

March 2009

Dear Friends of City In Focus – Asian Ministries:

A couple of CIF-sponsored events took place in February. The BC Student Forum, held on February 6-7th, was attended by about 70 students from various universities, colleges, and a few high schools in the Lower Mainland, along with 26 facilitators consisting of Christian professionals experienced in the fields of business, politics, arts and science. This year's theme was '*Discovering Our Imagination: Innovation through Collaboration.*' Three speakers shared their insights on the theme. After each speaker presentation, the facilitators were invited to facilitate round table discussions with the students at their respective tables. The aim of the Forum is to equip the next generation of young leaders to live out their faith in leadership roles, as they progress into the marketplace.

The 10th Annual Vancouver Lunch – 'Where Faith and Work Intersect' was held at the Four Seasons Hotel on February 25th, with Leonard Buhler, President of Power to Change, as the keynote speaker. Over 200 guests came to hear Mr. Buhler share on '*Leading in Tough Times.*' When he owned and operated a potato farming business in Manitoba a few years ago, he experienced a crisis situation beyond his control that challenged his integrity and faith. By God's grace, he was able to overcome that situation. The lessons he learned were: eternal security takes the stress out of situations beyond our control; and our faith provides a moral compass in our decision making. Prior to this experience, he considered himself a businessman who happened to be a Christian. Now he considers himself a Christian who happens to be a businessman. He challenged the guests with these two questions: 'What situations are currently causing risk and stress in your life? How do you normally cope with situations beyond your control?'

Reflections of a Christian in the Marketplace:

I've come to an understanding about what separates a wise person from a foolish person. It's often not dramatic lifestyle choices, but word choices. Let me share my thoughts.

Words can have power all their own. I'm sure you know by experience, like I do, that in ten seconds flat a single sentence delivered with intensity, can quickly tear down any relational trust and respect that have taken some time to build up. The words that wound are often more painful than the bumps we suffer in daily life. Of the most hurtful situations that I've experienced in my relationships with people at work or at church, with my family and extended family, with friends and neighbours, it's been something that was said that should have remained unsaid that has caused the most pain and grief. How much heartache and relational damage could have been spared from those situations simply by not saying anything? How often are our tongues the tool of the enemy?

But you might ask, "What if what I want to say is true?!" Proverbs 10:19 (CEV) tells us that truth is only half of the equation: "*You will say the wrong thing if you talk too much – so be sensible and watch what you say.*" In some cases, you may be dying to say something because what you want to say is true, but wisdom very often compels you *not* to say it. However, that doesn't mean you are relieved of your responsibility to train your kids or to speak up against something immoral or illegal. But it does mean that as wisdom prompts, you might ask yourself, "Will my words help this situation or not? Am I the right person to say this? Does this need to be said now or can it wait?" I call this "duct-tape sanctification." As we grow in godliness, wisdom should train us to sometimes just keep quiet. Think about how much hard feelings we could avoid over the next thirty days if we adopt duct-tape sanctification. My wife often reminds me that: "I am the master of my unspoken words, but a slave to those words which should have remained unspoken." When you really think about it, how true!

Proverbs 17:28 (CEV) supports this even more: "*Even fools seem smart when they are quiet.*" Even a person who has no wisdom at all can look wise if he remains quiet. I think that's enough said.

Blessings and shalom,

Bill Wong

Upcoming events to mark on your calendar - RSVP to events@cityinfocus.ca or call 604-687-7292.

Friday, March 6th – City In Focus Breakfast at the Vancouver Club (915 West Hastings) at 7:30 a.m. Speaker: **Richard Blackaby**, President of Blackaby Ministries International – "*Spiritual Leadership and the Christian Life.*"

Friday, April 17th – BC Leadership Prayer Breakfast at the Westin Bayshore Hotel at 7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Special guest speaker: **Nazanin Afshin-Jam**, an International Human Rights Activist. More information to come in the next newsletter.

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