



International Fellowship of Christian Businessmen

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Round Table Topic

Living for a Greater Cause

by Os Hillman

I can do everything through Him who gives me strength. - Philippians 4:13

What does it mean for workplace believers to live for a cause greater than themselves in our day and time? Jeremiah Lanphier was a businessman in New York City who asked God to do this in his life in 1857.

In a small, darkened room, in the back of one of New York City's lesser churches, a man prayed alone. His request of God was simple, but earth-shattering: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" [John Woodbridge, ed., *More Than Conquerors* (Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1992), 337]

He was a man approaching midlife without a wife or family, but he had financial means. He made a decision to reject the "success syndrome" that drove the city's businessmen and bankers. God used this businessman to turn New York City's commercial empire on its head. He began a businessmen's prayer meeting on September 23, 1857. The meetings began slowly, but within a few months 20 noonday meetings were convening daily throughout the city. The New York

Tribune and the New York Herald issued articles of revival. It had become the city's biggest news. Now a full-fledged revival, it moved outside New York. By spring of 1858, 2,000 met daily in Chicago's Metropolitan Theatre, and in Philadelphia the meetings mushroomed into a four-month long tent meeting. Meetings were held in Baltimore, Washington, Cincinnati, Chicago, New Orleans, and Mobile. Thousands met to pray because one man stepped out. *Annus Mirabilis*, the year of national revival, had begun.

This was an extraordinary move of God through one man. It was unique because the movement was lead by businessmen, a group long considered the least prone to any form of evangelical fervor, and it had started on Wall Street, the most unlikely of all places to begin.

Could God do something extraordinary through you? Take a step. Ask God to do mighty things through you.