Called to Love

By Barbette Brophy

Diversity in the workplace is a hot topic and for many businesses it’s required training. In addition to political differences, diversity includes race, color, creed, and lifestyle differences. Christians should be well-equipped to embrace diversity. We are called to love God with our whole heart, mind, soul, and being, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. As described in Christ’s answer in the parable of the Good Samaritan, our neighbor is anyone whose path we cross.

There are times we can be intolerant. When we feel our views are not shared, or are ignored, or worse yet opposed, we can be uptight and uncharitable. Political discussion—even with fellow Christians who agree on moral issues—can get heated and partisan. Christ says to love your enemy and do good to those who hate you.

As a nurse, I have an opportunity to serve all types. Those the world may find hard to love, I can easily love—even the poorest and the sickest. There are others I have had to learn to love, some who are vulnerable in other ways or live a lifestyle with which I don’t agree. That has been a challenge.

Sometimes our difficulty comes from not knowing how to operate as Christians in the workplace. We can feel upset when we see sin or wrongdoing and don’t know how to respond to it. We might feel an obligation to tell someone when their behavior is wrong. Or we might avoid bad behavior by shutting ourselves off from others or fear being perceived as self-righteous.

How do we know what to do? We need to keep in mind Christ’s call to love. Then, even if we are unsure, if our reflex is to love, we will be acting in the way that Christ calls us to act in every encounter.

St. Francis is sometimes credited with saying, “Preach the Gospel always, and if necessary use words.” At a recent baby shower for a nurse at work everyone was enjoying themselves. The tone changed when a fellow nurse with a bit of a reputation left the room. The group began to make fun of her. A tech—who is a church goer and someone I had prayed with that morning—began impersonating her immoral lifestyle. At that point, I left the room. Noticing my exit, the tech was convicted. She approached me later and asked if they had gotten too carried away. In her heart, she already knew the answer.

My friend Mary shared the story of a Muslim coworker. The woman often wore a burka and her coworkers resented that she took so much time off for religious holidays and family obligations. They said she was not capable and lacked confidence. Mary knew the treatment was unfair. She tried to inform the woman discretely when she made a mistake so she could correct it. Soon the woman regularly sought Mary’s advice. They became friends and the woman shared that she was married with three kids. Mary shared her Christian faith. Believing they prayed to the same Father, the woman asked Mary to pray when her family was sick. Eventually the pettiness toward the woman subsided. She became more adept in her work and is now a valued colleague in the department.

Every difference we experience in another needs to be experienced through the love of God which has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. I know that I am Christ to others, I am the Good News. And that is first and foremost.
And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Colossians 3:17)

The skill of a juggler is remarkable. By tossing the balls or skittles in the air and moving them around, the juggler is able to hold more than can normally fit in his or her hands. Our lives can often feel like we are juggling groups of balls between our family commitments and work obligations… trying to throw some parts dangerously high to have a bit more time to hold on to others. It is a tiring and stressful way to live and the fear of dropping one of those balls is ever present. The juggler needs to keep focus and adjust his grip according to how the ball is flying.

An executive of Pepsi-Cola once described how we all juggle different balls in our lives. Some balls represent our work, others our hobbies and interests, and others our family. All balls can bounce except one that is made out of glass. This special ball represents the family and if dropped may crack or worse still, break altogether. It is hard to keep all the balls in the air at all times. We can drop some balls and they bounce rather than break. Many mistakes can be corrected and we can pick up from where we left off. We have to take special care of the family ball—the one ball we cannot drop.

Recently I was working on a project of a significant scale and complexity. We had been working for over two years designing and planning. In the months leading to opening there were a lot of moving parts that had to come together. It was a stressful time for our team. I was leaving home early and coming home late. I was focused on one thing—seeing this project completed. Just before my breaking point I realized that my health was suffering. I felt weak and lost my peace.

