

Working the Field

By Steve Becker

Recent conversations with Randy Raciti and Dennis Burke give hope for reaching 500 igniters by 2025. It will be God that gives the growth, but it's good to have men like them planting the seeds and working the field. (1 Corinthians 6: 7-9) There's a hunger with the younger generation for what they're providing.

Randy got a call on his birthday last September from David Magill, who lives in Northern Virginia. Randy asked him if he'd like to get together weekly to talk about "real stuff" with others. It would be an opportunity to share on a deeper level the big things that are in our hearts like relationships, children, work, and friendships.

David checked with his friend Chris Horneman and Chris recruited his friend John Burke. Randy reached out to his son, Dominic, and John's father, Dennis Burke. In October 2021 they began meeting on Saturday mornings at 8:00 a.m. via Zoom. Randy is in Indiana, Dominic is in Alabama, and the rest are in Northern Virginia. The young men, in their late 20s, were raised in Christian homes

but are not actively involved in any formal church setting.

"I use WorkLight Reflections to get things started," Randy shared. "One of the keys I've found is sharing your life including our failures, disappointments, and embarrassments."

"My son has gotten to know me in ways that wouldn't have been possible outside this group." Randy continued. "Same is true for me. I suspect the same can be said for all the guys in the group. The WorkLight Reflections along with each of these guys' upbringings have brought a strong spiritual dimension out. These meetings have enabled us to experience life in the Spirit."

Dennis Burke points out, "I was struck by the uniqueness of the group, ages, occupations, and family connections. I've been doing things with some of these guys since they were kids and they've been friends for years. They are young adults now.

"I heard the Lord say, 'Get out of the way and allow me to work,'" Dennis

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INSIDE: REFLECTIONS

Being Christ 24/7

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (Ephesians 2:10)

WorkLight's desire is to reach a new generation of Kingdom Builders. Working for our Father includes the call to be Christ 24/7, 365 days a year for our entire lives. It means redeeming where we work, our family, our neighborhoods, and the world around us.

Are today's young men and women drawn to this call? This issue will give us a specific peek into what is a good starting point.

The lead article shares the story of Randy and Dennis reaching out to four young men in their late 20s. The Reflections are based on conversations writer Paula Lent has had with the young men to learn more about their experiences through their eyes.



All four were raised in Christian homes but are currently detached from any active Christian involvement or commitment. Their friendships, their careers, and their families matter a lot to them. This is providing a foundation to support each other and grow. We can all learn something from this.

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REFLECTIONS WEEK 1

Investing Time

By Paula Lent

How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity! (Psalm 133:1)

The men in Randy Raciti and Dennis Burke's Small Group have come together because they care about real, deep friendships and are willing to make the commitment to nourish these friendships.

John Burke says, "Joining this WorkLight Small Group, I knew all the men to varying degrees, and Chris and I have a lifelong friendship, but I was interested in this opportunity to get to know each other better and keep in touch."

"I appreciate the fact that we don't all have to be in the same place at one time. If I wanted to know what was going on with David or Dom, I wouldn't necessarily call them up out of the blue. Now, I'm staying updated on where they're moving, how their jobs are going, and getting to learn more about their lives."

John says further, "Work is a big part of all our lives, so we read the WorkLight

Reflections and discuss the prompt, sometimes talking about an interaction at work or an interview question someone wasn't sure how to answer. But we also talk about our marriages or girlfriends, other friendships, or outside experiences we've had."

Chris Horneman echoes the importance of intentionally sharing life in order to maintain deep friendships. "When you start having families and kids, you start losing old bonds with some of your friends," he says. "This is a great way to have consistency and stay up to date in each other's lives. John and Uncle D are two of my closer friends in my tight-knit group. To catch up with them in a more structured formal setting is awesome."

"I was talking to a close friend in another state about how he doesn't have a group of guys he sees on a regular basis and how hard it is to make friends as adults. Whereas it's not impossible, it's not natural. It requires a combination of intentionality, being in the right place at the right time, and being open."

John says, "Friendship is what you put into it. Prioritizing that hour on Saturday mornings—it's just an hour, but I've gotten to know everyone on the

call so much deeper. Prioritizing the other person is one of the biggest keys to friendship."

Christopher Horneman is a beverage demand analyst living in Richmond, Virginia. With his wife and son, they recently welcomed a new baby daughter to their family.

