storms they encounter.

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REFLECTIONS WEEK 1

Wait for the Lord

By Karo Ghani

Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord. (Psalm 27:14)

In 2020, my job duties changed to be more in line with the needs of the company where I worked. Up until that point, I loved my job because I had plenty of opportunities to do many different tasks, and there were always ways to be challenged.

Over the next several months, I trained coworkers from other areas on the tasks I was performing. It may sound silly, but I didn't realize how much I loved these parts of my job until I had to say goodbye to them one by one. To be honest, it saddened me. I felt undervalued, and I grew increasingly unhappy.

Consequently, I started to seek the Lord regarding my work. I kept asking him questions. Was he making room for something new in my current position or was it time to look for another job? Now as I look back, I think I was trying

to quiet doubts in my heart about what the Lord had in mind for me. Over the years, my job had been a constant during times of change and turmoil in my personal life, so I wondered if I had relied on it too much when I should have been relying on the Lord.

Each time I asked the Lord for guidance the answer was, "wait."

He reminded me that he has "plans to prosper (me) and not to harm (me) ..." (Jeremiah 29:11), so as an act of faith, I began declaring, "the Lord has a good place for me—whether it is here or somewhere else. The Lord has a good place for me!"

Then in early 2022, I was asked if I would be interested in moving to another business area that I had worked closely with over the years. They needed help from someone with my skill sets. The Lord had been preparing a new position for me, and I didn't have to do anything but receive his gift.

I am loving my job again! Some of the tasks I had to say goodbye to have been restored and I've had an opportunity to learn new assignments, as well. The Lord truly has a good place for me!

Karo Ghani lives in Maple Grove, Minnesota, with her husband of 26 years. They have two boys and one daughter-in-law. She is a senior business systems analyst for Ameriprise Financial.

PRAY

Thank you Lord for orchestrating my future and for working things for my good. Help me to hear you better and be patient while waiting for the fullness of your plans.

REFLECT

Think about work situations where you are not sure what you should do. Ask God to give you direction.

DISCUSS

It can be hard to wait upon the Lord, and it can allow time for doubt to enter in. How can we push aside doubts and continue to be patient?

PRESIDENT'S NOTE



He replied, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm. (Matthew 8:26)

What kind of Christian are you?

From the office, to the road, to the home, these days our workplaces are more varied than ever. A multitude of new storms suddenly appear on the horizon. How do I stay focused on my Zoom meeting when my toddler is knocking on the door? What can I do to find a mentor when my entire company works remotely? Where is my workplace if I retired after a long career?

The answer is Jesus. Not only in eternity but in the present moment. Christ came not only to offer us the eternal life promised in John 3:16, but to invite us to work with him through the power and fire of the Holy Spirit. (Luke 3:16.) Don't just be saved. Be sent. Don't just decide for Christ. Be a disciple. Don't just wait to meet God in heaven. Work to serve God right here. Right now.

Jesus doesn't stop at delivering us from evil, he equips us to work directly with him. This month's stories highlight opportunities to be the type of Christian who doesn't just attend church on Sunday but seeks to live a Christ-like life 24/7.

It's no mistake that Christians in Commerce's vision has been WorkLight's vision—"Being Christ in

the workplace." Not just seeking him or learning about him. Not just loving him or trying to be a little bit like him. We boldly commit ourselves to be Christ in the workplace. It's a goal we will never attain. We continuously fall short and are saved by grace. But it's a direction toward which we persist through repentance, work, and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Could it be that Jesus called out the faithlessness of his disciples because he wanted them to be fearless in the face of storms? After being saved from the storm the disciples replied, "What kind of man is this?" Let us turn that question on ourselves. What kind of Christian are you? Saved? Sent? Or both?

With you in Christ,
Wes

REFLECTIONS WEEK 2

Pure Joy

By Steve McShane

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds. (James 1:2)

Experiencing pure joy in trials seems a stretch at first. But it's a good reminder from scripture to patiently persevere.

I recently transitioned from owning my own business to running a nonprofit in my community. I was presented with a staff in transition and some challenging situations involving personnel handbook violations. I knew that a big part of my new responsibilities would be to straighten out the mess I'd inherited.

