

WorkLight Heart

By Rich Preuss

Jesus was on a mission. His mission was salvation for the world. Everything he did revolved around that mission. Behind that mission was his total love for his Father. It drove his thoughts, words, and deeds.

In the workplace, businesses have missions. They have a mission statement. They have a vision and values. All of these are connected. When companies get away from their mission, vision, and values, the results tend to suffer. They lose focus and put the company at risk.

In WorkLight, we, too, have a 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. Behind that mission is our vision of being Christ in the workplace.

As coworkers in Christ, we need to understand who we are: Christ in the workplace. Paul reminds us in Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me."

Do we really believe that? If we do, we begin to understand that our

whole heart, mind, and soul needs to be absolutely focused on living out our identity. Living out that identity encourages those around us to begin to live that way. It is a permission slip to live for the Lord. Conversely, failure to live that identity is a permission slip to others to do the same. When we sin, it isn't just a personal failure, it has repercussions. When others see us fall in the areas of gluttony, lust, greed, envy, anger, sloth, and pride, it can be a sign to weaker brothers and sisters that that behavior is acceptable.

When "Jesus resolutely set his face to go to Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51), his heart was set on the one thing that was needed to fulfill his mission; to die on the cross. He was undeterred by those around him who wanted him to become king and change the world in a different way. While good intentioned, those around Jesus didn't understand his mission.

We need that same resolve. We need to be totally focused with an undivided heart on our mission and vision. That resolve means capturing

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INSIDE: REFLECTIONS

An Undivided Heart

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." (Matthew 22:36)

God calls us to have undivided hearts. He asks for all our heart, just as he has given us all. We believe in one God. Anything else is an idol.

In Colossians, Paul reminds us that we have been raised with Christ and should set on things above. The things that connect us with God are prayer, growing in virtue, actively building the Kingdom of God, and practicing the gifts and fruit of the Holy Spirit.



Our own nature is easily distracted from what is above by our own disordered desires for the things around us. Let's consider the things we desire. Are they what God desires? Are we willing to put all our desires before the Lord?

Are we willing to desire only what God desires? Will we ask the Lord especially for the desire to build his Kingdom at work, at home, and in the world around us?

January Reflections: Pages 2-4

REFLECTIONS WEEK 1

An Unplugged Heart

By Annie Stutley

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Romans 12:2)

Scrolling through social media, our hearts and minds often dance between reels and video clips, consumed by a digital world. Amidst this whirlwind is a still, small nudge that echoes with a resonance challenging our modern-day distractions.

Our incessant engagement with social media presents a paradox. While it connects us virtually and has proven to be a creative way to build brands and sales, it's also a major disconnect from deeper relationships—with God and with each other. God beckons us to wholeheartedly devote ourselves to him, with scripture emphatically stating that he is our escape (Matthew 11:28) and he is the source of our blessings (James

1:17). He also encourages a deep sense of appreciation for others, urging us to actively prioritize honoring and valuing those around us (Romans 12:10).

But let's face it, God's greatest gift, love, is often discounted by us. It's far too tempting to satisfy our craving for the fleeting affirmations, latest trends, incessant updates, and clever life hacks that abound in a two-dimensional world that more times than not obstructs a divine alignment.

Consider for a moment: the hours spent absorbed in a curated world of filtered realities. Is this time stealing away from moments of prayer, reflection, and genuine connection with our creator? Does the constant comparison and pursuit of validation on social platforms hinder our ability to find contentment in the Lord's provision? Moreover, the shallow interactions facilitated by likes and comments often pale in comparison to the richness of face-to-face conversations and genuine human connection.

The call to reclaim our hearts for God and genuine relationships rings loud. It's not about completely abandoning social media; rather, it's a challenge to use it purposefully—to share faith, to uplift others, and to connect authentically. It's an invitation to

rediscover the beauty of silence amidst the noise, to savor moments of connection in the physical world, and to actively participate in building God's Kingdom in our daily lives.

Annie Stutley is a member of the editorial team living in New Orleans, Louisiana. Find her at anniedstutley.com.

PRAY

Lord, in this digital rush, lead us to use worldly tools wisely—to uplift, connect, and cherish genuine moments. Amen.

REFLECT

How might you prioritize genuine connections amidst the distractions of social media in your daily routine?

DISCUSS

How does social media impact our ability to cultivate meaningful relationships, both with each other and with our faith?

