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**Fellowship of Companies for Christ
 Greater Hartford Chapter
 R HOUSE Restaurant
 April 4, 2012**

- Welcome! Opening prayer and introductions
- FCCI news/update
- Today's topic: **Is the joy of the Lord your strength...at work?**

*"...for the joy of the LORD is your strength."
 "The joy that the LORD gives you will make you strong." Neh 8:10b*

Some Christian business leaders are gifted and wise, but they're practically JOYLESS! They have little or no spark, enthusiasm, pleasantness or gladness. Instead, they are somber, straight-faced, bland, dry, unpleasant, stern, hard and Pharisical. They look tired, weary, beat up, defeated and worn out. In this passage, Nehemiah, Ezra and the Levites are leading a vibrant worship service celebrating the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the re-reading of God's Word, and the people's recommitment to the Lord. It's an awesome day, an amazing culmination of very challenging work.

This week is the 13th annual **Joy At Work Week**, which I created and launched during Easter Season in 2000. So, I'd like to describe the genesis, purpose and potential of this Week in particular, and the joy of the LORD in general.

When I founded Northeast Christians At Work (NCAW), my vision for the ministry was to "joyfully make, motivate and mature Christians in the workplace." If we couldn't do it joyfully, I didn't want to do it. While we all have our moments, a grumpy Christian is a contradiction of terms. That's why the NCAW logo has Smileys in it. That's why joy is in the slogan. To some, it may appear immature and childish for a workplace ministry, but to me it has power. I also knew that in order to soften the cultural soil in the rocky Northeast, an all-volunteer, grassroots ministry would need to focus on activities and tools that could reach many people with a small budget. Hence, the ministry focus on the media, events and the internet.

The media dimension of the ministry would ramp up during Easter and Christmas, when Christians and our culture are most sensitive to the things of Christ. The annual Northeast Marketplace Ministry Awards would be timed to be announced and publicized during Christmas season...but *what would we do around Easter Season?*


In the winter of 2000, I was participating in a public relations conference in Chicago and went to a workshop on organizing special media events. The speaker was a PR professional from Wisconsin who created Clean Your Refrigerator Week around Thanksgiving. As I was listening to her speak, the Lord inspired me. When I returned to Connecticut, I immediately set out to launch the first Joy At Work Week. Easter Season was a good time, because if we really believe what we say we believe about the resurrection of Christ, we should be the most joyful people where we work! I sent presskits and news releases to hundreds of media outlets. Associated Press picked up on it, did a feature story, and the rest is history! The ripple effect these 13 years has been a joy to watch!

After 9/11, this emphasis on the Joy of the Lord took on extra significance. If Osama Bin Laden and his henchmen could wake up and deliberately choose to be terrorists, then I would be the "un-terrorist." I would be a joyist, seeking to bring joy to people's lives instead of terror. That's what Jesus did. He came that our joy would be complete!

Today, is the joy of the Lord your strength? How does His joy gives you strength? If we are weak in joy, do we become weak? If we're not operating in joy, how do we increase our joy? If I were to ask your employees, customers, and suppliers if you are a joyful person, what would they say?

- Next meeting
- Upcoming events/news
- Closing prayer

**CELEBRATE THE 13th ANNUAL
 JOY AT WORK WEEK**
 APRIL 1-8, 2012
 www.ChristAtWork.org 1-800-JOY-9075



**Your glow
 should show
 Who you know!**

If your sins are forgiven and you have the gifts of eternal life in heaven and the Holy Spirit, then you should be the most joyful employer or employee where you work!

The week between Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday is the annual Joy At Work Week created by Northeast Christians At Work and co-sponsored by your church.

Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you, and let His joy transform each workday. Your smile will make a big difference in your attitude and your influence for Christ in the workplace. Try it this week and see!