



Transformed Through Injury

By Vanessa Cooreman Smith

Date night on a Friday evening seemed to be a perfect end cap to the hustle and bustle of the first week of June. We were planning to tour our new home, which was under renovation, and then head up to take in the sunset on Lake Michigan in New Buffalo, followed by a nice dinner.

Our plans for the night, the summer, and even the year seemed to be in perfect order, but as we kicked off date night by stopping at our new home, I could not have known how these plans would be rocked.

As we came through the kitchen, I accidentally rolled my right ankle, and as a result, I lurched forward and stumbled, falling forward off a 24-inch drop between our kitchen and a sunken living room. X-rays revealed I had broken my fibula and tibia, as well as breaking three metatarsals, had torn ligaments and numerous bone chips, and the bottom of the tibia was broken off completely.

My orthopedic surgeon was one of the best specialists for my injury and was also a Christian. Going into my first surgery he discovered me in pre-op

alone, riddled with anxiety and fear, tears streaming down my face, and grief stricken at the realization that I was facing a long recovery.

He sat down next to me and held his hands out over me. I knew he was praying, and I felt the power and peace of the Holy Spirit envelop me.

Following the first surgery, I spent six dark weeks on pain medication in excruciating pain. I was losing all hope and the will to live. I felt guilty, negligent as a mother and a business owner. A few weeks into the injury, I had no choice but to wave the white flag and completely turn over my work to my team. God was asking me to have faith in him that it would be OK.

In August, I was able to phase back into work. I was amazed at how well my team had run the business. Numerous team members had grown from their new responsibilities and there was new maturity and confidence.

At that point I had a choice: I could pick up where I left off and resume the responsibilities that I had always held,

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INSIDE: REFLECTIONS

Good and Faithful Stewards

"Here is your mina; I kept it laid away in a piece of cloth." (Luke 19:20)

The pandemic is fueling the Great Resignation. As Christians, we may be doing the same thing, even if we don't leave our jobs.

It's easy to leave at our workplace's door the call to always be working for our Father. It's a great temptation. We look forward to retirement so we can do what we enjoy, and maybe even do a little of God's work. In the meantime, we keep our talents "laid away in a piece of cloth" during our work week.



Every ability, skill, relationship, experience, situation, challenge, and opportunity are "talents" entrusted to us. Daily we're given opportunities to put our spirit-filled life in action for our Father. He will be faithful when we do.

It's not easy; and that is why we join together in WorkLight, supporting and encouraging one another to bring God's presence into our workplaces.

As the workplace becomes darker, let's light up our workplaces together.

February Reflections: Pages 2-4

REFLECTIONS WEEK 1

Steadfast Stewardship

By Mike Maslow

“Why then didn’t you put my money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest?” (Luke 19:23)

There are times I feel bankrupt with not much to give at work. Recently, I’ve been in one of those times and so, I pray:

“I in you, and you in me. I give you my five loaves and two fishes, give me enough to feed the 5,000.

“I give you my weakness, my failure, my sadness, my shame, my unsettledness—give me your strength, your grace, your joy, your identity as a beloved son, your peace. I in you, and you in me.

“You and I Lord are now two persons with one shared life. You are living my life daily in me and I am living your life

in you, both loving the Father and his other children together.

“Help me to see that when I love, talk, see, walk, touch, embrace, it is you and I doing it together. You are alive in me, a new incarnation in me by grace. Help me to boldly walk with confidence this day knowing that the same Spirit that was in you is in me as well.

“I desire to rejoice in my sufferings (and not become fearful, angry or bitter) for your sake, and in my flesh, I desire to make up what is lacking in your afflictions on behalf of your body, the Church.

“Give me hope, patience and a profound trust in you as I await the final consummation of our holy union in the resurrection and the beatific vision after my death. Amen.”

As I pray this prayer, I persevere knowing the Lord will give me what I need for the day. God is working in me and in the people around me. I may not have the wisdom to know what to do, the strength to persevere, the patience and love to give, but God

does. He gives me what I need to be steadfast in my stewardship.

Mike Maslow is a Director of Initiatives and Sales for a large metropolitan newspaper. He lives in Burnsville, Minnesota, with his wife, Kathy. They have seven children.