To make more time for work, I had been neglecting my prayer time and spending less time with my family. I realized that I was out of balance and my performance at work gradually declined. When I finally realized what happened to me, I asked for forgiveness from the Lord and also from my family. Over the course of the next month I gradually got better and learned how important it is to make Jesus a priority in all areas of my life—especially when there is a lot of pressure at work. Spending time in prayer with Jesus is the natural way to recalibrate when things get out of alignment. The encouragement and guidance to keep our life in alignment comes from him.
PRAY:

Thank you Lord for the full life you have called me to and for your faithful presence in it all.

REFLECT:

Reflect on each of your callings. How has the Lord loved you and provided for you in times of imbalance in the past?

DISCUSS:

What are two practical steps you could take to help your life feel more in balance?

Pursuing Christ’s Call

By Hilary Shreves

Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. (1 Corinthians 15: 58)

One dreary fall morning nothing in our home was going right. The school uniforms never made it into the dryer, an overdue library book was missing, and when I opened the fridge we were out of milk. My stress mounted as I considered the full schedule of patients I had at work that day, the zealous student working with me who I needed to both curb and encourage, and the impending due date of a manuscript. It was going to be one of those days. Could I hold all this together? Surely there was no balance found in that moment.

I have learned over the years that this is a familiar cycle. We have our smooth days and then we have rocky days. There are days when I’m stretched too thin and thrown off-kilter.

Yes, I am called to rugby carpools, lunch boxes, homework help, and late night chats with teenagers.

I am also called to cancer patients and to the world of blood work, CT scans, and teaching. I realized it is not about finding balance but about calling. The pursuit of Christ’s calling prompts me to bring together radically different efforts such as parenting and practicing medicine. A framework of calling tolerates that these efforts will be wildly off balance at times while giving me the freedom to move forward in peace and confidence. Knowing that my vocations in Christ might be complex but a little colliding needn’t sink the ship.

Keeping Your Word

By Mark DeMicoli

But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. (1 Peter 3:15-16)

Setting boundaries can be difficult especially if your colleagues have a different approach to work.

It’s important to have your testimony prepared to explain to your colleagues if ever asked about your own priorities, and how you manage your family life and work commitments.

I know of an architect who was in the middle of a major project. His client asked him to go on an important business trip. The project had already taken up a lot of time away from his family. This planned trip coincided with his son’s birthday. This architect told his client that he was unable to make the trip that weekend and proposed to go the following week. When pressed for the reason why, he explained that he did not want to miss his son’s birthday party, and that he had promised to be there. Consequently, his client was furious, ridiculing his reason in front of other people. The architect held his ground. A few weeks later the client apologized and things were back on track. Needless to say, the son really appreciated his father’s commitment and it helped to restrengthen the family bonds.

Mark DeMicoli is a director of Equinox Ventures Ltd., a real estate development company committed to projects that promote and strengthen the local community. He is married to Maria and they have six children and live in a 400-year-old house in Malta. He can be reached at mark@danda.com.mt.
Thank you Lord for your transforming love and the abundance that you call forth out of my weakness.

PRAY:

Thank you Lord for your transforming love and the abundance that you call forth out of my weakness.

REFLECT:

Do you struggle with unnecessary guilt? Where does this show up in your life?

DISCUSS:

What could you do to recognize unnecessary guilt more quickly in the future?

Giving Up Guilt

By Hilary Shreves

My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. (2 Corinthians 12: 9)

“Mom, will you be there to see me Hula hoop today?” my youngest daughter asked as I ran out the door. No, I would not be there. It was the annual Olympics at her elementary school and the hula hoop was her event. After attending previous school Olympics we realized that although it was fun, it was not one of the most important to our children, or to us. So I no longer needed to rearrange my schedule to attend. My daughter took my answer well and agreed to reenact the whole event later for the family.

It was a bright spring morning as I headed to clinic to see patients. I thought about my sweet daughter and I hoped she wasn’t too disappointed. Then, I thought about other events for the kids I have missed over the years. Next, I thought about the myriad of other needs that had come up that week, some of which I could not meet. Does everyone need a piece of me? Before I knew it, I had myself pinned with guilt and headed for anger.

