



Fireproof

By Jim Ganther

...“Weren’t there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?” They replied, “Certainly, Your Majesty.” He said, “Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods.” (Daniel 3:24–25)

Finally—a scripture about barbecue. Let me explain.

When you’re smoking a brisket, the internal temperature of the cut will steadily rise one degree every minute or two. And then it doesn’t. At a certain point, the temperature levels off and may even drop a degree or two. This is called the “stall.” The stall can persist for five hours or more. If you give up and pull the brisket before the stall concludes, you will have an inedible piece of protein. You’ve got to be patient and endure the process.

And here’s the thing—you can’t detect any progress. It seems like nothing is happening. But in fact, it is during the stall that *everything* happens. What is tough and dry becomes tender and moist.

When the brisket emerges from the stall and its temperature resumes its rise, it is fundamentally changed. It is a different thing than it was when the stall began.

So, too, in our own work lives. We can fan the flame of the Spirit by embracing the trials our Father permits us to suffer for our good and his glory. When we run from the fire, we run from what the Lord wants to accomplish in us.

Staying the Course

Last year my dear friend and long-term mentor Tom Brophy died. In the last month of his life, he had something he wanted to get off his chest. We knew his time was short. We sipped Scotch and he confessed, “Remember when we talked through your difficulties when you started your solo law practice back in 1994? And then things slowly got better, but it took years, and it was awful to watch you go through it. And

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INSIDE: REFLECTIONS

Fan the Flame

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. (Colossians 2:6–7)

Anyone who has lit a fire knows that keeping a fire going can be as challenging as lighting it. This is especially true when the wood isn’t dry.

Some people love to get their face down near the coals and blow. Others prefer using some cardboard to fan a fire back into shape, but the principle is the same. The fires fade if they aren’t fed enough oxygen.



The same is true for our faith life. We can have powerful mountain top experiences like on a Challenge Weekend, but those feelings can fade. The toil of life can act like wet wood and dampen the flames. Prayer, Small Groups, and Chapter participation can all help fan the flames of our hearts and ensure we show up every day as Christ in our workplaces.

May Reflections: Pages 2–4

Inspiration

By Larry Favor

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. (Isaiah 43:2, RSV)

After I attended my first Challenge Weekend, I began to understand and realize: the weekend was the next step in my personal transformational relationship with my Father. I knew that by being committed to the workplace ministry of Christians in Commerce/WorkLight, I had been awakened to the path I was longing.

Over time, I included Jesus into my workdays. My heart and business continued to be transformed. Although I had a Christian-centered life, I wasn't maintaining the connection of being in his care throughout the workday. I'd reconnect at prayer time each night and then dump my workplace anger and disappointment and ask him to take the load.

And then everything changed. While completing the preliminary steps with

a new client, things were going well. He had "checked me out," and was convinced that my company should build his luxury residential home overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

He asked me to take him again to visit a beautiful beachfront project my company had completed the year prior, and we had a great time together. When we returned to my office, he happened to glance in my car. My Holy Bible was riding along with us in the rear seat. With absolutely no hesitation, he hurried to his car, shouting at me over his shoulder, "if you've got that book in your car and in your life, I would never work with you."

I was crestfallen and felt the immediate impact of the crisis. I had let my staff down. My guys might be out of work. Cash flow was certainly going to be impacted. Thankfully, the Holy Spirit stepped up and prompted me: "We're in the boat together—have no fear."

As well, the men of CIC/WorkLight have kept my fire lit and mentored me into believing and knowing, "Thy will be done." This community is the workplace family that provides understanding and inspiration in times of trial or despair.

Larry Favor is a long-time member of the Santa Cruz Chapter in California, where he owns and operates Favor Construction. In his down time, Larry enjoys spending time with his family and his horse.

PRAY

Lord, thank you for the blessing of having you in my workplace in good times and in bad. I am humbled to serve you.

REFLECT

Where do you find understanding and inspiration in your workplace, especially when things are not going your way?

DISCUSS

How has your work life been transformed by your love of the Lord and how has it helped you to inspire and serve the people that you work with every day?

Big News: Meet Seth Neistadt

We're thrilled to welcome Seth Neistadt as WorkLight's new VP of Ministry Programs! With decades of entrepreneurial experience and a powerful faith journey, Seth is stepping into this role to help grow our mission and equip believers across the country.

Read more about Seth on our blog at worklight.org/blog.



REFLECTIONS WEEK 2

Work Is Worship

By Marty Anderson

“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” (Matthew 6:33)

Recently, I found myself watching a transformation happening in the life of a music artist named Jelly Roll. He became friends with Christian artist Brandon Lake and their duet is causing many people to take notice. In the interview, I heard Brandon say we don't just go to church to “worship” God, we worship him all the time. And worship music is just a way to worship God in song, but that our whole life is to be “worship.”