WORKLIGHT

Challenge Weekend™ Toolkit

Is your group interested in putting on a Challenge Weekend? Will you answer the call? Find important planning and event materials in the Challenge Weekend toolkit!

worklight.org/cwetoolkit

REFLECTIONS WEEK 2

How to Clean a Heart

By Jim Ganther

Create in me a clean heart, God, and renew in me a steadfast spirit within me. (Psalm 51:10 NASB)

The sixth Beatitude tells us that the pure of heart will see God (Matthew 5:8). I just assumed we would eventually “see” God by participating in the Beatific Vision after death. Seeing God was a “there and then” sort of thing, not “here and now.”

And yet there are those who seem to see God here and now, and almost everywhere. Mother Teresa saw God in the faces of the poor; Louie Grams sees him in the majesty of the Canadian Rockies and the intricate veins of a tiny

flower. Indeed, we are all called to see God in our neighbor, and not just in the neighbors we like.

To do this requires a clean heart. But how does one clean a heart? Is Windex involved? If only. In my own experience, a failure to forgive is one of the surest ways to block my perception of God. Grudges contract my field of vision to myself and the object of my annoyance. But if I pray for the grace to see Christ in the face of the person who wronged me, the grace to forgive soon follows.

Heart-cleaning is an ongoing process. Our Lord suggested this himself when he told Peter we must forgive our brother “seventy times seven times” (Matthew 18:22). Note that there is no requirement that the brother actually be sorry!

It is incumbent upon us to forgive, even in the absence of an apology. This is hard work, and humbling, but the payoff is worth it: to perceive God in the here and now, that we might better be able to reveal him to others.

same plane, I was overwhelmed trying to serve both.

But a momentous change occurred when I took seriously Paul’s call to do work with all my heart as working for God. Rather than trying to keep things balanced horizontally, aligning those things vertically pointing to God clarified my focus. It turned the clammer of competing things vying for my affection into a more harmonious orchestration.

What did that (literal) “lining up” look like? It was a focus on implementing Bible teachings. 1 Timothy 6:11 is just one list of ways we can act in following God’s call to us (“pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.”)

And in a strange turn that could only be orchestrated by an amazing God, aligning with God has the power to improve everything else in our circle of influence. Dedicating my heart to God propels me to be a better father, husband, son, and friend.

Jim Ganther is an attorney, entrepreneur, and captain of a competitive BBQ team. He and his wife, Melissa, have seven children and three Big Green Eggs. If you need help smoking salmon, contact Jim at jganther@MosaicCS.com.

PRAY

Loving Father, create in me a clean heart that I might see you even in the faces of those who wound me, and love them with the very love of Christ.

REFLECT

Read Matthew 18:21–35. Which character best describes you in this parable?

DISCUSS

How do you forgive someone who isn’t sorry for offending you? Is unilateral forgiveness possible?

Oh, and work got better, too.

Tom Petersen is former utility communications professional who writes on work and faith issues. He and his wife Cathy have two children.

PRAY

Lord, help us to focus our hearts on you, knowing that giving you our whole heart builds up all parts of our lives.

REFLECT

Where is your relationship with work in comparison to your relationship with God?

DISCUSS

What prevents you from giving God your undivided heart? What are the biggest things pulling for your affection?

REFLECTIONS WEEK 3

Lining Up

By Tom Petersen

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

For the longest time, I struggled with how to balance my work and my faith. These two important parts of my life seemed in conflict. While my faith focused on Almighty God, work felt like it was striving for the almighty dollar. While my faith told me to think first of others, my work seemed to signal that only the selfish are promoted. While my faith told me to walk humbly with my God, it felt like work success meant taking credit for all my good works (and maybe a few works that weren’t mine).

When I saw God and work in competition, I strained to balance the two. When I set work and God on the

REFLECTIONS WEEK 4

It May Not Be Finished

By Victoria LeMay

... It is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign Lord my refuge. (Psalm 73:28)

When I was recommended for a per diem position at a faith-based hospital, I prayerfully sought to decide whether or not to accept the additional job opportunity and, eventually, did so with joy. Sadly, I quickly learned that my team lead did not seem thrilled with a newcomer.

As I felt more and more intimidated, my anxiety and fear increased. I knew this wasn't from God and soon found myself beginning each shift in the hospital's chapel. I struggled to understand the lead's unfair behavior, and I prayed for the strength to model Christ-like attributes to have a positive impact. Unfortunately, I was let go after serving only a few months. My heart felt divided.

