



## Long Road Back

By Bryan Beck

If anyone had an excuse to have a bad attitude at work that morning, I sure did. As office manager, I had been working with building management all winter to ensure proper snow removal of our lot. With a snowstorm on the horizon, I had triple checked to make sure that would happen.

But all my best laid plans went to ruin. On the way to work, I spun out of control on the icy interstate, right into the path of an oncoming bus. I only clipped it, but it was enough that my heart was pounding in my chest as I pulled up to the parking lot. I say “up to” because the lot was so unplowed that there was no way to even drive into it. I had failed.

I dragged myself through the snow into the building, and then the text came in. My wife’s recent sickness had taken a

turn for the worse; she was being rushed to the doctor for emergency attention. Any of these three things would have rattled me—the combination shattered me. I sank down into my office chair, angry, and scared.

Then Edith showed up. She had a reputation, even at the corporate level, for demanding clean parking lots. Before the snowstorm hit, I resolved to end the need for her complaints. When I saw her face and anticipated the rant I was about to get, all I said was, “yes, I know about the snow. I’ll take care of it,” but apparently it was my tone that did it.

A few minutes later, one of my colleagues pulled me into his office, letting me know Edith was crying. After hearing my side, he encouraged

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### INSIDE: REFLECTIONS

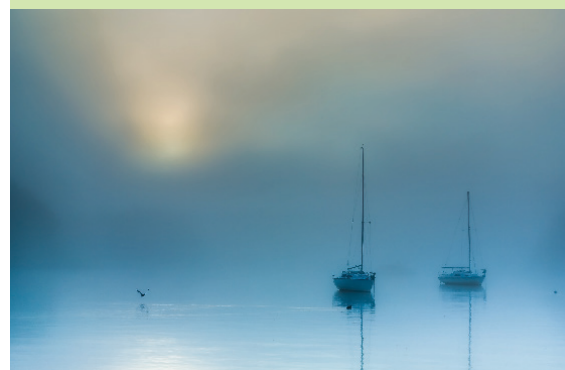
## Blessed are the Peacemakers

*“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.” (Matthew 5:9)*

Conflicts abound all around us. One of the most powerful ways as Christians we can bring change to our workplaces is by acting as peacemakers.

Disagreements are commonplace. Good people get upset with each other because of misunderstandings, perceptions, insensitivities, preconceived notions, and clear differences.

God can do more through a healthy dialogue pursuing truth, than a confrontational conflict that only causes each of us to further entrench ourselves. Humankind will put their trust in power and control. God puts his trust in love. If we love one another and draw each other toward truth we can leave the rest in his hands.



We should do it in humility and love with a painful awareness of our own failings and contributions. Let us go, in his power and grace, where we fear to go and be willing to grow in learning the skills of reconciliation through loving service.

May Reflections: Pages 2-4

## REFLECTIONS WEEK 1

Finding Peace  
in Conflict

By John E. Daly

*"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)*

A litigation attorney is not a career in which the idea of being a peacemaker usually comes up. In fact, many would think that this adversarial career would be the opposite of bringing peace. I thought that for many years but changed my view when a client taught me a lesson I never forgot.

I had been hired to help a family in a tragic injury and death case. The father had been killed and the daughter seriously injured in an accident out of state. I spent almost two years working on the case and met

with the daughter and son many times to go over a variety of complex issues that came up during this time. At the end of this case, some family members were invited to speak at a Christian gathering to explain how God had been with them through this difficult time in their lives.

I sat in the back during the meeting and listened as they explained what they had gone through. At one point they mentioned all the stress and conflict when insurance companies, bill collectors, and legal matters were overwhelming them. It was then that they mentioned that their attorney came and brought them peace. I had never thought of myself as a peacemaker but suddenly I saw something different.

When people are overwhelmed with the world they seek peace and comfort from someone who can help them. I started to see my job in a whole new way. Being a peacemaker was not just one who settles conflict but rather can be one who brings comfort and peace to those in conflict.

**John E. Daly** is an attorney and lives in Burnsville, Minnesota, with his wife of 43 years, Peg. They have two married sons and six wonderful grandchildren.