Beneath it all was a deep desire to say “yes” to everyone and a disappointment with my limitations. My unnecessary guilt caused me to forget that these are limitations which God accepts. He had chosen to take those limitations on for himself through the incarnation. He isn’t daunted by my limitations.

Throughout that day there were clear reminders that I was right where I needed to be. Later that day our proud little Olympian stunned the entire family and a few neighbors with nearly three minutes of ceaseless hula hooping. It was a reminder that God always makes provisions for each of his callings in my life and that it is up to me to resist the distraction of guilt.

Hilary Shreves lives in Portland, OR. She and her husband, Eric, have five children. She is a Nurse Practitioner at Oregon Health Sciences University and leads a Urologic Oncology Survivorship Clinic. She can be reached at hilaryshreves@yahoo.com.

2018 ANNUAL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION RATES

The theme of this year’s Annual Conference focuses on bringing God’s good order into our lives. Registration is now open. Early bird registration rate is $205 and runs through September 6. Beginning September 7 the rate is $225. The spouse rate is $155.

The Annual Conference will be held on October 5-6 at the Embassy Suites Bloomington, MN. Please mark your calendars!

Room reservations are now being accepted at the conference hotel. Contact Embassy Suites at http://embassysuites.hilton.com/en/es/groups/personalized/M/MSPWEESSCIC-20181003/index.jhtml

Or call them at 952-884-4811 or 1-800-Embassy.

Ask for Group: Christians In Commerce or Group Code: CIC.
It’s increasingly difficult to live our faith when facing the demands of work and modern life. Learn practical strategies for living a life of peace and freedom in the Holy Spirit.

NEW “Ted-like” talks with practical, spiritual insights
- Short, first-hand accounts from members
- Panel discussions
- Special reports
- Song and worship
- Fellowship
- Breakout sessions
- Workshops

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”

John 14:27

ChristiansInCommerce.org/2018conference
Name ________________________________________________________________

Spouse (if attending)  ____________________________________________________

Address ______________________________________________________________

City ___________________ State ________ Zip ___________________________

Daytime Phone  __________________________________________________________

Email  _________________________________________________________________

Spouse’s Email  __________________________________________________________

Chapter  ______________________________________________________________

Spouse’s Chapter  _________________________________________________________

**Lord’s Day Meal Selection** (check one):

(self)  □ Beef □ Salmon □ Gluten-free □ No Meal

(spouse) □ Beef □ Salmon □ Gluten-free □ No Meal

Special dietary restrictions for ALL meals: _________________________________

**Payment Method** (check one):

☐ Check  Credit Card:  ☐ Visa ☐ AMEX ☐ MC ☐ Discover

Credit Card Number: ____________________________________________ Expiration Date: (mm/yy) _____ / _____ CCV# _________

**Housing** (Attendees are responsible for making their own accommodations - check one):

☐ Staying at Embassy Suites Bloomington, MN*  ☐ Requesting local hospitality - please complete our Hospitality Request form here:

https://www.christiansincommerce.org/2018-annual-conference-hotelhospitality-request

☐ Staying elsewhere

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**CONFERENCE FEES – Check All That Apply**

☐ Early Bird Registration: .............................. $205.00

☐ Early Bird Registration + Spouse:  ......... $360.00

☐ Registration beginning September 13:  .... $225.00

☐ Registration + Spouse: ............................... $380.00

Registration closes on October 2, 2018.
Discounted Room Rate at Embassy Suites until September 13.

Fee includes Friday and Saturday lunches, the Lord’s Day dinner on Saturday, and all conference materials.

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To register online, visit our 2018 Annual Conference page and select register online: christiansincommerce.org/2018conference

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Mail completed registration form (with check if paying by check) to CIC Office: 7515 Lee Highway, Falls Church, VA 22042

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“Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.”

2 Corinthians 3:17
We face delays every day in the working world. The internet goes down just as the web meeting is about to start. The copier breaks just as it’s printing handouts for that big presentation.

Delays force us to wait, and we don’t like waiting. When we are forced to wait, we are reminded that we are not in control. We are reminded that our plans are not the ultimate plans. We are reminded that we can’t always have our way.