PRAY

Lord, thank you for the friendships you have gifted us with throughout our lives. Help us to prioritize the other person so that we might more fully experience your love.

REFLECT

To whom in your life might the Lord be calling you closer? How can you build a stronger relationship with them?

DISCUSS

What stands in the way of friendship? How can you overcome those hurdles? How can you pray for them more intentionally?

SAVE THE DATE:

GIVING TUESDAY

Tuesday, November 29, 2022

Mark your calendar for Tuesday, November 29, 2022, and make this year's Giving Tuesday the most generous day in WorkLight's history.

WorkLight.org/donate

When you support WorkLight, you equip Christians to shine bright in the workplace.

MINISTRY

- Small Groups
- Chapters
- Challenge Weekends

RESOURCES

- The Flame
- Spark
- WorkLight.org
- YouTube



REFLECTIONS WEEK 2

Transformative Friendships

By Paula Lent

As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another. (Proverbs 27:17)

Calling each other out and calling each other on is important to be able to grow.

For Chris Horneman and John Burke that started when they were young. They grew up on the same street with dads who have been lifelong friends. Both generations have experienced deep and real friendships.

“With John, I’ve experienced a friendship unlike any other,” Chris says, “Having those kinds of friends is rare. My family’s needs are just as important as his family’s needs, and I would do the same

for him. We just experience a really deep type of friendship.”

Chris says, “A lot of people just want you to agree with them, but that’s not what a friend is.”

“I’m doing this with a great group of buddies where we call each other on, so it’s only real conversations,” Dominic Raciti says. “If it’s not real, my interest is out the door immediately. I want to focus on how I can make better choices for the people around me in and out of the workplace. This group has challenged me to do that.”

Having conversations prompted by WorkLight Reflections is also something Dominic has appreciated. “We discuss topics that I wouldn’t really steer my mind toward as much intentionally unless I had this group,” he says, noting that it helps him to be aware of “things to look for on a day-to-day basis to be more Christlike.”

REFLECTIONS WEEK 3

Listening Well

By Paula Lent

Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry... (James 1:19)

“If you don’t like someone, get to know them better.”

This is the advice Randy Raciti gave to John Burke when he was dealing with a difficult work situation.

This same advice was also underlined in a *TedTalk* their Small Group watched during their weekend together. In “10 Ways to Have a Better Conversation,” radio host Celeste Headlee said that the most important of the 10 is: listen. The group shared their reflections from the *TedTalk* with each other, unpacking the topic.

Dominic Raciti said, “We bounced back and forth about what we agreed on or

not. It led to interpersonal reflections over a wide variety of topics that apply to our personal lives and being better humans in the workplace and society as a whole and leading in our families.”

John noted that some of the takeaways for him were don’t multitask, don’t pontificate, set aside your opinions and listen instead, and assume that everyone knows something you don’t. He was also struck by the importance of viewing conversations as opportunities to get to know someone deeper. “You already know what’s going on in your life,” he said. “It’s nice to learn what you can about someone else.”

John said now he’s more likely to ask a clarifying question when someone shares, as opposed to sharing about himself in return. “One of the takeaways from the talk for me was that you don’t have to share, even if you’ve experienced something similar. It’s natural for me, if you say you had a car crash for example, to say ‘I’ve had a bunch of car crashes.’ But I don’t need

Dominic Raciti is a health insurance agent living in Birmingham, Alabama. Outside of work, he loves golfing and spending time with his family and kids.

PRAY

Lord, please help us support and encourage one another, especially when we may have to say something others might not agree with.

REFLECT

Show me Lord how and when to speak honestly and with heartfelt compassion to my friends at work.

DISCUSS

Think about a time that you called a friend out. What compelled you to speak honestly and openly with him or her? What was the result?

to share that. Instead, I can get more information from the other person.”

John Burke is an analyst who lives in Chantilly, Virginia. In his free time, he enjoys volunteering at a senior center, kayaking, hiking with his wife, walking their dogs, and spending time with family.

PRAY

Lord, please give us the grace to humbly receive others. Help me to listen for your voice in me when they are sharing.

REFLECT

Do you allow conversations to be opportunities to learn?

DISCUSS

What are some of your conversational strengths and weaknesses? How can we use clarifying questions more effectively?

REFLECTIONS WEEK 4

Valuable Mentors

By Paula Lent

Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. (1 Peter 3:8)

Randy Raciti and Dennis Burke each have a son in their Small Group. But talking to the men, you might at first get the impression that there are even more family bonds.