I found myself in a situation where I would need to document staff behaviors and begin the process of correction and,

if necessary, termination. I spent a lot of time in prayer and in the book of James, which teaches us to live our faith and not resent troubles when they come our way.

One particular situation really tested my patience. The individual used foul language when working with members, coworkers, and the public. I'd never encountered this before. I needed a new level of endurance and sensitivity in a very tough situation.

Ultimately, I went to great lengths to document inappropriate behaviors. Unfortunately, this resulted in one resignation and two terminations in a three-week period.

If it weren't for my faith, I am convinced the flesh would have gotten the best of me. I'm proud that two of the three transitions resulted in smooth outcomes. I know that wouldn't have been the case if I hadn't leaned on the Holy Spirit for help.

Steve McShane is president of his local chapter and has been a long time member of Christians in Commerce/WorkLight.

PRAY

Lord, please give me the power to seek you first when addressing difficult people and behaviors in the workplace.

REFLECT

Think of a difficult relationship at work and how scripture can make for a smoother process of resolution.

DISCUSS

How do you go about engaging the Holy Spirit as a partner in resolving difficult relationships and conflicts at work?

REFLECTIONS WEEK 3

A Loyal Brother

By Kevin Terrell

A friend is always loyal, and a brother is born to help in time of need. (Proverbs 17:17)

In 1989, Jack McCall became my commercial insurance agent and for close to five years, he had consistently been inviting me to his Christian Small Group meeting at a local restaurant.

Unfortunately, as time went on, I moved further into darkness that finally peaked with a divorce and my fourth DUI conviction. Now I was facing a two-year prison sentence, the loss of my daughter, and my business.

Everyone had given up on me and avoided me like the plague. Except Jack.

He appeared in court for me, and helped me to keep my daughter and business.

He worked with me spiritually, and I was born again while in jail.

Once sober, I attended WorkLight meetings consistently, building friendships with other brothers. These men were loyal and supportive, and accepted my rough past.

These friendships initiated my journey with the Lord. When I needed a brother, Jack continuously said "yes" to God. As a result, I have dedicated my life to saying "yes" to God's invitation to "follow me."

My mission in retirement is to serve others. Busier than ever, I have several ministries, including a prison ministry where I tell my story to men who feel hopeless.

Who knew an insurance agent could have such an impact?

Kevin Terrell currently lives in Idaho with his wife of 30 years. Together, they are involved in a number of ministries, including serving the homeless, incarcerated, and veterans. In order to fund his ministry work, he works as a contractor. He may be reached at kevin@jakservicesllc.com.

PRAY

Lord, as you are willing to leave the 99 for the sake of the one, help us to lay down our lives in order to pursue those you lead us to.

REFLECT

Is there someone the Lord is inviting you to accompany?

DISCUSS

What are different ways in which the Lord has called you to support and be loyal to someone?

REFLECTIONS WEEK 4

Nothing to Lose

By Paula Lent

Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on.” (Mark 12:43-44)

“The world was a struggle for me, and when I got saved at 19 my whole world changed and I had purpose,” says James Lawson. Growing up with an absent father and a struggling mother, his life was chaotic and violent. Yet, he was endowed with a spiritual sensitivity. “I sensed things that typical people don’t,” he says.

After his conversion, James started to use his spiritual gift in order to be guided to pray with people. He has now prayed with over 200 people.

Through his work as a drywaller, James has regular engagement with many people, and never balks from acting in response to a need. “I go into clients’ houses,” he says, “and when I see that

someone is having a health problem, I’ll take time after the estimate to pray with them.

“Once, I walked into a house to give an estimate and noticed something was off with the woman I was working for,” James recalls. “After I was done, I asked if I could pray with her. Afterwards, she shared that the whole issue was that her husband had left her.”

Another time, James and his wife were at a restaurant celebrating their anniversary. He noticed that the waitress had a stabilizer brace on her wrist, and he was moved with empathy that she had to carry trays with a bad wrist. So, he gave her a very generous tip. “She came back crying,” James recalls, “and told me that she was a single mom and how hard it was to make it and asked if I could pray with her.”

Sometimes, the self-preservation instinct hinders us from acting in the spirit in all circumstances. Not so with James. He notes that his difficult background and lack of education have rendered him free from trying to protect his worldly identity. “I have nothing to protect,” he says. “I’m as simple as they come. My life has been a struggle. I open myself up and that opens others up. ... If the Lord is leading, I’m going to follow.”