How do you respond when you have to wait at work? How do you deal with that guy—you know who I’m talking about—who is always late? If a project fails because a colleague causes a major delay, the other team members are likely to be pretty angry and frustrated with him.

Patience is one of the attributes of love, and in 1 Corinthians 13:4, Paul tells us that love is patient. We are called to love our neighbors, and that includes our colleagues. It even includes that guy who is always late.

Impatience ≠ Urgency

How do we balance patience with productivity, diligence, and accountability?

We should be careful not to confuse the ideas of impatience and urgency. The Bible clearly distinguishes these ideas.

Many passages in scripture indicate we are to be patient with one another. Other passages indicate we are to be diligent and move with a sense of urgency. Passages falling under both of these categories include Romans 2:7, Romans 8:25, Galatians 5:22, Ephesians 4:2, and many others.

Patience is the ability to tolerate delay without getting angry or upset. Patience is a state of peace in the heart. Knowing God is in control, we are free to love with patience.

Impatience is an inability to wait without getting angry or upset. When we’re impatient, we’re focused on ourselves. We’ve lost sight of the fact that God is in control.

Urgency, on the other hand, is an indication of importance that requires swift or timely action. Urgency is not a state of the heart, but a state of the facts. If an airline pilot encounters an equipment failure mid-flight, he must act with urgency to land safely. If a company must generate a certain amount of revenue each month to meet the needs of its clients, the sales team must act with urgency to close deals.

A healthy sense of urgency is a key contributor to success in every business. The Bible commends this sort of urgency by calling us to be diligent and excellent in all we do. Proverbs 21:5 says, “The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty.”

It’s our responsibility to understand the difference between urgency and impatience. We should pursue our work with urgency and expect others to do the same.

At the same time, we should be patient with our colleagues. When there is a delay, we should empathetically—and lovingly—work to understand the problems and then help to resolve them.

Our sin and brokenness prevents us from experiencing a perfectly harmonious balance of patience and urgency. Yet we are called to pursue it as much as we can—for God’s glory and for the good of those around us.

Even with the harsh realities of the workplace, we are called to love with a genuine love. Ultimately, Jesus showed us how to love. We can’t love perfectly as he did, but we can follow him and learn his moves.

This article has been adapted and published with permission from the Institute for Faith, Work & Economics. View the original article at https://tifwe.org/patience-at-work-still-productive/. Subscribe to the IFWE Daily Blog at https://tifwe.org/subscribe.
Our call to work for our Father as coworkers in Christ may be on a small scale but the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed, the smallest, yet it grows into the greatest of plants. Filled with the Holy Spirit, we are called into battle wearing the armor of God. As Christians there is always one of three roles we can play. It’s helpful to think that these situations fall into three buckets.

Bucket 1 is where we have control over an issue; by our own decision and effort we can achieve positive change. These are areas to reflect on our own part and responsibilities, making sure they conform to God’s will. We may be called to personally change or step in to provide leadership. In these we have clear accountability for our actions. Are we being faithful to a life pleasing to God?

Bucket 2 is where we have some, but not complete control over an issue; we do have influence to achieve a positive change. How are we building relationships of trust with others, so we can be a positive influence? How are we willing to constructively confront issues and hold others accountable? Can we draw other Christians together to pray, support, and encourage each other?

Bucket 3 is areas where we don’t have control or influence. Will we commit them to prayer? Our King has control and influence over all things. Will we trust these to God’s authority and care?

When we think about our own industry or work environment perhaps we feel overwhelmed, or helpless. It seems often like everyone’s to blame, but no one’s responsible. We suffer in silence, leaving at the door our faith and confidence in the Lord.

Our Lord has won the victory over sin. He is restoring all things and he calls us to join in with him. In our own workplace, what is good that we can encourage and build on? What is evil that we can eliminate? What is not working that we can fix? What is missing that we can bring about?

Let us be his coworkers in those issues facing us where we have control and influence. We know his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and his dominion endures through all generations...even ours.