“Uncle D” is the only way the men refer to Dennis. Dominic Raciti got to know him through Thursday night “fellowship” gatherings when he was interning in Virginia, and the group’s recent weekend together provided continued growth in their friendship. “The weekend was great,” Dominic says. “I love golf, and got a good amount of golf in. But I got to do it with Uncle D, so I got to know him on another level.”

“All my friends love my dad,” John Burke says. “Before I went to college, he would do cookouts at our house for my friends, and after I left, the cookouts continued. It was seamless, because he gets along with everybody and likes to learn what we’re going through and gives us prompts, such as: what do you think of this? Or, I had a thought, what do you guys think about it?”

Chris Horneman says Randy is “very affirming” and “instills confidence in people. He’s someone in the group who bends and pushes you outside your spot, and that’s really helpful.”

David Magill says he enjoyed riding most of the time for their weekend with Dennis and Randy. “They are both calm, composed, and patient. I need to embrace those characteristics more, in both my personal and professional life. They aren’t frazzled easily and have a self-control that I strive for. They don’t hurry too fast, worry too much, or expect too much.”

“Our weekend together is what I think life is about,” John reflected. “It’s not just about eating delicious food; it is

about getting to know one another on a deeper level. It’s also about sharing all the blessings God has given us and challenging each other to improve.”

David Magill lives in Baltimore, Maryland, where he works in finance and HR staffing. He enjoys hiking, traveling, and time with family.

PRAY

Lord, help us serve you more by reaching out and mentoring those around us with the life you’ve shared with us.

REFLECT

Who has mentored you in Christ? How has that impacted your life?

DISCUSS

Who has God put in your life to mentor and guide? How can you help them learn to support and encourage others in Christ?

PRESIDENT’S NOTE



This is why it is said: “Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.” (Ephesians 5:14)

Coworkers in Christ 24/7

WorkLight carries the same bold vision today that Christians in Commerce was given years ago, “Being Christ in the workplace.” This month The Flame explores what that looks like 24/7.

So, what does it mean to seek to be Christ all day, every day? It’s not just expanding one’s faith beyond church on Sunday. It means working directly with the Holy Spirit to bring sanctification to the entire world. Through our work we are stewards of God’s creation, and at

our best we are collaborating with our Father to bring Heaven to Earth.

Am I suggesting that the perfect creator of everything wants your help in actualizing the divine destiny of this world? Yes, absolutely. Who, me? Yes, you. You mean, now? Yes, right now!

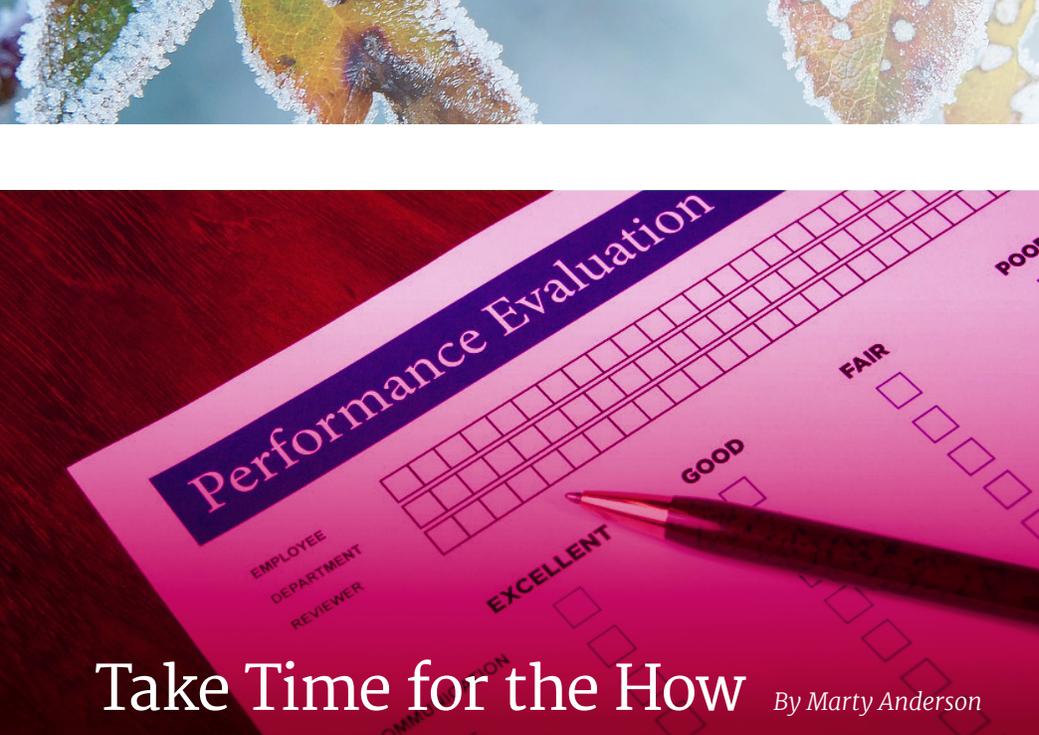
For some this might feel scary. How could I possibly be worthy? Be reminded that the answer lies in Christ, not you. For others this might tempt pride. If the Holy Spirit wants my help, then I must be better than everyone else. Be careful. In Christ we are all one as beloved children of God. No one is more or less worthy or loved, for all our worth and love comes from Jesus.

