

The Blessed Life of the One-Percenter

Community Leaders in Christ (CLIC)

Q1 2026 - Letters of Encouragement

By Mark Lauzier, 12-24-25

I first saw the 1%er diamond-shaped patch at Daytona Beach Bike Week in March of 1984 but I didn't know what it was or its meaning. I had other things on my mind, and the internet had not been made public yet, so I couldn't research it, and I dared not ask one of the wearers. Not to mention there was no access and no public data stored on the worldwide web yet, except what may have been provided by and available for the exclusive use of the military's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA).

I don't know when DARPA figured out they should make a worldwide, inter-connected computer network accessible to the public but I'd like to revisit that decision. Certain things seem like good ideas at the time but become much more clear in their negative impacts many years later.

The decision on making the worldwide web accessible to the public aside, March 1984 was one of those rare years before Volusia County, Florida finally figured everything out. What they figured out, or maybe it was the colleges and universities collectively who figured it out sometime after 1984, is that you don't have college Spring Break in Daytona Beach the same week as Bike Week. That's a bit much even though the impact of tourism dollars are coveted by the business community above all else.



Daytona Bike Week is the annual motorcycle pilgrimage of debauchery the likes of the infamous 1947 July 4th weekend biker rally in Hollister, CA. The modern Bike Week now occurs every March as the weather becomes perfect for motorcycling in Florida. It's worked out so well for the area that they even added something called Biketoberfest every year. But for me and my future wife, Bike Week plus Spring Break was clearly a major win-win.

As a motorcycle enthusiast, I was there to go to the beach, party with the other young college grads and current students, do some hard drinking, and go to both the Daytona 200 Gran Prix motorcycle race and Daytona Supercross at the Daytona Beach Super Speedway. We were in for an all-motorcycle, all-party week. I remember seeing many black leather vests and patches that week. So, and now that I have the convenience of the internet at my disposal, what does 1%er really mean in the motorcycle subculture? The answer depends greatly on whether you are part of a "club" or not. According to <https://www.streetbikersworld.com> the concept of the one-percenter patch begins at that infamous motorcycle rally in 1947 in Hollister, CA after WW 2:

The story starts at what was called the 1947 Hollister Gypsy Tour motorcycle rally. While local papers reported manageable rowdiness, a single, likely staged, LIFE magazine photo depicting a drunken rider amidst beer bottles ignited a national panic about “outlaw bikers.”

The legend claims the American Motorcyclist Association (AMA), desperate to salvage its image, declared “99% of motorcyclists are law-abiding citizens, implying the last one percent were outlaws.”

Certain clubs – feeling alienated or defiant – didn’t shy away. They embraced the 1%er label as a badge of honor. It became a potent symbol of non-conformity, a defiant middle-finger to the AMA and mainstream society. Clubs like the Hells Angels and Outlaws adopted the diamond patch, hardening a collective identity rooted in rebellion¹.

Members of motorcycle clubs, or *gangs* if you prefer, wear the 1% or 1%er patch as a proud sign of non-conformance, even disobedience to the authorities and societal norms that hem them in and reduce their freedom to live their lives as they desire. They may be the hard riding, hard drinking, Harley-Davidson motorcycle enthusiasts like Marlon Brando’s character in ***The Wild One***, but sometimes it doesn’t stop there. Sometimes the 1%ers are involved in criminal enterprises. The Big Four Outlaw MC clubs, including the Hells Angels, Bandidos, Pagans, and Outlaws, are known as *major 1%er clubs* by the FBI and DOJ because of involvement in violent criminal enterprises including drug trafficking and worse.

The patch on page one has been seen on the black leather vests of these notorious outlaw biker clubs but also on the vests of more benign groups like the Combat Veterans M/C Association. In that case maybe it infers former membership in the Special Forces, Navy Seals, or Green Berets, I don’t know. Maybe there is an even deeper symbolic meaning to the patch in those non-outlaw MC groups. Regardless, the patch is a sure sign of confirmed loyalty and commitment to the club. And the patch must be earned somehow.

This is where the topic of the one-percenter takes an interesting turn as it relates to our group, club, or clique if you prefer. We call ourselves the Community Leaders in Christ (CLIC). So, what exactly does a 1%er motorcycle club member have to do with Community Leaders in Christ? After all, our group’s affinity is to follow Christ while serving within the city management profession. No doubt not an easy juggling act but consider this. Christ followers in public service and motorcycle gang members are committed to a spiritual cause representing a counter-cultural philosophy. They are both fiercely loyal to that cause or lifestyle. The bikers’ unusual loyalty is to the club. The Christians’ is to Jesus Christ and God’s Word. But let me make an even deeper connection to how CLIC members are 1%ers because I believe in providence, not consequence.

I was sitting there in amazement after the Monday morning keynote session at the October 2025 ICMA conference as everyone was filing out of the main auditorium. During the morning keynote, the speaker announced that there were approximately 5,200 people in attendance at the Tampa conference. Earlier that morning, I was leading our discussion and stated that I didn’t know how many people were in the room in which our CLIC group was meeting but there were people on the floor.

Someone quickly piped up that exactly 52 ICMA members/managers who are Christ followers were in attendance at the CLIC morning meeting.