PRAY

Lord, let me be a living sacrifice to you. Help me to persevere in tough times knowing you are with me.

REFLECT

On times where the challenges and demands at work and at home left us feeling spiritually bankrupt.

DISCUSS

How can we be steadfast in our stewardship during times of struggle?



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REFLECTIONS WEEK 2

Being Grateful Stewards

By Carol J. Lopez

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. (1 Peter 4:10)

Because my family was of simple means, I was taught to take good care of my belongings and not waste anything. Rain was plentiful, the fields were abundant with rich crops, the air was clean and fresh, and the water in the California's Central Valley was crisp and delicious. The farmers there provided most of the food supply for the world.

I grew up believing our Earth would always be abundantly rich in

natural resources. I never thought our abundance would seriously be threatened by our own misuse and negligence to properly care for these gifts provided by God.

As many people around the world now realize, man's activities and lifestyle choices have created damaging results to the environment. Pollution, deforestation, destruction of natural habitats, and the effects of our modern lifestyle are just some of the reasons our Earth's natural resources are in jeopardy. It is clear we have not been following God's call for responsible stewardship of his creation.

God provides for all of mankind. Therefore, we should show our gratitude by taking care of the creation God has entrusted to us. By being a responsible steward of this world and God's call, we express our love for our Creator and our own gratitude to him.

Carol Lopez was an educator for over 40 years. She lives in Fresno, California, and serves in several volunteer ministries.

PRAY

Heavenly Father, may our faithful stewardship bear witness to the love of Christ in our lives.

REFLECT

What are the characteristics of being a good steward of God's creation in our occupations? How do we show good stewardship at work, community, and families?

DISCUSS

How can we be better stewards of creation in our own day-to-day lives?

REFLECTIONS WEEK 3

A Talent in My Pocket

By Charlie Singleton

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:28)

Several years ago, my wife Kris was diagnosed with a very rare form of cancer. The cancer, which started in her placenta when she was pregnant, had spread to her lungs.

During the resulting months of treatment, we saw miraculous healing. The doctor said that had Kris come in two weeks later, she wouldn't have survived. Throughout Kris' cancer treatment, my WorkLight small group were present, accompanying me with understanding and prayer.

We have walked with one another through the most mundane to the

most cataclysmic events of life. It's a microcosm of the kingdom, built on peace, understanding, brotherhood, accountability, and love. We are Christ to one another.

God calls each of us to participate in his most precious work: building his Kingdom. In return, he expects us to do our best to bear fruit with the talents he has entrusted to us. These talents include our experiences. After Kris' healing, I realized the Lord had given me a talent for helping those who are suffering.

Several years later, my brother Patrick's wife, Carmen, was diagnosed with cancer. I was able to walk with him out of my own experience. And before she died, I was able to be present with Carmen and pray with her.

The support I again received from my small group was invaluable to me. I experienced Christ standing next to me, placing his hand on my shoulder, and saying, "I'm going to equip you with what you need; I have given you these men to help you." This experience of support is a talent I can now give to others.

Charlie Singleton lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota, with his wife, Kris, and their four children. He is currently the lead of the Engineering Team at Trademark Transportation and can be reached at csingleton06@gmail.com.

PRAY

Father, please give us the grace to accept everything you give us and to use it for your Kingdom.

REFLECT

What are some of the hardships in your life—right now or from the past?

DISCUSS

How might you use your experience in order to build the Lord's Kingdom?

REFLECTIONS WEEK 4

Stewardship with Moxie

By Katie Bellerino

Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. (2 Corinthians 9:10)

I started my career as a hairdresser, but I've always been a fan of coffee. Like a big hug, it's warm, comforting, and gives you a huge pick-me-up right when you need it. But that's just what's in the mug. What makes a good product really good is the complete experience.

Originally, I opened Moxie Coffee because there wasn't a decent option in the vicinity of my salon. However, after it went from an idea to reality, I saw it was more of a calling than just my next business move.

As my team, with vigor and enthusiasm, created the drinks we'd serve, I knew we were building something larger than a coffee menu. Upon opening, my team greeted each guest with genuine kindness and humor.