What a powerful perspective!
Everything I think, say or do. It's all

worship! And it means that what I choose to think or say or do is important to God. Too often in the workplace, I have gone about my day without considering if God cared about what I said or did. I was very focused on myself. But in reading about being in Heaven, I now realize that God reviews “everything” I do... and he doesn't skip over actions in the workplace!

That's the beautiful thing about WorkLight. Our whole reason for existing is to remind people that God cares about our work and to encourage people to live for Christ in their workplace!

So, for the rest of today and for all my tomorrows, I pray that my life is full of choices that please God. From the things I choose to watch/read to the things I say at work/home to the things I think about... may they all be pleasing to God.

What will you choose today?

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.

PRAY

Lord, help me to remember that everything in me is worship to you.

REFLECT

In what ways will you choose differently at work today?

DISCUSS

Share choices that you've been making that you want to stop. Share choices you want to make and would like prayer to support you.

REFLECTIONS WEEK 3

Facing Adversity

By Steve McShane

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. (Psalm 46:1)

Have you ever been faced with long term adversity? I have. In 2010, I was a young professional elected to represent a district of nearly 30,000 very engaged citizens in our city.

I quickly learned that this position required a keen ability to listen, solve problems, and smile. Periodically, I would enjoy a major policy achievement or something very beneficial to our district, only to get barraged with negative attacks and angry citizens.

In the last five or six years, personal attacks and criticism of the government just got stronger and more frequent. I spent many days and nights leaning on scripture and prayer.

One citizen called weekly with reports of litter or tree trimming in areas near his home. His intense and unjustified criticism was directed at me. Sadly, my experiences at Challenge Weekends, which have provided living examples of energy and inspiration, began to be ruined by daily responsibilities that wore me down.

In many ways, all these attacks just made me better and stronger. These have enabled me to grow closer to God, and I've gained immeasurable self-understanding and faithfulness.

And just like Joseph in the Old Testament, I was being tested and tempted at the same time. We know God blesses those who are patient and obedient to him, so I drew strength from that knowledge. Ultimately, in May of 2024 I retired, amid a flurry of critical and negative attacks, and made a change in my career path to one that suits my strengths.

Steve McShane is past president of the Salinas Valley Chapter. He serves as director of development for the Bridge Restoration Ministry.

PRAY

I am thankful, Lord, for the journey you have laid out for me. Help me to remember all the blessings you have poured out in every moment.

REFLECT

Think about times when your responsibilities got ugly. Were you tempted to bite back at those who took a swipe at you?

DISCUSS

How did you keep your faith going when good times got difficult? What strategies can you employ to remember God's faithfulness in all situations?

Joyful in Hope

By Brian Dahl

Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. (Romans 12:11-12)

Have you experienced work situations that are so challenging they give birth to significant stress and fear? As a small business owner, sometimes I feel like I'm riding an emotional roller coaster. One day there is a thrill of hope based on some "good" news. But the next day an unforeseen piece of "bad" news quickly ushers in a wave of fear.

When I choose to ride that roller coaster, it's a clear signal that my hope is misplaced. Work trials can shift my focus into self-preservation mode if my hope is rooted in circumstances.

But Romans 12 calls us to live and work with an altogether different perspective: "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer." What an encouraging truth

and calling to consider! But how do we put it into practice?

Note that this passage does not direct us to try harder to fix our problems. I know from experience that more hours, more planning, and more striving isn't what God is calling us to.

I am learning this lesson again as my business partners and I are navigating an extended and pronounced downturn. This time, the loss in revenue has led to laying off long-term staff members—close friends—that we love and have labored alongside for years. Truly gut-wrenching decisions.

But in the very midst of these trials, God offers amazing promises for us. Hope. Peace. Love. As we've prayed together, sought God's will, and endeavored to serve the Lord no matter the circumstance, he has blessed us with a surprising sense of peace that can only come from the Holy Spirit.

Joy rooted in hope. Patience to trust his sovereignty over our future. And peace in the knowledge that he hears our prayers and will only answer with good.

Brian Dahl is a partner at DKY, a brand marketing agency in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He is also a WorkLight Board member, and the DKY team supports WorkLight marketing communications needs.

PRAY

Holy Spirit, show us when we choose to fear circumstances and turn inward, instead of surrendering to our fears.

REFLECT

When trials come, would others say that I am joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer?

DISCUSS

Share experiences and ideas to help each other mature in response to situations that trigger fear and anxiety. Commit to praying and supporting one another, so we can shine the light of Christ—especially in the midst of difficult circumstances.