## PRAY

*Lord, help us to find a way to let peace rule our hearts in order to be more compassionate in the work that we do.*

## REFLECT

*When you are faced with conflict, what is your gut reaction to the situation—to react in kind, or to bring God's peace into the situation.*

## DISCUSS

*Think about a time when you faced conflict and the actions you took. How might you have handled that situation differently?*

## PRESIDENT'S NOTE



*Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. (Philippians 4:6)*

## Spiritual Solutions

Life can be hard. The death of a spouse. A diagnosis of terminal illness. The loss of a marriage to divorce. I've seen all this recently in the lives of people under 40 years of age. Yet, we are called to be peacemakers. Especially in the face of anxiety and adversity.

How are we to respond to earthly tragedy? I used to think my job was to get the download on Sundays and try to fix everything myself during the

week. I would reassure the widow that she was still loved. Encourage someone facing a serious illness to believe in the power of healing and modern medicine. Try to get a victim of divorce to see the possibilities of a new life.

But where's the real peacemaking opportunity? Earthly problems can't be solved by earthly means. After all, we aren't entirely part of this world. We are children of God most high. Only spiritual solutions can truly set us free from earthly bondage. In Christ we find authentic peace, not just another strategy to fix something. Jesus is the path from anxiety to peace. And he can conquer anything for anyone. Anytime. Anywhere.

The heartbroken widow is still loved. The source of that love is far greater

than any person can express. The terminally ill can have hope not only for miraculous healing but for deliverance from fear and bondage. The greatest new relationship for anyone, perhaps especially a broken divorcee, comes in a renewed relationship with Jesus.

If you have ears to hear, you just might be turning to God in thanksgiving right now. Especially in the face of death, fear, and loss. Where in your life is the Holy Spirit equipping you to bring the peacemaking of our Lord and Savior into the anxiety of this world?

With you in Christ,  
Wes



## REFLECTIONS WEEK 2

## Into the Conflict

By Carol Lopez

*If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. (Romans 12:18)*

The phone was ringing off the hook as I ran to answer it. When I heard the voice on the other end, my heart fell, and I realized I was in for a long, gut-wrenching conversation. "I am so upset. I do not know how much more of this I can take. I should have left him years ago," said the voice on the other end.

Over the past 30 years I have been the "go to person" for my beloved friend who continues to foster her feelings of depression, anxiety, and misgivings in her relationship with her husband.

In the beginning, I tried to counsel her and make suggestions as to how she could remedy this conflicting relationship. But after years of such conversations and diligent prayer, nothing has really changed. And in

addition, her husband is also a good friend so these conflicts are very challenging for me.

In reflecting on this conflicted triangle of individuals, I must ask myself this question: "Lord, what am I to learn from this situation and why aren't my efforts helping?"

The answer lies in Paul's words in Romans 12:18. In a world where we've been disciplined to avoid conflict, peacemaking takes a commitment to move toward it. The peacemaker knows there is no peace without healing, and there is no healing without tough conversations and work.

The pursuit of meaningful relationships is essential to peacemaking. Peacemaking may be kind, but it is not passive. It demands that we step into conflict regardless of the outcome. It is an opportunity to let them experience God's love and mercy first hand.

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*Carol Lopez is a retired educator and serves as the secretary of the Fresno, California, WorkLight Women's Chapter*

Service Council. She also volunteers as a Stephen Minister for her parish church.

## PRAY

*Lord Jesus, you are the Prince of Peace. Teach us how to be like you and inspire creativity within to handle conflict lovingly.*

## REFLECT

*Being a peacemaker means being in touch with the pain of others and realizing the need for action. How can we act, even though that may mean letting go of the need to fix the problem?*

## DISCUSS

*How can we aim for restoration, comfort, agreement, and peace? Give examples of ways you've been able to put Jesus' teaching into practice when conflict has arisen.*

## REFLECTIONS WEEK 3

## Making Peace

By Jim Ganther

*"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift." (Matthew 5:23 -24)*

When Jesus proclaimed the Beatitude "Blessed are the peacemakers," he followed up with their reward: "they shall be called children of God." Given the value of the reward, it would have been nice if he told us how to make peace!

How does one make peace? How much lumber do you need? Are there blueprints?