Soon, my baristas became so familiar with returning guests they remembered not just their usual orders, but also knew their names and what was going on with their families and personal lives. For the Moxie team, the morning ritual of getting coffee is greater than a caffeine jolt. It's an opportunity to brighten someone's day at its beginning. It gives us a chance to make others know they matter from the start.

I don't take my privilege of leading them lightly. It's rewarding to know my part in inspiring a group effort is to be generous.

I consider entrepreneurship a gift from God. When the going gets tough, I remember that this is a calling bigger than myself and how much I truly love the people with whom I work. I believe we are doing work unto the Lord. Personally, whether it is motherhood, leading a team, being a wife, cutting someone's hair, making a coffee, or simply having

the opportunity to brighten someone's day, I pray God uses every minute of my work for his glory and to further his Gospel and his Kingdom.

Katie Bellerino lives in New Orleans, Louisiana, with her husband, Matt, and her two children. She is the owner of Moxie Coffee and is a partner at Glow Hair and Beauty Bar.

PRAY

Lord, thank you for the prize of building a discipleship in your name. Grant me the wisdom to guide in all your ways.

REFLECT

What is the greater need of the people whom you serve on a daily basis?

DISCUSS

How can you expand the service of your product from a sale to sharing a complete experience?

PRESIDENT'S NOTE



"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'" (Matthew 25:23)

Good and Faithful Stewards

What does it mean to be a steward?

The free online Holman Bible Dictionary defines stewardship as "utilizing and managing all resources God provides for the glory of God and the betterment of his creation."

Early in my experience as president of WorkLight, the phrase "stewards of creation" stood out with a certain

ring. As time went on it became clear how this concept can illuminate our Christian life in so many ways.

Often, we think of stewardship in terms of our specific professional work and our general impact on the world around us. We answer this call by working hard for our Father and treating our environment with care and respect. You can find encouragement to do so in this month's reflections from Mike Maslow, Carol Lopez, Charlie Singleton, and Katie Bellerino.

Our workplaces are important to our WorkLight mission as Luke Cahill and Vanessa Cooreman Smith illustrate. There are other ways that we can be good and faithful stewards.

When we seek to be physically healthy, we are stewarding the fleshy body God gave us. When we seek

spiritual growth and discipleship, we are stewarding not only our bodies, but our minds and souls. When we evangelize, we are stewarding not only ourselves but others.

When you gather in the name of Christ as Chapters and Small Groups, you are stewards of the Ecclesia that Dan Clites writes about. When you host a Challenge Weekend or invite a friend to join your next meeting, you are stewarding relationships toward Jesus.

The list goes on and on. God calls us in so many ways to be an active part of his plan for creation. Hallelujah!

Where is Jesus calling you to stewardship today?

Come Holy Spirit,

Wes

Stewardship in the Pandemic

By Luke Cahill

Ninety percent of our business is in-person research. The pandemic suddenly took that away early last year. We were gearing up for a big year by hiring two people. But by April, all of our projects were canceled and nothing was in the pipeline.

WorkLight has had a huge role in helping me understand aligning my career with God's mission of stewardship. The gifts I have belong to the Father. We are all called to be active participants in caring for God's creation. He wants us to use our gifts and work together for good.

As I prayed about the impact of the pandemic on my business, layoffs didn't seem to be an option. It would be like the steward with one talent who just buried it. Instead, I cut my salary and decided to put the whole team to work to reinvent our solutions.

We work in the data and insights industry. We are paid to provide

information to decision makers to aid them in making more reliable choices. You'd assume in an industry paid to inform decisions, research clients would highly value getting those answers. You'd be wrong.

It isn't an intentional rejection of the reliable answers, rather it is

because the truth is hard to uncover. Most research methods have flaws that make it difficult to get an accurate read.

Good research is expensive, takes time, and can give you answers people don't want to hear. It can be inconvenient. But getting to the truth is what we've always tried to do.

Being a truth seeker in an industry that doesn't value what it takes means it's harder to win projects and you won't grow as quickly. It's exhausting.

A little history. Our company was founded by my father and focused on finding the truth. He found an effective methodology and stuck with it through an unprofitable decade. Eventually, the failures of other methods became big enough that the industry considered our alternative way, and our business grew.

