

# 60 seconds with Bill Thomas



Bill Thomas

All it took was a simple invitation from a ministry colleague for Bill to attend a CMA annual conference and experience the benefits both for himself and other Christians called to the marketplace. He's been extending that invitation to others ever since. Here's why. . . .

By Mark Cutshall

*Bill Thomas currently serves as president of CIBN Workplace Ministries. CIBN has established a worldwide, Christ-centered, community-impacting business network of Christian leaders who have a passion for advancing the Kingdom of God and being empowered to function as "ministers in the marketplace." His wealth of experience in both the banking and investment industries includes positions with Merrill Lynch and executive leadership and management positions with Solomon Companies and Integrated Resources. Bill is a licensed minister with Christian International and serves on boards of nonprofit and for-profit organizations.*

**CMR:** Some people with all your professional achievements would be happy to take it easy, hole up on a golf course and enjoy the sunsets, but not you. How come?

**THOMAS:** A few years ago, I found myself at what Bob Buford calls "halftime." I'd achieved a certain level of professional success and done a lot of volunteering, but found myself asking, "What next?" Several years ago, Dr. Tim Hamon, the CEO of our ministry, said to me, "I belong to Christian Management Association. You should go with me to the annual conference." And so I did.

**CMR:** And the result was . . .

**THOMAS:** I saw a spirit of professionalism and excellence, an atmosphere where CEOs, managers and pastors came together collectively to fellowship, learn and challenge each other about the issues relevant to overseeing ministries, and how they could ensure their fruitfulness.

**CMR:** What was it about Christian Management Partners that caught your attention?

**THOMAS:** Advancing the mission of CMA. CMP helps to unite those of us who have been called to the marketplace and gives us a platform to support Christian ministries.

**CMR:** Keep going. . . .

**THOMAS:** God calls some of his people to be in occupational ministry. God has called the majority of the body of Christ to the marketplace to be salt and light. I like what Henry Blackaby said at a recent CMA conference: When Moses stood before the bush, the ground where he stood was holy, not because of the bush, but because God was present. As Christians, every place we step is holy ground, because the Holy Spirit is in us – whether we're in occupational ministry or in the workplace – and the CMP gatherings offer a unique kind of forum where leaders from both spheres of influence come together for mutual support and encouragement.

**CMR:** CMP is that important for you.

**THOMAS:** Yes. It's a tremendous opportunity to share collective wisdom – spiritual, intellectual and financial capital. I've taken others with me to CMP functions, and I hope to do so again this March for the gathering in Palm Springs. I'm looking forward to the fellowship, and learning from CMP's dynamic leaders.

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