I came to be a city management executive via my background as an analyst and number cruncher by trade. So, it did not take long for me to translate the bottom-line numbers which led to my mental distraction due the relationship between the CLIC to conference attendee ratio. The fifty-two at the CLIC meeting that morning and the fifty-two hundred reportedly at the conference results in a clean and simple ratio: **one-percent (1%)**. It was one of those God sign moments that Christians hold onto for later confirmation and/or puzzle-fitting.

It took another day for my motorcycle enthusiast background to percolate into what the message of the 1% cohort of Christ followers to conference attendees might be. My excitement grew to the point I needed to share it with someone, but only someone who would know what the difference between the motorcycle culture *1%er* and a ***Spiritual 1%er*** is. It soon became clear that it could only be fellow CLIC organizer, former City Manager, ICMA Life Member, and former President of the ICMA, Ken Parker. He was the long-serving City Manager of Port Orange, Florida, which basically has been one of the host cities for Daytona Bike Week for decades, and it was certainly in its heyday during Ken's tenure.

I tracked Ken down at the Wednesday CLIC meeting and explained my observation and he gave me his signature broad smile as I explained the 1% message I had received. He got it. I just hope that the photo of the patch doesn't bring forth an outlaw motorcycle club nightmare from his past service as city manager in Port Orange during the many Bike Weeks he managed the city through.

Motorcycle gangsters of the 1% ilk are counter-cultural. So are servant leaders who serve in city management and allow the God of the universe to guide their decisions and actions. They are not just spiritual warriors who serve the public and dedicate their lives to God on Sunday mornings. Spiritual 1%ers are open about their faith in God and their love for Jesus Christ. They get up early at trade conferences to fellowship with others who are serving in Christ. They support one another's walk with the Lord as the world and the prince of the power of the air seek to take them out of their positions of influence. And they recognize their blessings, even in times of extreme challenge. During the dark seasons.

Spiritual 1%ers are like the movie character George Bailey. In the Christmas movie "*It's a Wonderful Life*," George Bailey is talking to the evil capitalist Potter when we learn George makes \$45 per week at the Bailey Building and Loan, the equivalent of a \$2,340 annual salary. Potter offers Bailey a 3-year contract at \$20,000 per year to come work for him, nearly a nine-fold increase in salary. A life-changing proposition. As George agrees to think about it for a day, he shakes Potter's hand and encounters a sweaty palm causing him to pause. The handshake stirs his Spirit enough to pause and think for a moment and actually listen to the Spirit as he contemplates a sure sign of a nervous schemer who is hiding something. He immediately declines the great offer, calling Potter a scurvy spider. George Bailey later asks for help from Potter, Potter makes matters worse by saying George *is worth more dead than alive*, but George ultimately ends up being blessed in his season of trouble because of his faith and great service to the community.

CLIC members are Spiritual 1%ers. And we live a blessed life as city management executives when we are salt, light, and love in this dark world. We do this when:

1. Our work life, family life, and faith life are inter-twined and inseparable.
2. We practice bold faith, are willing to share our faith, and are not ashamed of making God the first thing in our lives. A sure sign is when our staff members know we are a Christ follower. It's not a secret, otherwise, the Great Commission is meaningless.
3. We understand that we are Ambassadors to the Kingdom who have conquered the debate within ourselves. The great debate between the carnal and the spiritual, the temporal and the eternal. The Holy Spirit is the one running our lives, certainly not the secular, anti-God world.
4. Humility precedes our servanthood. This is exemplified by a willingness to forgive, pray for, and yes, even love those who have done us and/or the community wrong.
5. We are courageous, ready and willing to shine light on the hard truths, even when shining light on those who are the *tools and fools* of darkness will come at great potential personal cost. We will never contribute to compromised truths as the world offers and rely on the absolute truth of God's Word. For this we have received our orders and should not take them lightly.
6. Spiritual 1%ers overcome their carnal and temporal biases one trial and one citizen engagement at a time. We recognize that we can contribute to the spiritual transformation in America that is the true embodiment of the Great Commission, demonstrating courageous love in a fallen world.

Successfully following the Lord and committing fully to Christ's truths, even the hard truths, may invariably result in you becoming an annoyance to others. Not just non-believers, but the comfortable Christians who do not want to make waves. They sometimes practice their faith on a part-time basis, or only to the point at which they run up against a 'light and momentary trial,' which we know from the Apostle Paul is a euphemism for pending total annihilation attempts aimed at destroying your faith. We must understand the attempts to annihilate the Spiritual 1%ers is our future, a badge of honor that we can lean on as we seek Jesus and His Word for guidance.

But I must speak this piece to the world and the dominion who is influencing it. There are many leaders in the city management profession who have overcome the world and who love the Lord. And it is fruitless to try to make Christians who are ambassadors representing the Spiritual 1%ers, the Community Leaders in Christ, do something that contradicts or opposes the Truth of God's Word. For we have a commanding officer, and a conscience empowered by the Holy Spirit that we must be true to.

So, I ask you, Dear Lord, strengthen us with compassion, encouragement, and hope. Thank you for sending your son to die on the cross for us. May I encourage in truth but also in love. May our Community Leaders in Christ fellowship contribute to spurring on the next Great Awakening as we seek to serve you as you restore the brightness of the light shining from this city on a hill. May we be that light in all our dealings, whether at work or in the home. Amen.

Brothers and Sisters, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! May you be blessed in 2026.

ⁱ <https://www.streetbikersworld.com/what-does-1-really-mean-in-motorcycle-club-subcultures/>