The good news is we feel great about the work we do. Do you know how

many employees we lost during the Great Resignation? Zero. Our employees believe in the work we do. Other companies provide perks we can't offer, but the work our employees do makes a difference they value.

All products and services go through cycles. The pandemic caused our team to come together, reassess where we were at, and innovate.

A new wave of cheaper and faster methods in our industry has begun to emerge, but they won't produce the same results. We used the slow down created by the pandemic to reinvent our approach for a new time and a different market. It is invigorating.

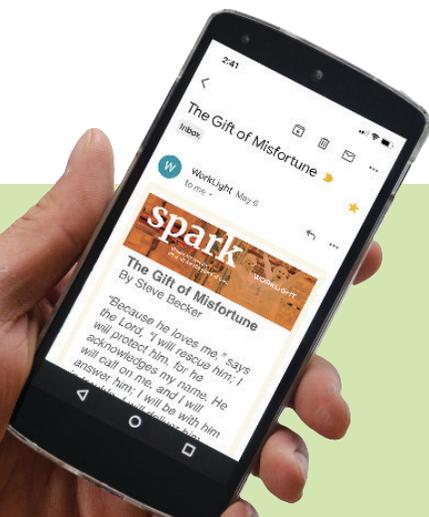
We know that it isn't going to be easy. The pain my father felt in the early years will be felt again, but I'm working for my other Father now, and I must persevere.

What is being a steward of creation for me? First, it is not my business and God cares about the truth more than profits. Secondly, we are called to do our part to create a flourishing world. Making the right decisions contributes to that, even in the realm of helping food and beverage companies make the right products.

Luke Cahill's company is Real Insight and is located in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He's a member of the WorkLight Board. He and his wife, Angela and their five children are big hockey fans.

FORWARD >>> a spark

If a Spark Reflection reminds you of someone, that's a Holy Spirit nudge. Forward it on and ignite a movement of the Holy Spirit in their life.





Sent into the Marketplace

By Dan Clites

In the first century, there were three major institutions in Israel: The Temple, the Synagogue, and the Ecclesia. The first two were considered holy places of God’s dwelling, while the Ecclesia was considered the unholy marketplace.

After all, the marketplace was where Rome ruled, consisting of people sent out to talk, walk, and teach Rome’s culture until everybody fully embraced it.

Jesus flipped that paradigm, declaring the Ecclesia as “his church body of believers.” He wanted his followers sent out to talk, walk, and teach his Gospel until everybody had fully embraced it.

The Ecclesia was the catalyst of good news within the Jerusalem marketplace, filling the very city that had crucified Jesus with its new doctrine of resurrection hope (Acts 5:28). The reason the Ecclesia multiplied so quickly was because it activated itself as an organized organism—wired in the Holy Spirit to multiply and expand its influence for city transformation.

This first century cultural turnaround was God’s miracle move for his people, and it’s true for us today. This is the calling of WorkLight! By faith, we are to boldly usher the light of Jesus Christ into the daily marketplace of our local spheres of influence, driving out the darkness of despair, fear, scarcity, greed, and apathy.

How can you work in this movement of the Holy Spirit? We must actively

go and disciple someone around us! Is our WorkLight Chapter passively expecting people to just religiously gather on a weekday morning at 7:00 a.m., or is it intentionally engaging, equipping, and empowering those gathered to scatter life-altering faith, 24/7, into the marketplace of local businesses, schools, government agencies, media, entertainment, homes, and neighborhoods?

Are we settling for just maintaining WorkLight Chapter membership, or are we being emboldened to make missionaries in the name of Jesus?

In their book *Hero Makers*, Dale Ferguson and Warren Bird encourage us to begin this partnership with God by moving from wanting to be “the Hero,” to becoming “the Hero Maker.” Here are some of the differences.

- Heroes love to do great things while Hero Makers love to disciple others to do great things.
- Heroes love to have the spotlight on them while Hero Makers love to disciple others to find their own spotlight, and their own voice for God’s proclamation.
- Hero Makers will approach others and say, “I see something in you. Can I help you?”

Being a Hero is not a bad thing, but it’s limited to one person’s abilities and energy. Becoming a Hero Maker activates, multiplies, and sustains a

movement’s energy. No longer full of self-pride, but full of Jesus’ humility.