Jesus provided a clue later in his sermon, and I quote it above. One way to make peace is to seek forgiveness. Forgiving is important, too, but this

scripture is clear: If your brother has something against you, it means you are the transgressor, not he. You are the one who needs forgiveness, so you are the one who must seek it.

Asking for forgiveness is hard. In comparison, forgiving is much easier. The one who was injured holds the power to forgive or to withhold forgiveness. He is in control. The one who needs forgiving lacks that power. He can neither force forgiveness nor demand mercy. Needing forgiveness makes one a beggar and no one wants to beg, so forgiveness can't occur and peace cannot be made.

Contrition requires humility. Only a humble heart can sincerely seek forgiveness (Psalms 53:17). Those who seek forgiveness make peace, and shall be called children of God.

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*Jim Ganther is an attorney, entrepreneur, and captain of a competitive BBQ team. He*

and his wife, Melissa, have seven children and three Big Green Eggs. His other hobbies include car insurance, dry rubs, and tuition. If you need help smoking a salmon, contact Jim at jganther@MosaicCS.com.

## PRAY

*Brother Jesus, quick to forgive, grant me the grace to do what you never had to do—seek forgiveness from those whom I have hurt. Send your Spirit that I might make the peace you came to establish, and so share in your work.*

## REFLECT

*Read Psalm 23 and imagine yourself directing that prayer to someone you have hurt by your words, actions, or indifference.*

## DISCUSS

*Where in your life does peace need to be made? How can you make it?*

REFLECTIONS WEEK 4

# Peaceful Patience

By John E. DeSanto

*A hot-tempered person stirs up conflict, but the one who is patient calms a quarrel. (Proverbs 15:18)*

I have worked for our Father for over 50 years in a courtroom where opposing views are commonly presented to a jury or judge for an equitable decision or resolution. Based on this half century of experience in this workplace, I recognize and appreciate a “peacemaker” when I see one.

My WorkLight men’s chapter in Duluth, Minnesota, has been blessed by such a “child of God.” His name is Phil. Whenever he shares his life experiences and insights during our weekly discussions, Phil reveals that he is the “peacemaker” Jesus has called each of us to be in his Sermon on the Mount.

Our brother, Phil, works five days a week as a custodian in an office building and a pub. At each of these workplaces he meets and greets office tenants, bar customers, and others, who clearly live alternative lifestyles and espouse beliefs and opinions different from—even opposed to—Phil’s biblical values. He greets and meets everyone with cheerfulness, patience, calm, and mercy. And it is obvious that everyone Phil has come to know in these workplaces truly appreciates, and loves Phil.

Recently, Phil received a birthday card signed by most, if not all, of the office building tenants. Comments such as “love you,” “thanks for always being here,” and the like abounded throughout the card. Others actually recognize and are grateful for the love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, and gentleness (Galatians 5:22) of peacemakers in their midst. The fruits of the Spirit impact fellow believers, like us WorkLight members on Tuesday mornings, but his peacemaking is equally visible and attractive to nonbelievers in Phil’s workplaces.

*John E. DeSanto lives in Duluth, Minnesota, with his wife Lana. He has been a member since November 1984 when he attended his first Challenge Weekend with his twin brother, Will, and their father.*

## PRAY

*Lord, show me how to be a true peacemaker in this contentious world.*

## REFLECT

*What is the difference between a peacekeeper and a peacemaker? Which one runs from conflict, and which one runs toward conflict in order to create peace?*

## DISCUSS

*Am I a peacekeeper or peacemaker in my home? In my workplace? In my neighborhood? In my small group? In my church?*

# SPOTLIGHT CHALLENGE WEEKEND

**Salinas Men’s Chapter**

**November 17–19**  
at Mission San Antonio De Padua  
in Jolon, California

Can’t make your local Challenge Weekend? Don’t live near a WorkLight Chapter? Curious to experience a Challenge Weekend with folks from other parts of the country? We have one men’s weekend we’re specially highlighting for those willing to travel.

Learn more at  
[worklight.org/all-events/category/challenge-weekend/](http://worklight.org/all-events/category/challenge-weekend/)



# The Holy Spirit Changes Everything

By Paula Lent

Jack Borja first became involved in WorkLight in the 1980s. His experience with the power of the Holy Spirit has been life changing. It has been enriched and reinforced and has grown ever since his first Challenge Weekend.