Looking back on my experience, I asked, "What was I trying to accomplish and how did it potentially differ from God's will?" In Colossians 3:1, Paul reminds us, "you have been raised with Christ, and set your hearts on things above ..."

Our human nature causes us to become distracted from our own disordered desires for the things around us. Was I willing to put my desire to change my supervisor's behavior before the Lord?

With time, the Holy Spirit provided insight that helped me to gain some clarity. God was asking me to build his Kingdom in the workplace. I had to let go of judgment and mindfully set my heart on the things above. My perspective shifted and my heart became undivided in service to our Lord.

Through the healing process, I've wondered if my work there is truly complete. I believe I was there for a purpose and may be called to be bold and speak up on behalf of the vulnerable—for colleagues, for patients, and for the well-being of God's Kingdom.

Victoria LeMay is a speech-language pathologist and has worked in a variety of hospitals, clinics, and private practice settings. She is happily married, has a daughter, is a member of Fresno Women's WorkLight chapter, and an active parishioner at her church.

PRAY

Lord, remind us to share your wisdom. When we speak let our voice speak with the love and wisdom from above.

REFLECT

Has there been a time when you felt called to speak up for others but experienced fear, became discouraged or lacked the time, energy, or resources to do so?

DISCUSS

Consider sharing about a time when you had a divided heart. What circumstances, if any, changed your position so that you could rise above?

PRESIDENT'S NOTE



I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought. (1 Corinthians 1:10)

Unity in Community

By the grace of God, each of our personal relationships with Jesus can keep us in a state of solid and unwavering faith. At WorkLight we pray that our undivided hearts come together to form a community in Christ.

At our most recent board retreat in Arizona, we were blessed with a shared Holy Spirit "a-ha" moment. Written on the whiteboard was a

word that we had all seen countless times before. Community. But on that particular day, in that particular conversation, and at that particular moment we started to see that word differently. The "unity" became more apparent to us than ever before. A few board members commented that they had never before realized how the word "community" depends on "unity" for its very existence.

Any of us could spend a lifetime meditating on the goodness of giving one's life to God privately and individually. But God keeps calling us beyond that moment of salvation. To be unified in Christ is both an unwavering truth and an ongoing effort. We know that our identity and salvation are secured for eternity. But what does that mean for your decisions today? Your plans for tomorrow? Your stewardship over time?

As one year ends and another begins, this is a season for reflection. Perhaps there are ways you could participate more often or more deeply in your Chapter or Small Group. Maybe this is the year you build a re-igniter + igniter relationship that carries on into a Challenge Weekend. Or it could be that you're called to be a leader in local efforts to contribute to the national movement toward 500 by 2025.

When you take on the bold call to be more like Jesus, the work never ends. Where is your undivided heart for the Lord being called into action, daily life, and community?

With you in Christ,
Wes



Uniting in Mission

By Bill Dalgetty

*"Small wonder that pride gives birth to division, and love to unity."
(St. Augustine)*

Let me share two stories—one ending in division, and the other in unity.

As an attorney for an oil company for most of my career, I saw many examples of St. Augustine's statement play out in the corporate world, particularly in cases involving multi-party litigation. In one such case a west coast oil company had filed a patent on a particular gasoline formula mandated by the state of California. Since the gasoline formula was required by a state regulation, everyone assumed the formula was in the public domain and could not be patented. Still, the company who filed the patent brought a patent infringement case against all other refiners selling gasoline in the state.

So, we had one plaintiff company on one side and a dozen defendant companies on the other. Sometimes there would be as many as 30 lawyers present at the defendants' joint counsel meetings. The pride of supposed expertise of several of the lawyers made it difficult to establish a unified defense. As a result, a case characterized by some of the defendants as a "slam dunk," was lost at both trial and on appeal.

Let me offer a contrasting example. When I retired from Mobil, I began to serve as president of Christians in

Commerce, the parent of WorkLight. We brought a new executive committee together to pray for the future direction of the ministry at Mount Tabor Retreat Center in Vienna, Virginia. The meeting included people with remarkably diverse business backgrounds in banking, advertising, insurance, a former international airline pilot, and me. Despite our diversity, we all had a love for God, respect for one another and a desire to seek God's will for the ministry. Those attending included Steve Becker, Bob Carmody, Bill Colegrove, Kevin McGinty, Tim Rowland, Bud Rose, and me.

