



International Fellowship of Christian Businessmen

For more information about I.F.C.B. visit our web site at: www.ifcb.org

Round Table Topic

Unlimited Potential

by Os Hillman

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

What might God want to accomplish through you in your lifetime? As a workplace believer, you may yet have your greatest contribution to society. Such was the case of Cyrus McCormick, born in 1809. Raised on a farm by an inventor father, Cyrus McCormick sought to invent a mechanical reaper to harvest wheat. His father's attempts at inventing a successful machine had failed until Cyrus, at 22, created one that worked. McCormick had to overcome many setbacks including the loss of his patent 14 years after his first invention. This opened up competition. Then, in 1837 he went bankrupt due to the bank panic of 1837. However, these setbacks did not prevent McCormick from achieving his goals.

He expanded his market by trying to sell his machine to European farmers in 1851. A long series of honors compensated for the lack of recognition and praise from his American compatriots. By 1856, he was not only a world figure but his factory produced more than 4,000 reapers a year.

McCormick was a committed believer. He lived during the time of D.L. Moody and gave \$10,000 to Moody to start the Chicago YMCA in 1869. That building burned along with his Chicago factory in 1871. By this time, McCormick was over 60 and wealthy enough to retire. Before his death in 1884, he had given \$100,000 to help open Moody Bible Institute. His son, Cyrus Jr., was to become the first chairman of the school's board. Cyrus McCormick was a devoted Christian who passed his faith on to his son who later met up with J. Pierpoint Morgan to become the first president of a combined reaper firm, the famed International Harvester Corporation. [John Woodbridge, ed., *More Than Conquerors* (Chicago, Illinois: Moody Press, 1992), 328-331.]

What might God want to accomplish through your life? Surely you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you.