Since then, he's felt called to continue to shine Christ's light and bring the Lord to more people. "Once you've been baptized in the Holy Spirit, you always know the Lord is in your heart," he says.

He loves to introduce friends and acquaintances to the Lord by giving them an annual Bible Diary\* of daily liturgical readings. "I've been distributing it for 20 years. I use it as my business card," he says.

Jack's business mentee, Michele Wang, goes through it every day, "reading and taking notes and reflecting," she says, "When I have questions about the Scripture passage, I'll just ask him about it."

Recently, several recipients of the Bible Diary joined Jack for WorkLight's National Challenge Weekend in Arizona. During the weekend, everyone was prayed over for the Holy Spirit. "I can give a Bible Diary to a new believer, they'll read it and try to make sense of it, but when you're baptized in the Holy Spirit, everything changes," he says.

The group bonded during the retreat over shared meals and plenty of time praying together—including praying before and after the conference each day. Now, the group meets regularly through a combination of in-person and Zoom, so everyone can participate. During each twice-a-month meeting, a different member gives a talk based

on a WorkLight Reflection before everyone breaks out into small groups for discussions.

Through this, members are learning how to give testimonies—a skill that can hopefully result in creative evangelization opportunities. "The more people are given the chance to give a talk, the more confident they are to talk about the Lord," Jack says. "It's like home-based training. You almost have to go through the experience of giving a presentation.

"I believe that each and every one the Lord has touched will need to do a presentation in the world on how to deliver the Gospel message in a concise, "elevator-ride," way."

Little did Jack know when he began, that the people he was sending Bible Diaries to would be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit and begin learning to evangelize.

"For the past 5 to 10 years, I have been thinking 'how do I bring people to a deeper relationship with the Lord?' Then I realized, I need to bring them into the life of the Holy Spirit, that's what happened to me. The Challenge Weekend is a seminar on life in the Spirit, which is what I invited them to. Now we're bonded and see each other twice a month and share the Lord together."

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*Paula Lent is a member of WorkLight's Editorial Team and lives in South Bend, Indiana.*

## Long Road Back

*Continued from page 1*

me to talk to her and apologize. As Dale Carnegie observed, the hardest thing for anyone to say is "I was wrong." I would add "especially on days when you narrowly avoided death and you're anxious to leave and visit your recovering wife in the ER." With quivering legs, I knocked on Edith's office door.

In the ensuing conversation, I listened and learned about her underlying fear of ice and snow and about her experience of men dismissing her justified concerns. I validated her distress and expressed my commitment to address them, shared about my morning, apologized for my tone, and requested her forgiveness.

I wish I could say things were better after that, but in the coming months, Edith seemed to make it her ambition to ensure I was fired. Casual coworking conversations with her frequently resulted in my boss and HR receiving "anonymous" critical and slanderous feedback about my performance. Life was tense.

Throughout the next year, I learned the value of restoration. It meant admitting I can't change others' behavior, only my own. It meant choosing forgiveness "70x7" times (Matthew 18:21:22). It took months of consistently showing love, concern, and genuine remorse for any small missteps before I started to see the relationship restored. In the end, on Edith's last day before retirement, she looked me in the eyes and told me she "trusted" me. I knew then that despite the events of that awful day, we had finally restored our relationship and found peace.

*Bryan Beck is WorkLight's administrative operations manager who joined the team in December 2021. He and his wife, Karissa, live in Fridley, Minnesota.*

# The Power of Story

We may not be trained theologians or master apologists for our Christian faith, but we have stories to tell and they have a unique power for our materialistic society. No matter our occupation, we are “on the job” for our Father and that means we have seen God at work. Our stories let the Kingdom of God break through.

Stories illustrate the life of Christ in a fractured, fallen, and rebellious world. They are able to reach hearts in ways not possible through pure reason and logic.

In a recent interview, author Os Guinness noted, “We need a massive awakening right across Western civilization. We need the Word and the Spirit to break us and help us understand there is a far greater reality than a consumer society allows us to know.”

Stories of Christ at work spark imaginations, letting the transcendence of God breakthrough. Their details impress listeners in contexts they recognize and can apply to themselves. In an age of cynicism and hostility to Christianity, these accounts speak a language that breaks open the hardened shell and touches the soul.