We spent the first day primarily in prayer and discussion with the following scripture becoming prominent in our thinking: *"I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me."* (Galatians 2:20) This gave rise to the belief that God wanted us to expand his Kingdom by "Being Christ in the workplace." We believed he was calling us to encourage and equip Christians to bring his presence into their workplaces in terms of how work is done.

Our love for God and one another brought a unity of purpose at the time and into the future. As the years advanced, this unity evolved into our current 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."

There is no limit to what unity in the love of God and one another can accomplish! How do you strive for unity in your workplace?

Bill Dalgetty spent most of his career as an attorney and executive of Mobil Corporation. He is the former President and former Chairman of the Board of Christians in Commerce. In 2013, he published *"Hope for the Workplace—Christ in You,"* about the Holy Spirit empowering us to bring hope and transformation to our workplaces.

WorkLight Heart

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every thought, word, and deed for the glory of our Father in Heaven. It means asking him how we should use our time, our money, and our talents. It means understanding every interaction we have as being meaningful. It means doing God's will instead of our own. It means being humble enough to take the time to pray daily to our Father and declare to him "thy will be done." It means setting our face to Jerusalem.

Each Gospel ends with the death and resurrection of Jesus. There is no resurrection without death. There is no death without an undivided heart. I encourage you to turn to the last page of *The Flame* and reflect on our mission, vision, and values. Pray the WorkLight prayer. What is keeping you from focusing on fulfilling your mission? What one thing do you need to do to gain greater focus?

Rich Preuss is a member of WorkLight's Board of Directors. He can be reached at richpreuss@alumni.nd.edu.

Slow Down

By Marty Anderson

When I think about having an undivided heart, I reflect on how I often chase the things of this world and easily forget about the things of God. Then I look at the two greatest commandments in Matthew 22: 37-40, "Love the Lord your God. Love your neighbor as yourself." I stop and ask myself: why isn't this the focus of my day? Today. Every day.

I remember in the book of Revelation it says there are creatures in Heaven singing to God all the time. Not just once a week on Sunday for 20 minutes. Think about that. God is so worthy there is praise in songs happening all the time. Pause. Ponder. It's beyond comprehension.

Sometimes I get up in the morning and whether I realize it or not, my day

can get away from me and before I know it, it's over and it'll soon be time for tomorrow. What would happen if I slowed down? Is God telling me to go at this fast pace every day? Somehow, I don't think so. Jesus told me to "follow him." I don't ever remember Jesus rushing and being over committed!

There's a song called Vienna by Billy Joel that starts with the lyric, "Slow down ..." It's about a life that is over before you know it. Maybe I've gotten to where I am because I forgot to consult God along the way? I go and go and go, trying to fulfill the commitments I've made, but maybe God never intended for me to make them? Is that why people who have little are happier than those with much? They have less things to care for and fewer

commitments. Is it a simpler life that allows for an undivided heart?

A wise person once asked me, "Are you following Jesus? Or just visiting him?" That got me to stop and think about my life and what was true. I know that pride and control can be challenges for me. I need to keep Jesus on the throne all the time and not take him off.

Realizing my heart can be divided is embarrassing. I should know better. It can leave me feeling disappointed. How could I allow myself to get here? If my heart is divided, I'm certainly not living the life Jesus died to give me. Thankfully, I know that Jesus is full of mercy and grace. So, I think it's time to slow down and get back to what matters ... worshiping the one who loves me unconditionally. And focusing on loving others rather than myself.

How can I love God today? Spend time with him and talk to him about it. How can I love others and put them first today? Reach out with a word of encouragement. Pray for them. Listen and care.

Does this resonate with you too? Will you join me by slowing down and getting back to what's eternally important?

Marty Anderson lives in Bloomington, Minnesota, with his wife Cecilia. He is the president of the Minneapolis/St. Paul Chapter and a member of the WorkLight Editorial Board.

Provide through Planned Giving

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

NEWS

A NEW SEASON OF KINGDOM BUILDING

The work that God started over 40 years ago with Christians in Commerce continues today through WorkLight. The outpouring of support this year is not only a form of encouragement and equipping staff, board, local leaders, and volunteers. It's a sign of the relationships, presence of the Holy Spirit, and glimpse of God's Kingdom on Earth. Together we are answering the call to reach the next generation with this movement of the Holy Spirit. By the grace of God our work continues into a new year and a new season. Glory!