NEW PODCAST

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Three Buckets

An excerpt from the Snapshot Podcast series

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NEW PODCAST

NINE TO FIVE PODCAST

Check out the latest Nine to Five podcasts—conversations with Christians aligning their careers with God’s mission. Twelve episodes are now available featuring Christian men and women sharing their work experiences and experts offering valuable insights. Listen, share with friends, and let us know what you think!


YOU WERE ONCE IN DARKNESS, BUT NOW YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THE LORD. LIVE AS CHILDREN OF LIGHT FOR LIGHT PRODUCES EVERY KIND OF GOODNESS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS AND TRUTH. TRY TO LEARN WHAT IS PLEASING TO THE LORD.

EPHESIANS 5:8
JOHN W. MOONEY
December 26, 1937 - April 27, 2018

The impact John Mooney had on people around the world was evident on May 19 at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Cottonwood, AZ. The panoramic view of Verde Valley and the beautiful day reflected the majesty of God, whom John loved and spoke about to anyone and everyone. Over 500 of John’s close friends, as well as the children from Immaculate Conception School, came together with Patti, John’s wife, and their children and grandchildren to celebrate the man who changed so many people’s lives.

Among the guests attending the Mass were over 70 Christians in Commerce (CIC) brothers and sisters from all over the United States, including Bud Rose, co-founder of CIC, and Terry Cassell, president of CIC.

Immediately preceding the Celebration of Life Mass, Bart Tesoriero asked the CIC members to rise and led the group in a couple rousing songs John loved. Then John’s son, Tim Mooney, gave a wonderful eulogy about his father and the impact he had on so many lives. The Pre Mass concluded with the school children singing “He is Exalted.”

Mass was concelebrated by Fr. David Kelash, pastor of Immaculate Conception, and Fr. Charlie Goraieb, longtime friend and pastor at St. Timothy Catholic Church in Mesa, AZ. Deacon Jim Brown assisted Fr. David and children from the school were altar servers. Andrew Mooney, another of John’s sons, read from Book of Revelations. Ford Mooney and Kaydee Mooney (grandchildren) read Psalm 136 and 1John 4:7-17. Haiden Mooney, W. Mooney (grandchildren) and Nathan Kalna (great-grandson) brought gifts to the altar. Fr. David sang parts of the Mass. Fr. Charlie read the Gospel (John 15:9-17) and gave the homily.

Fr. Charlie shared stories of John mentoring him on the golf course (a sport John could have played professionally). He shared that John was asked by a Catholic Bishop to stand in as exorcist for the Diocese while he trained a few priests to become exorcists. Fr. Charlie also shared that prior to John receiving the Holy Spirit, he stuttered terribly and would never speak in public. John’s life changed overnight when he received the Holy Spirit. His stuttering ceased and he spoke to anyone and everyone, from a single person to hundreds in auditoriums around the world. When asked, “How many men attending were mentored by John?” Almost 200 men stood up.

Tom Zaleski, who considered himself a student of John’s, shared his remembrance. “I think all of us who were mentored by John would agree he taught us well who the Holy Spirit was. At the time of my life when I knew him, John saved me from drifting away from the church. I will always consider John to be an incredible mentor and friend.”

When Mass concluded, the school children sang “How Great is Our God,” joined next by CIC members to sing and ultimately everyone else.

Internment took place at All Souls Cemetery, adjacent to the church grounds. There was a reception in the church hall.

Tim and Andrew Mooney invited everyone back to Sedona, AZ, where drinks were waiting at Mooney’s Irish Pub.

John, you are loved and missed.

- Contributed by Cathy Glover
"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me."

Galatians 2:20

VISION: Being Christ in the workplace
MISSION: To encourage and equip Christians to be God’s presence in the workplace by the power of the Holy Spirit, exercising faith, integrity, and excellence
VALUES: Christians in Commerce is an ecumenical organization committed to:
• Growing and being transformed in Jesus Christ
• Manifesting the gifts of the Holy Spirit
• Building strong brotherhood and sisterhood
• Serving God and expanding his Kingdom in all aspects of our lives