PRESIDENT'S NOTE



As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead. (James 2:26)

Faith Without Works

I recently heard someone say that "faith without action is like imagining a healthy salad while eating a candy bar." Maybe that's not a great comparison. But perhaps it's appropriately provocative for those who have a hard time seeing through the eternal sweetness of salvation and into the immediate call to life in the Spirit.

When I was a child I thought Heaven was a distant destination. It seemed

like when I got there none of this disposable planet would matter. But then why did God create creation? And why "on earth" did he call it good?

As I moved along in my spiritual formation, my life as a human being became more confusing. Sunday school taught me that God loved me the way a perfect parent loves a child. So much so that he sent Jesus to save my soul for eternity. But what about my life? What about today, tomorrow, and all my days on Earth?

God uses the theology of work to show me the truth through a difficult season of life. Here's my wild oversimplification of how I understand the theology of work: Creation is good + our lives matter to

God = good and faithful stewardship. That helps me remember that Jesus defeated death, rose again, and sent the Holy Spirit to equip and encourage each and all of us to build God's Kingdom on Earth.

Now what? I challenge you to join me in accepting Jesus as not just your personal savior, but also to accept the invitation to consider him Lord of each moment and action of your life. And if Jesus is Lord of your actions, then your faith will not die and your works will become a part of God's plan for this world.

With you all in Christ,
Wes

CHALLENGE WEEKEND

Come and See

Begin in Love

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”
(John 13:35)

Activities such as speaking about faith, going out of our way to help others, and inviting someone to a Challenge Weekend all might be examples of things that can take us out of our comfort zones. As Christians, how do we find the motivation to overcome our desire to remain comfortable and risk sharing our faith with others?

Modeling the example of Jesus, we seek first to love.

Love should be the foundation for our relationships because acting in love reflects God's nature. God is love, and as believers, we are called to reflect his nature in our relationships. By starting with love, we mirror the unconditional love that God shows us (1 John 4:7-8).

Building Connections

Coming to relationships out of a position of love also fosters unity and harmony with others, encourages mutual support and care, and fulfills Jesus' commandment to us to love God and love our neighbors as ourselves (Matthew 22:37-39).

When we approach others from a place of love, we demonstrate Christ's love for others. His sacrificial acts, culminating with his death on the cross for our salvation, builds connection with others. It is a powerful witness to others to help draw them to the faith.

In the same way, our approach when inviting someone to a Challenge Weekend should begin not with a desire to increase our WorkLight numbers, or fill an event, but from a desire to show sincere, selfless love.

But what does it look like to begin in love? It is a heart of care, concern, and compassion for an individual out of a sincere desire to model the example of Jesus. It is sharing time, resources, and especially attention with another person. Inviting someone to a Challenge Weekend is not about meeting a quota; it's about sharing the gift of helping another person grow deeper in their relationship with Jesus.

Focus on 'The One'

In his book, *Parallel Faith*, Dave Boden describes following Jesus' singular focus like this:

“Jesus did big, amazing things in his ministry where he reached crowds of people. But at the heart of it, he always stopped for ‘the one.’ No matter how big his crowd became, he always thought of ‘the one.’

“... Loving the person in front of you can be done on any schedule. I don't care if you work as a salesperson for a car company or a receptionist for a doctor's [office]. This is something every Christian can do. You don't need special training, and it doesn't require you to be a superhero. You simply need to be brave enough to press pause and see what happens when you focus on ‘the one.’”

If you are looking to step out of your comfort zone to invite someone to a Challenge Weekend, consider how extending that invitation is an expression of love. Ask God to give you the same compassion that Jesus showed when he invited the curious to “come and see.”

This is the fifth in a series of articles designed to inspire WorkLight members to extend invitations to connect with others.

WORKLIGHT

CHALLENGE WEEKEND

“The night is over, the day is almost here.” Romans 13:12

**Awake
the Dawn.**

Host a
Weekend.

This is our year for Challenge Weekends. Our National Conference introduced a new look and new resources. Schedule a weekend now so a new generation in your area can experience its power.

Learn more at WorkLight.org/Challenge-Weekends





Calling All Disciples

By Ron Schmalz

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.” (Luke 10:1-2)

As we work together as brothers and sisters in Christ, we must remind ourselves that the strategic goal of 500 by the end of 2025 is much more than hitting a particular metric within a prescribed timeframe. Since the founding of Christians in Commerce over 40 years ago, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit has powerfully guided us to bring Christ’s presence into our workplaces. We know that transformation happens when we invite the Holy Spirit into every aspect of our lives—especially our work.

In this past year, we have been blessed by the success of the John Mooney Campaign, and our staff at the home office is stepping up in a significant way to streamline operations and improve our support of local leaders across the United States. From rolling out online registration with QGiv to codifying our standard operating procedures, we are proactively focused upon scaling our ministry to increase our impact on the workplace.