DID YOU KNOW?

Our current Challenge Weekend Toolkit has been a blessing to Chapters and Small Groups across the country in planning transformative weekends throughout the year. With 40 years of hosting these weekends there have been a few changes along the way. Our current weekend format includes six key talks. How many talks were there on the first-ever weekend in 1983?

Last month's answer: The Spark emails, then called *Workday Reflections*, were first published in 2007.

2023 IGNITERS ON CHALLENGE WEEKENDS

At the start of this year the National Growth Council and Program Committees set out goals for the year. We aimed for 75 new igniters on Challenge Weekends and reached 127. We worked for 800 total participants in the ministry and now have 856. Praise God! But the work continues into the new year. More Challenge Weekends. New Chapter and Small Group members. Closer alignment with local leadership and our national calling. Come Holy Spirit!

COMMITTEE SERVICE

As a working board, we rely on our committees to play key roles in organizational leadership, governance, and active stewardship. We are currently praying for new members. There is a particular desire for folks to join our National Growth Council, Program Committee, and

2024 CHALLENGE WEEKENDS

Salinas Men's Chapter

- January 26-28 at Mission San Antonio De Padua in Jolon, California.

Fresno Women's Chapter

- April 19-21 at St. Anthony Retreat Center, 43816 Sierra Dr., Three Rivers, California.

Salinas and Santa Cruz Men's Chapters

- April 26-28 at Mission San Antonio De Padua in Jolon, California.

Minneapolis' Hilltop Small Group

- April 26-28 at a local member's cabin in central Minnesota.

Check out these events and more at worklight.org/events/.

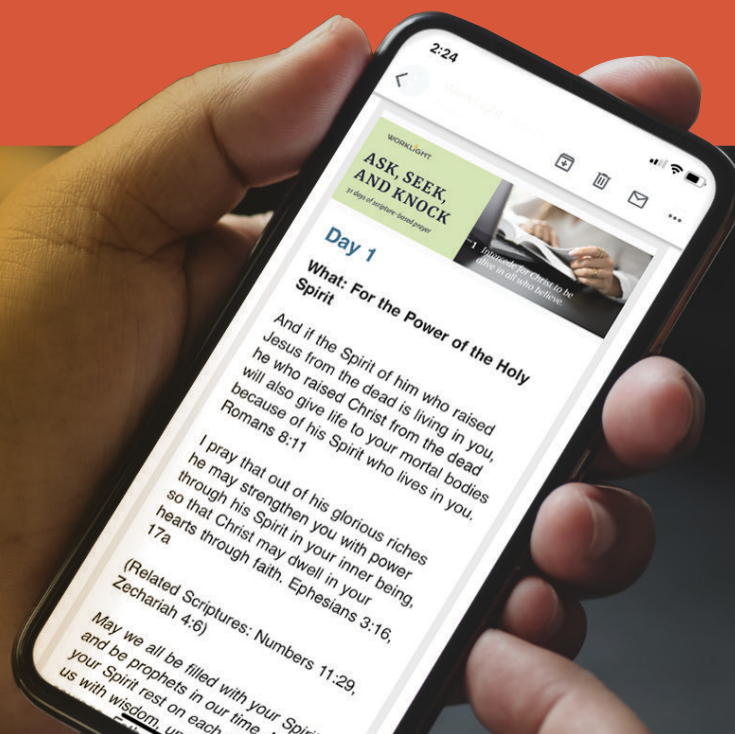
Fundraising Committee. If you or someone you know would be a good fit for one of these committees, please let us know.

Let's Pray for Our Work

31 DAYS OF SCRIPTURE-BASED PRAYER

Using the power of Scripture intercede for the coming of the Kingdom in our workday world. Daily emails select scriptures and provide prayers in five critical areas.

Learn more and sign up at WorkLight.org/ask



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

Galatians 2:20

JANUARY 2024

WorkLight.org

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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Managing Editor: Stevan Becker
Editor: Nancy Huddleston
Editorial Team: Marty Anderson, Greg Aitkens,
Carol Lopez, Annie Stutley
Design/printing: Andy Grams Design Solutions

For further information about WorkLight
call or email:

(612)-552-5656
info@worklight.org