I pray that we can all hear this bold call to be Christ 24/7, navigate temptation with a repentant heart,

and be continuously transformed as we learn to collaborate with the Holy Spirit. Looking for signs of progress? Be attentive to love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control in your life. Each one is a reminder that we are coworkers in Christ.

Now what? Wake up and turn to Jesus. Don’t just open your eyes. Be attentive in your mind, body, heart, and soul. Once you’re awake, pray for the Holy Spirit to guide you to the job God has waiting for you in building his Kingdom. Get curious and listen carefully. Where will the Father lead you next?

With you in Christ,
Wes



Take Time for the How

By Marty Anderson

When was the last time you engaged others in a discussion about “how” work was getting done? To talk about how you’re communicating with each other. To talk about what’s working well as well as failures and what was learned from them. Year-end and mid-year reviews provide you with great opportunities to talk with those you lead (as well as your teammates) in a different way than you do regularly throughout the year.

Often in weekly one-on-ones, we tend to focus on work priorities and getting things done. But I found it’s also important to talk about “how” the work is getting done. Too often, this conversation does not take place.

A leader never knows if they have blind spots. Are they communicating clearly and in a motivating way? Or are they deflating their people by providing too much (or too little) direction, leaving others frustrated or confused?

A follower might not be sure if their style is effective or frustrating to others. Are there things they could be doing better so they’re more helpful to others? Do their peers like working with them or do they have blind spots? It’s important to provide a safe way to give and get feedback so everyone can work together better.

As a leader, I’ve found it effective to meet in person one or two times a year just to discuss how the work gets done. We take time to prepare for

the conversation by identifying both positive and negative examples. We meet in a neutral location rather than my office so my position of power is neutralized. Privacy and being uninterrupted is key so you can focus on each other.

Start with questions like: “What are some things I should stop, start, or keep doing?” It should be an open exchange where both parties are comfortable giving and receiving feedback on what’s working well and also on how things could be improved. Come prepared to refer back to specific situations.

The goal for everyone is to “seek to understand” and listen. There should be clarity and both parties should feel heard. After all, this is not just a meeting for the leader to give feedback, but to also GET feedback on how to be a better leader. And before the meeting ends, we agree on a future time to meet to see if things have improved.

Creating a safe environment where both parties can communicate openly and honestly with one another greatly improves trust. Trust is the key to effective leadership and a productive workplace where everyone is comfortable to succeed and fail. Everyone puts forth their best effort when they know their leader and others trust them and have their back. And taking time to talk about HOW the work gets done will also greatly improve the quality of the work itself.

Marty Anderson lives in Bloomington, Minnesota, with his wife Cecilia. He recently attended his first Challenge Weekend and has joined a regular WorkLight Small Group.

Working the Field

Continued from page 1

continued, “Laughter and banter are the hallmark traits. The trust and love these young men have for one another is apparent.”