The Ecclesia is empowered to multiply when we move from Hero to a Hero Maker, because Jesus was both. He was a Hero, because only he could go to the cross to save the world. Jesus was also a Hero Maker, conquering life-ending sin and death then investing his power and authority into his disciples—so we could do even greater things than he alone.

Dan Clites serves WorkLight as its Small Group consultant (dan@worklight.org). Dan lives in Savage, Minnesota, serving as the SW Metro Director for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

Transformed Through Injury

Continued from page 1

or I could allow these employees to maintain their evolved roles. What did God want me to do? The answer came back, “I used this hardship to create a clear path for you, use it to build my kingdom.”

Since then, I’ve used my talents and time in new ways. As a result, I’ve had the time to meet with each team member to mentor them and increase their job satisfaction and meaning. And my newfound capacity allowed me to be Christ in the workplace in a more intentional way.

I relinquished control of the role I was gripping so tightly. He blessed my business and gave me opportunities to serve others. It’s amazing what happens when we allow God to be in the driver’s seat.

Vanessa Cooreman Smith is an interior designer in South Bend, Indiana. She and her husband of 17 years, Stephen Smith, are business partners and the parents of three children. Vanessa can be reached at Vanessa@FlourishInteriors.net.

NEWS



**WELCOME OUR NEW
ADMINISTRATIVE
OPERATIONS MANAGER!**

Have you called the WorkLight home office lately? Noticed a new friendly voice answering the phone? Please join us in formally welcoming Bryan Beck to the WorkLight family!

Bryan will be working closely with Wesley in our Minnesota home office as the administrative operations manager.

His seven years of experience in healthcare administration and office management have proven valuable right out of the gate. Bryan also has a rich background in ministry, having grown up on the mission field in Eastern Europe.

He lives in Fridley, Minnesota, with his wife and dog, and in his free time, he and his wife teach music lessons or perform in local ensembles.

Welcome Bryan the next time you call the WorkLight home office or send him a welcome email at bryan@worklight.org.

WORKLIGHT TORCHBEARER

Whether you are a longtime supporter or new to WorkLight, we are encouraging everyone to become a WorkLight Torchbearer by making a recurring gift. This committed group of donors sustains the core elements of this ministry and help make future investments possible.

You can conveniently set up and maintain monthly donations at worklight.org/donate, or you can call the home office at (612) 552-5656. Did you know recurring gifts also support healthy year-round cashflow and simplify donor retention? It's a win-win for everyone!

For the cost of a few fancy cups of coffee each week you can be a dedicated part of reaching the next generation with this movement of the Holy Spirit. Imagine this—if each current chapter member gave \$50 per month, we could bring on dedicated staff to support growing Challenge Weekends, Chapters, and Small Groups across the country.

Please pray about becoming a monthly Torchbearer, so that WorkLight can ignite and sustain this movement for generations to come. Visit us at worklight.org/donate to learn more and make a recurring gift today.

Year End Giving Report

A special thank you to all who supported WorkLight's end of year campaign!
211 donors contributed **\$143,936.**

worklight.org/donate

This generosity exceeded our expectations. It makes possible supporting the ministry with The Flame newsletter, Spark Workday Reflections, online resources, conferences, efforts to expand existing chapters and small groups, as well as bring Challenge Weekends and WorkLight to new audiences and areas.

Did you know there are 86 brothers and sisters in Christ donating monthly as WorkLight Torchbearers? Can you help us pass 100 Torchbearers?

Visit us at worklight.org/donate to make a gift. Consider becoming a Torchbearer with a recurring monthly donation.

2022

FEBRUARY

*"I have been crucified
with Christ and I no
longer live, but Christ
lives in me."*

Galatians 2:20

THE FLAME

WORKLIGHT PRAYER

Father,

*Fill us with your Holy Spirit
that we may be made new
and bring the presence of Christ into all we do;
That we may grow in love for you, and for all;
That we may be humble and wise stewards of your creation;
That we may bring your light into our workplaces;
That we may lead all to unity in you;
Through Jesus, our Lord.*

Amen

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 WorkLight is an ecumenical workplace ministry committed to:

- Growing and being transformed in Jesus Christ
- Working for our Father, 24/7, 365 days a year
- Building a strong sense of community
- Living life in the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit

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