Paula Lent is a member of WorkLight’s Editorial Team. James Lawson is the owner of Lawson’s Drywall and Painting Company. He lives in South Bend, Indiana, with his wife and three kids.

PRAY

Heavenly Father, you have given us new life in you. Please help us to always be open to the promptings of your Spirit, and to give up anything that hinders us from boldly following it. Grant us more opportunities to bring you to those in need.

REFLECT

What do you have to lose by following the Lord’s promptings?

DISCUSS

Where are some areas of your life that you haven’t handed completely over to the Lord to work for the good of others?

Keep Building God’s Kingdom

Did you know WorkLight can be designated as a beneficiary of your retirement plan or life insurance policy? You can even arrange for contributions from an IRA, 401(k) or pension fund.

Learn more about planned giving at WorkLight.org/Legacy



Where's Your Workplace? By Ric Glover

The evil one would love for Christians to fully retire from all our different workplaces. But the truth is that we are all at work in this life until we are called home to our Father for eternity. Don't believe for a second that God doesn't have a plan for you and your work—even if you call yourself “retired” or don't have a “full-time career.” You are a steward of creation to your last breath.

With that in mind, what does working for the Father look like, especially when there are many illusions of disconnect from “the workplace?” We all have our own places of work, whether you work alone, on a team, remotely, without pay, in community, at home, or as a parent. God has a plan for you and your work. As it says in John 5:17: “Jesus said to

them, ‘My Father is always at his work this very day, and I too, am working.’”

We are called to be Christ 24/7 and to take Jesus wherever we go. It goes beyond commerce or the marketplace. We are continually building his Kingdom and it doesn't matter where we do that as we're reminded in Proverbs 16:3: “Commit to the Lord what you do ... he will establish your plans.”

Those active in the workforce have multiple places they work. For example, I have a WorkLight workplace as a chapter president, volunteer workplaces at my church and with community organizations, and home workplaces in my cooking, cleaning, hospitality, and parenting.

Those who are retired from their day-to-day careers may think some of this doesn't apply to them and wonder: “I don't work anymore, what does this have to do with me?” But are we too focused on a narrow definition of “work” as the method by which one makes a living that we are missing the point?

Colossians 3:23–24 says: “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.”

If you're feeling disconnected from work, we have a job for you! Join your brothers and sisters in discerning who the igniter might be in your life, building a relationship with them, praying with them, and inviting them to be a part of this movement of the Holy Spirit. Start now by praying: “Come Lord Jesus, help me to see clearly the mid-career Christian in my life who I am meant to mentor into a deeper relationship with you through the ministry of WorkLight.”

Ric Glover has been a CIC/WorkLight member for about 20 years and is currently the president of the Scottsdale, Arizona, Chapter, and a member of the West Phoenix Men's Chapter. He and his wife Cathy are members of the West Phoenix Coed Chapter. He can be reached at ricglover@gmail.com.

More Insights, New Stories

Rediscover The Spark Email Reflections. Additional, new stories and insights expand on the month's theme every workday morning. Encourage others to signup.

bit.ly/WLTheSpark



Unity with the Holy Spirit

By Nancy Huddleston

The bonds of fellowship run deep at Challenge Weekends, creating a unity with each other and with the Holy Spirit that enriches our lives, and of those around us.

Challenge Weekend veteran and long-time member Ned Sickle said he “found out I had forgotten about the fellowship piece—“the experience of being with people whose values are similar to yours. It also offered me a significant opportunity to make connections that I needed in my life.”

Ned, who attended a weekend in February in Payson, Arizona, with his son, also appreciated the format to stay overnight because it provided everyone more time to contemplate and dig deeper into their faith. He noted that for men, this is important, because there are not as many opportunities to lower their defenses and open up.

Our first-ever National Challenge Weekend is October 14-16 in Scottsdale, Arizona. More details at: Worklight.org/2022NCW.

“One of the big takeaways for me is to recognize the need to be more vulnerable,” he said. “By opening myself up to open and honest communication, that helps others realize we’re all going through similar issues. Or, at times, other

people’s challenges are greater than yours, which gives you a different perspective, and to realize that maybe what you’re going through isn’t that big of a deal. In the end, the experience causes you to be more sensitive to others and their needs.”

