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FBI informant Mark Whitacre describes life of separation

WHISTLE-BLOWER SPOKE AT CITY PRAYER BREAKFAST

BY CARLA HINTON [7 Comments](#)

Published: April 1, 2010

High profile whistleblower [Mark Whitacre](#) said he spent almost nine years of his life separated from his family, friends and the career he loved because of his greed and ego.



Mark Whitacre speaks during the 27th annual Metro Prayer Breakfast Wednesday at the Cox Convention Center in Oklahoma City. Photo by PAUL B. SOUTHERLAND, the oklahoman

But Whitacre said that separation led to a close relationship with God.

As guest speaker at the 27th annual Metro Prayer Breakfast on Wednesday, Whitacre, subject of the [Matt Damon](#) movie "[The Informant!](#)", urged the audience of more than 1,400 to develop their own personal bond with the Lord.

"With the Holy Spirit in your life, you can overcome any adversity," Whitacre said.

The breakfast is hosted by the Christian Business Men's Connection, also called CBMC of [Oklahoma City](#). Before Whitacre's keynote speech, business and civic leaders led prayers for local cities, the state and nation as well as the men and women who lead them.

"Give each of our leaders faith to follow your leading," [Chris Burton](#), with [Mid-America Christian University](#), said in his prayer.

Life as an informant

Whitacre captured the audience's attention with his true tale of life as an [FBI](#) informant who was sent to prison for embezzlement.

The story of his undercover work and subsequent trials and triumphs have been the subject of big-and small-screen projects including the feature film starring Damon and the [Discovery Channel's](#) documentary "Undercover." The book "Mark Whitacre Against All Odds" also

chronicles Whitacre's story, including his Christian transformation.

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'Missing something'

In the 1990s, Whitacre was the highest-level executive of a Fortune 500 company to become a whistle blower in [U.S.](#) history. He said at the urging of his wife Ginger, he informed the FBI about the price-fixing schemes of [Archer Daniels Midland](#) (ADM), where he was head of the company's bio-products division.

Whitacre said he wore three tape recorders for three years as he aided the FBI in the investigation of ADM. His information helped the FBI's case against his employer. However, Whitacre was sentenced to 10 1/2 years in prison for embezzling \$9 million from ADM.

He said he let greed take over his life as a corporate executive and it cost him years apart from the people and career that he loved. He said he realized how miserable he was while sitting in prison (he served eight years and eight months) and decided to give his life to Christ.

"I learned in prison the difference between going to church every Sunday and saying you're a Christian and being a Christian," he said.

Whitacre said he was a millionaire executive before he went to prison but he was happier making far less in prison helping people learn to read and get their [General Educational Development](#) certificates.

"I had lived in a 13,000-square-foot house, behind a wrought-iron gate but I was missing something," he said, his voice breaking with emotion. "Even though they thought I had everything, I was miserable."

Whitacre said after he placed his trust in God, the Lord worked several miracles. He said his wife stood by him as he completed his prison sentence and the FBI leaders he had befriended tried to get him a presidential pardon.

He said he worried that his family would suffer financially while he was in prison, but the companies that had previously been gouged by the price-fixing schemes of his employer helped pay for his wife's college completion and other family obligations.

Whitacre said he also thinks the Lord miraculously allowed him to go back into his beloved career field just a day after he got out of prison. He is now chief operating officer of Cypress Systems, a biotechnology company based in [Fresno, Calif.](#)

"It took me bringing Christ into my life to bring me back on track," he said.

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