Using a new language perfect for a post-Christian world, well-told testimonies of God at work draw the secularized mind in. It unveils God’s mercy, love, and consolation with a gentle invitation. Our modern Western culture has been described as a “world without windows.” Our stories illustrate the transcendence of God in a way that lights up the darkness of a windowless world.

Being able to tell a good story of Christ working impacts both the storyteller and the listener. The crafting of a personal story helps the storyteller reflect on God’s work in their lives, appreciating his steadfast love and growing in gratitude. For the listener, what they hear is a story of love, undermining the world’s narrative of a harsh, demanding, and distant God.

Love isn’t something that can be scientifically measured. It’s qualitative not quantitative and it’s personal. To understand how God loves requires a story of his love in action. Christian storytelling is best based on everyday circumstances. It is where most people live. Our story says, “Come and see.”

These “Christ alive” stories illustrate our own faithfulness, love, and devotion to God in particular, authentic, and attractive ways. Well-crafted stories take time and effort. But when we’re done, each of us has a gem in our pocket that can be offered to others when the Spirit moves.

Our editorial team has worked with many to help craft and refine their stories.

We’re here to help.

Reach out to us at [communications@worklight.org](mailto:communications@worklight.org).



## Join our Community of CONTENT CONTRIBUTORS

We welcome stories for both *The Flame* and our Spark Workday Reflections. Go to [bit.ly/WLcontentguide](http://bit.ly/WLcontentguide) for details on contributing.



## NEWS

**NEW CHALLENGE WEEKEND VIDEO!**

Challenge Weekends have touched countless lives since the first one in 1983. For the first time, we now have a professional-quality video overview of Challenge Weekends. Special thanks to everyone featured in the footage, the generous team at DKY, and expert videographer Luke Yaeger. Please join us in prayer for this video to reach igniters that God wants to invigorate in 2023 and beyond. Watch and share this new look for Challenge Weekends here: <https://worklight.org/challenge-weekends/>

**JOHN MOONEY MEMORIAL CAMPAIGN AND FOUNDERS IGNITER FUND**

Thanks be to God and the generous support of longtime CIC brothers and sisters, the John Mooney Memorial Campaign continues toward the goal of raising \$200,000. Hallelujah! Please join us in prayer for the next major donor who is meant to help us

reach the next generation with this movement of the Holy Spirit.

**NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

The 2023 National Conference needs a local host! Could your Chapter or Small Group help put together a weekend of fellowship, praise, and prayer? Maybe you feel a personal call to be the local host committee chair? Let us know at [communications@worklight.org](mailto:communications@worklight.org).

**DID YOU KNOW?**

As a U.S.-based ministry, our focus of 500 igniters by 2025 is most active in California, Arizona, Minnesota, Indiana, and Virginia. But did you know that there is also a history of Challenge Weekends outside the USA? If you think you know which other countries have experienced the power of a Challenge Weekend, let us know by sending your answer to [communications@worklight.org](mailto:communications@worklight.org).

**UPCOMING CHALLENGE WEEKENDS****Minneapolis-St. Paul Men's Chapter**

- May 5-7 at Dunrovin Retreat Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

**Phoenix Men's and Women's Chapters**

- May 6-7 at St. Helen's Catholic Church in Glendale, Arizona

**Salinas Men's Chapter**

- November 17-19 at Mission San Antonio De Padua, Jolon, California. This is our Spotlight Men's weekend for 2023. If you're looking to travel for a weekend, we hope to see you!

Check out these events and more at <https://worklight.org/events/>.

**TOGETHER, WE CAN BUILD THE KINGDOM**

WorkLight has given me the chance to connect with so many outstanding people, Christians who truly walk the walk without ceremony. Even though retired, we should continue supporting WorkLight so future generations can keep on living out their faith at work. I know, firsthand, how easy it is to make stewardship through estate planning a reality. I hope you will consider including WorkLight in your giving.

Learn more about legacy giving at  
**[WorkLight.org/KingdomBuilder](https://WorkLight.org/KingdomBuilder)**

**Clay Klein**  
Palm Desert  
Chapter

# 2023

## MAY

*"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** Christians in Commerce (DBA WorkLight) 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



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