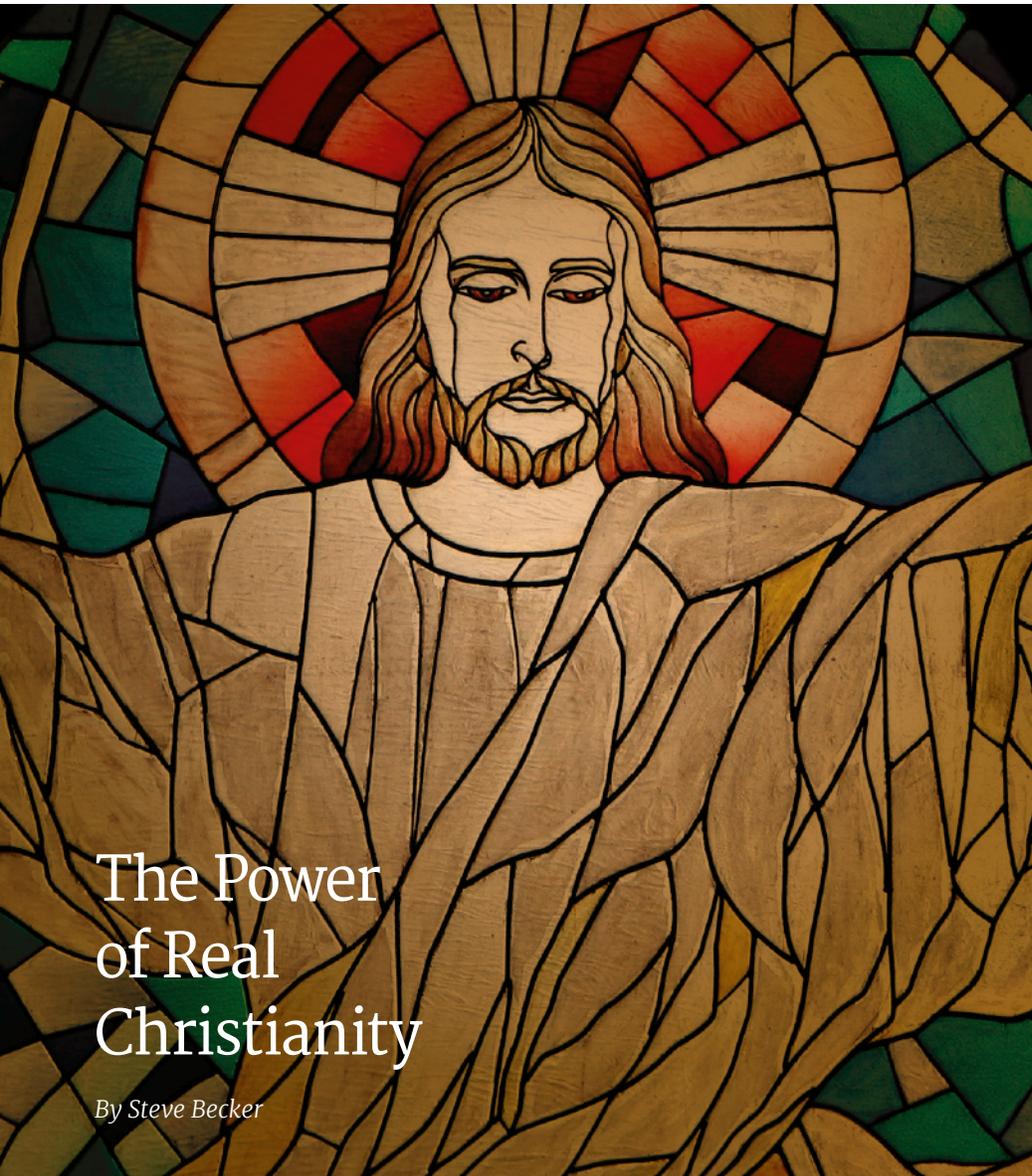
In August, they decided to get together for a three-day weekend in Northern Virginia. They did some fun activities, but also had some serious conversations in the evenings, including one on a *Ted Talk* about listening and another after watching “Agent of Grace,” a docudrama on Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

“We need more than just religion in the formal sense,” Dennis acknowledged. “I think our experience is demonstrating something Dietrich Bonhoeffer said. He said that when the day for renewal arrives there will be a new language, perhaps quite non-religious but liberating and redeeming as was Jesus’ language. It’ll shock people with its power. It’ll be the language of a new truth proclaiming God’s peace with men.”

It’s interesting to note that we are at the beginning of the third millennium since our Lord’s incarnation, death, resurrection, and the outpouring of his Holy Spirit. This newest generation are called Millennials.

Could this millennia be ushering in a time for the world to be changed and renewed? Could it be that our efforts to reach the next generation will be a small part of inviting this generation to be Kingdom Builders, too?

