



CARING PRESENCE NEWS

INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL MINISTRIES INC.

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“I had been thinking of stopping ICM recently,” wrote one of our chaplains last month, feeling that he’d not been productive. “I pulled into my parking spot and asked the Lord to have someone ‘open up’ to me” and to make it ‘really dynamic.’” That very shift, two men approached him, one about a child’s very serious health issues, and another about his strained marriage. He listened attentively to their heartfelt concerns and prayed for each of them, eager to return and hear updates.

I’m sure we can all relate to this chaplain. Who among us hasn’t wondered about our impact? Is our ministry bearing fruit? Is God at work in and through us? Do we see signs of success? Or, even if we’re not having our doubts, maybe someone else is!

We might take heart to know that even the Apostle Paul endured critiques from without and from within. In the passage below, he’s responding to those in Corinth who have been critical of him:

I CORINTHIANS 4:1-5

This, then, is how you ought to regard us: as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the mysteries God has revealed. 2 Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. 3 I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. 4 My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. 5 Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of the heart. At that time each will receive their praise from God.

Did you notice Paul’s response to his critics? He cares very little—not only about their views, apparently, but even his own. Why? Because he knew that they would all be in the dark about what really matters until the Lord comes to “bring to light what is hidden” and to “expose the motives of the heart.”

But—and this is important—Paul is willing to judge one thing now. Did you catch it? In verse 2, he writes that “those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.”

Here’s the key distinction that separates Paul from his critics: Paul focused on faithfulness

to his calling, not the fruitfulness of his calling.

For most jobs, we expect “performance reviews.” We are assessed by others and we assess ourselves. But work in the Kingdom of God is often different. Sometimes, according to the passage above, our impact is hidden, even, or especially, from ourselves.

Paul clearly became convinced that a “results focus” in Kingdom work was a distraction. For more reasons than we can name here, results are often beyond our purview. They show up at some distant place...or time. A seed is planted and takes years to bear fruit. We’re often tilling soil, leaving by necessity the work of harvest to others.

Stressing this very theme again, near the end of this same letter, Paul writes: “Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” (1 Cor. 15:58) Did you notice that? We may not see that our labor is not in vain, but we can—through trust in God—know it.

Thank you for the ways that you have given of your time, your talents, and your resources to the ministry of ICM. May God help us to live with the settled confidence that he sees, and one day—as Paul says—will even praise our faithful labor. Amen.

CARING PRESENCE CLUB

Our heartfelt thanks to the following individuals and couples for their generous support of ICM as members of the Caring Presence Club (CPC). These members contribute \$300 or more annually to ICM.

Al and Retta Lilliendahl	G.J. Topczewski	Paul and Sherry Cline
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Please consider becoming a Caring Presence Club member. You can give monthly - \$25 or more, in a lump sum, or several times during the year. We will update this list periodically. Thank you for your support of ICM.

LABOR DAY APPEAL

Each year, ICM honors people on Labor Day for their hard work and dedication. We also honor and recognize our hard-working volunteer chaplains who faithfully serve in workplaces, nurturing faith and hope.

During this time, we also ask for your financial support in our ministry of recruiting, training, and placing chaplains in the workplace.

And, as always, your help in spreading the word about ICM is invaluable.

Our Labor Day Offering will begin Friday, August 28, and end on Friday, Oct. 2nd.

FROM THE ARCHIVES...



I've spent time lately becoming more familiar with ICM's rich history. The red (or maroon?) blazers were once an easy way to identify an ICM chaplain. In this picture, one of our

chaplains seems to be getting ready for an interview on a TV news show. If you know more about this photo, let us know. Or, if you have other good ICM photos to share, please do! To my knowledge, ICM is the oldest ministry of its kind in the U.S. We have a history and a mission worth sharing far and wide!

Thank you for reading and, please, be in touch!

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