Sharing stories also has unlocked a “learning process” for Ned. “Evil is a growing force in the world and temptation is real. This causes us to pull away from God. So, what I need to do in my life is to identify the people or activities that are separating me from God.”

Now, Ned has committed to “a daily appointment with God” where he makes a concerted effort to praise God, thank God for the many gifts received, seek forgiveness, and to petition God for help with issues/problems/concerns.

First-time attendee Bryan Beck said the willingness of Challenge Weekend participants to be vulnerable was contagious. “My experience has been that any time people confess their hidden burdens and sins to one another voluntarily, the Holy Spirit is there and healing (James 5:16),” he said, “I saw the rawness in the stories that everyone shared. I learned how someone whose life has been transformed was willing to share everything without caring what everyone thinks and was willing to be vulnerable.”

By the end of the weekend Bryan said

he saw changes in everyone, and “it was humbling to see that in spite of man’s failings, look what the Holy Spirit has done,” he reflected. “It was not just something abstract, there was a community element, it was authentic, there was humility, and I saw others saying, ‘I have done it, let me show you how.’”

Nancy Huddleston is a member of WorkLight’s editorial team. She and her husband Mike live in Burnsville, Minnesota, and she can be reached at hud59@q.com.

And the Storm Came

Continued from page 1

Due to the language barrier, I was unable to engage in direct conversation with the family, but thankfully we had a bilingual team member to serve as a translator. She was deeply moved by the experience and said she’d never experienced anything like it while working for other companies. In her words, “it was like family.”

Her care and compassion allowed me to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to guide the conversation. I was led to ask several questions that clearly helped relieve some of the fear moving forward.

Living in the power of the Spirit is real and has direct impact during tragedy and adversity. It has allowed me to breathe hope into a situation because I know Jesus will show up.

The tragedy is real but having Jesus in the boat with us during this time will slowly calm the storm and bring hope back to all of us. Most importantly, Jesus will be with the family in ways we cannot do or understand.

Dave Mazanowski is the cofounder of Mainscape, Inc., a commercial landscape and maintenance firm based in Indianapolis, Indiana. He is a member of WorkLight’s Board of Directors.

NEWS

JOIN US IN SCOTTSDALE, AZ

Details and registration are now available to review about the first ever National Challenge Weekend October 14-16, in Scottsdale, Arizona. Find your igniter today and don't miss the early bird discount!
WorkLight.org/2022NCW

HOW CAN I HELP? I'M RETIRED.

As we work toward the WorkLight mission by bringing igniters to Challenge Weekends, many of our older and/or retired members have asked how they can help. While there are many ways to plug into the effort, the simplest way is to ask the Holy Spirit to help you find an igniter in your life. First, discern a sense of who

this person might be. Then, go out and nurture that relationship, break bread together, share your testimony, and encourage them to attend an upcoming Challenge Weekend. Remember—National Challenge Weekend tickets are BOGO, so it's a great opportunity to bring your igniter with you to Arizona at no additional charge.

MOVING CLOSER TO 500 BY 2025

The WorkLight team and family are actively striving to recruit 500 mid-career Christians into this ministry through Challenge Weekends over the next three years. From Small Groups to praying with strangers, there are countless ways to be a part of this effort. Perhaps next time you're

seeking to discern what to do with your Small Group or Chapter you might ask, "How does this move us closer to 500 by 2025?" Don't let perfectionism or hesitation stand in your way. If you start praying and working in earnest, the Holy Spirit will support you.

STORIES OF MIRACLES

Are you a long-time Christians in Commerce member with stories about healing, transformation, and redemption? Or maybe you joined WorkLight last week and it changed your life. We are always looking for inspirational stories to share about Christ at work in your life. Share your story at worklight.org/share-your-story.

NATIONAL

CHALLENGE WEEKEND

WORKLIGHT

October 14-16, 2022 | Scottsdale, Arizona

Don't miss the first-ever
National Challenge Weekend!

This powerful weekend will bring greater meaning and purpose to your work and life, as we gather to reflect, pray, worship, and seek more of the Holy Spirit.

More details available at: WorkLight.org/2022NCW

2022
SEPTEMBER

*"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 Christians in Commerce (DBA WorkLight) 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

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