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



The Power of Real Christianity

By Steve Becker

Lift up your heads, you gates; lift them up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is he, this King of glory? The Lord Almighty—he is the King of glory. (Psalm 24: 9-10)

“Anyone ever been attacked by a gate?” That’s what a speaker once said while commenting on Jesus’ promise to build a church which the “gates of Hell” would not prevail against (Matthew 16:18). I had read that promise as if we were on defense. His comment flipped the imagery. We’re the people of God and we’re on offense.

The Lordship of Jesus Christ and our life in Christ is what brings forth the

Kingdom of God. He has won the victory. It still has power today.

Early in our ministry’s existence, Christendom still held much sway. Christendom is when culture is influenced by Christianity’s perspective and values. How quickly that has changed. Now we live in a time more similar to the early Christians—an Apostolic age. In the docudrama “Agent of Change” that Dennis Burke refers to in the lead article, Dietrich Bonhoeffer makes a statement just hours before he is executed by the Nazis.

“We’ll need a new form of Christianity in a time when the world has come of

age. I think there’s only one purpose of religion in the modern world; where people must come and share each other’s sufferings and share the suffering of God in a Godless world. We’ll need more than just religion in its former sense. We need faith and Jesus Christ at its center. Real Christianity means sharing each other’s pain.”

The cultural tide has changed, and we must consciously live our faith, or we will drift, and our fervor will become more tepid. More than ever in this “new” Apostolic age we need new blood, renewed energy, and greater vitality to fulfill the vision and mission of this ministry to reach our coworkers.

It’s harder to get together and it’s easier to make excuses, or to “dumb down” our commitments. Commitment takes work. The gates of hell might not prevail against the church, but our own passivity and mediocrity will.

We should double-down on our commitments to one another. A successful WorkLight Small Group is relational, formational, and missional. In this Apostolic Age we need all three. It’s too easy to just default to “relational” at the expense of calling each other on to grow in our faith and go forth as Christ 24/7.

Our workplaces can seem hostile and too discouraging to live our Christianity openly. But in one-on-one conversations with coworkers, we can discover an openness to the life we have in Christ. In an increasingly Godless age, there is bound to be a hunger, and even a desperation, for what life in Christ has to offer.

This is the rest of the quote from Dietrich Bonhoeffer. “It is not for us to prophesy the day when men will once more ask that the world be changed and renewed. But when that day arrives, there will be a new language perhaps quite non-religious but liberating and redeeming as was Jesus’ language. It’ll shock people. It’ll shock them with its power. It’ll be the language of a new truth proclaiming God’s peace to men.”

This is the language that Randy Raciti and Dennis Burke are using.

NEWS

FIRST-EVER NATIONAL CHALLENGE WEEKEND

Praise the Lord for our first-ever National Challenge Weekend! Brothers and sisters in Christ came together as the hands and feet of this ministry from as far away as Hawaii and as close as across the street in Scottsdale, Arizona. From the Chapter Leadership Conference to the Kingdom Builder luncheon and with six powerful talks in between, the presence of the Holy Spirit was abundant. Couldn't make it? Head over to our YouTube channel (<https://bit.ly/WkLtYouTube>) for highlights, sign up for the Coworker Challenge, and keep praying about how you can be a part of this movement.

CHALLENGE CARD AND COWORKER CHALLENGE

We were all sent out two-by-two after the first-ever National Challenge Weekend. Those matched up for Saturday afternoon's Emmaus walk were connected as WorkLight Coworkers. Beginning Monday morning following the weekend, they received emails for two consecutive work weeks. Each email contained content from WorkLight designed to inspire conversation and connection with their Emmaus Coworker. The end goal of the Coworker Challenge is both simple and powerful: to foster ongoing brotherhood and sisterhood, and to build the WorkLight community so we truly shine for Christ. Hopefully,

this will be useful for use on upcoming Challenge Weekends.

GIVING TUESDAY AND END OF YEAR CAMPAIGN

Did you know that WorkLight is 100% funded by individual donations? From monthly Torchbearers to households who have given every year for decades, your support is what makes this ministry possible. As we seek to get 500 igniters attending Challenge Weekends by 2025, your support is needed more than ever. Please take a moment to pray about how God might be calling you to support this critical work of uniting Christians to shine bright in the workplace.

Three Keys to Transformative Small Groups

For Small Groups to be effective, members need to work together to be **missional, formational, and relational**. All three are needed.

Learn more at bit.ly/WLgroups

2022

NOVEMBER

"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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