Our marketing partner DKY, led by Board Member Brian Dahl, is also

developing new videos to expand awareness of our ministry as well as creating new collateral to empower our Chapter and Small Group leaders to be more proactive in local outreach efforts in their communities.

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. (John 15:16)

Under the leadership of Board Member Ned Sickle, we have successfully assembled a team of seasoned speakers to support Challenge Weekend core teams and provide best practices on giving talks and leading Small Group breakouts. With Seth Neistadt, our new vice president of ministry programs, we can look forward to further growth. All these efforts are bearing fruit in a powerful way due to the generosity of our donors who actively support our mission and values.

So Eli told Samuel, “Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, ‘Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place. The Lord came and stood there, calling as at the other times, “Samuel! Samuel!” Then Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant is listening.” (1 Samuel 3:9-10)

The Lord is calling each and every one of us to bring our gifts and talents into the workplace to bear rich fruit and build

his Kingdom. If you actively listen and cooperate with God’s will, the Holy Spirit will guide your heart and mind to build his Kingdom for generations to come. How will you respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit today?

Ron Schmalz is past president of the Santa Cruz Chapter in California and recently moved to New England. He and his wife Terri now live in Tolland, Connecticut where they are enjoying springtime and the change of seasons.

Fireproof

Continued from page 1

then you started your company and went through all that suffering again. Both times, I wanted to tell you to give up and get a real job. It hurt me to see you go through the flames. But all I could do was ask you what you heard the Lord saying. And you said, ‘I clearly heard *March*, and I haven’t heard *Halt*.’ So, you stayed the course and eventually prevailed, even when I wanted you to quit.”

Tom had a point. Going through two year-long periods of zero income while putting seven children through private school is discouraging, humbling, and painful. But it can also be sanctifying.

Which brings us back to the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace. The very thing that was meant to destroy them changed them. They went in as “administrators” and emerged not just alive and unsinged, but “promoted.” But more than their status changed. They changed as men, for it was in the fire that they encountered the Son of God.

Jim Ganther is an attorney, entrepreneur, and captain of a competitive BBQ team. He and his wife, Melissa, have seven children and three grandchildren. Contact Jim at jganther@MosaicCS.com.

NEWS

PLEASE COME TOGETHER TO PRAY FOR SETH NEISTADT

In 2022 we launched the Mooney Campaign and set out to reach 500 new igniters with Challenge Weekends by the end of 2025. In 2024 we successfully raised over \$200,000 to hire a vice president of ministry programs to bring this effort across the finish line. Through a Spirit-filled search and discernment process, we have hired Seth Neistadt. Praise God! Let us pray for Seth to be welcomed with open arms, informed through generous conversations, and filled with the Holy Spirit.

2025 NATIONAL LEADERSHIP RETREAT - POSTPONED

The volunteers who generously offered to plan and host a Leadership Retreat have decided to postpone the event to later this year. We will regroup to form a new planning task force under the leadership of our newly-hired VP of Ministry Programs, Seth Neistadt. Please email admin@worklight.org if you'd like to be a part of that process.

CHALLENGE WEEKEND SUPPORT FROM HOME OFFICE

Planning a Challenge Weekend? If you share your weekend's contact person along with a date and venue we will share the event on worklight.org. But that's not all! Did you know the home office offers a physical "Firestarter" kit, customized local brochures, and more? Find more information and get the support you need by filing out this simple online form: worklight.typeform.com/to/bT2x9BtN.

TRIVIA

As we pray, invite, and gather toward 500 igniters on Challenge Weekends by the end of this year, Chapters have been the driving force in pushing past our halfway point of 250. Thanks be to God for all of our Chapter members and leaders! How many Chapters do you think have committed to hosting a Challenge Weekend so far this year?

Last month's answer: Our South Bend Chapter leads the way with an estimated of 10 active Small Groups.

2025 CHALLENGE WEEKENDS

Minneapolis' Hilltop Small Group

- May 2-4 at a member's cabin in Mora, Minnesota.

Duluth Men's Chapter

- May 16-17 at St. Scholastica Monastery, 1001 Kenwood Ave., Duluth.

Orange County/Mission Viejo Men's Chapters

- September 5-7 at Prince of Peace Abbey, 650 Benet Hill Road, Oceanside, California.

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



Pay it Forward

As a steward of God's creation, you can support the ongoing ministry of WorkLight through planned giving of cash, equity or property. Through a partnership with the National Christian Foundation, we can help take the complexity out of legacy gifts.

Help others shine bright with planned giving at WorkLight.org/legacy.

WORKLIGHT

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

Galatians 2:20

MAY 2025

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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