WORKLIGHT™

The flame™

Be transformed
by the renewing of your mind

SEPTEMBER 2026

Being Christ in Conflict

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. (Romans 12:9)

Conflicts abound all around us. Christ was not a conflict avoider. As his followers, we are called to bring about restoration and foster transformation by bringing truth and honesty to these situations. The more we remain calm the more grace can abound.

It is hard to keep our emotions in check and continue loving those around us. In times of stress and conflict, let us pause, turn our hearts to the Lord, and seek what he is asking of us at this moment.

A peacemaker is unafraid of compromising their own peace by stepping into disagreements. We walk forward with humility and a painful awareness of our own failings and contributions. Peacemakers are called sons of God in the Beatitudes because we are doing what Jesus did.

Humankind puts its trust in power and control. God puts his trust in love. If we love one another, we can put the rest in God's hands.

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Where's My Referee?

By
Jules Miller

The billboard lawyers boast they'll "fight for you." That may be effective advertising to attract clients, but it's meaningless. If some prospective clients think this means the other side's lawyer won't fight or won't fight as hard, they're foolish. The lawyers for both sides will present the facts and argue what the law requires vigorously and most favorably for their clients.

What does matter is how well lawyers can shape a story, read people, think on their feet, and master the rules that govern what the jury sees and hears. These skills come from experience, not nastiness. Clear thinking also helps, not obnoxiousness.

Unlike most conflicts in life, trials have a referee (a judge) to make sure both lawyers conduct themselves fairly within the rules. Wouldn't you like to have a referee in the middle of your conflicts? (Maybe not if you're someone who cheats, but if you are a cheat you're probably not reading this article.)

We do have a referee when we're in conflict. Just remember, our referee doesn't only call fouls on the other team—he calls them on us, too. Of course, I'm talking about the Holy Spirit.

Successful Conflict

For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live. (Romans 8:13) The Spirit helps us "put to death" the reactions that escalate conflict—anger, pride, vengeance, and defensiveness. This is referee-like work: Stopping the escalation; calling what's out of bounds; and redirecting us toward holiness.

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continue on

WEEK 1 *By Ned Sickle*

Body of Christ

"Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. (Acts 9:5)

Michael had been an important part of our WorkLight group meetings, and over the years he had shared critical aspects of his life story. He had also counseled and supported many others in WorkLight and was a frequent attendee and leader of Challenge Weekends.

When I didn't see Michael for a couple of weeks at our WorkLight meetings, I didn't think much about it. Soon a month had gone by, and Michael had not attended one meeting. Perhaps he was taking some vacation or was traveling. I simply didn't know and, in hindsight, I had other priorities and didn't follow up with him.

What I didn't know was that Michael was struggling with a significant health issue coupled with some serious family problems.

I was not the only one from WorkLight who had failed to reach out to Michael during this difficult time for him. The message we inadvertently sent was clear: We didn't care about him. Our neglect hurt Michael's feelings. As a result, he intended to leave our WorkLight family entirely.

It is interesting to me that, in the Bible passage above, Jesus could have asked, "Why are you persecuting my followers?" After all, it was Jesus' followers such as Stephen who had recently been stoned to death.

Perhaps Jesus said "persecuting me" because we are the Body of Christ, and when a member of that Body is hurt, Jesus is in pain.

Our WorkLight groups are part of the Body of Christ. We need to take care of those relationships and support our brothers and sisters in Christ so that we may all carry out the example that Jesus taught us.

PRAY: *Lord, remind us that you place people on our hearts for a reason, and to listen to your prompting to check in on them.*

REFLECT: *How can I support the body of Christ in my relationships with others in my WorkLight groups, and in my workplace?*

DISCUSS: *Do you follow up with your WorkLight friends if you don't see them for a couple of meetings? Why or why not?*

Ned Sickle enjoyed a career in management consulting and hotel operations. Ned is a Board member of WorkLight and can be reached at ebsickle@gmail.com.

WEEK 2 *By Ron Schmalz*

His Presence

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." (John 13:34)

A good friend at work was disappointed about being passed over for a much-deserved promotion, and I felt called to be a sounding board where he could share his feelings in confidence.

As the situation unfolded, I called upon the Holy Spirit to guide my words as I listened to my friend. I realized that my role was not to give advice, but to affirm all the good things he and his teams were accomplishing for the company. By relying upon the Holy Spirit, I lifted up prayers of thanksgiving, asking that my friend's skills be more broadly recognized by other leaders within the company.

During this time, the Holy Spirit guided my coworker to a sense of peace and forbearance, and these fruits became an important part of his journey forward. By encouraging my colleague to persevere instead of falling prey to discouragement and frustration, that opportunity to be the Lord's presence to my coworker ultimately resulted in him receiving a more significant promotion. And, by following God's will, I was able to resist giving human advice and instead chose prayers for wisdom and listening.

Throughout scripture, Jesus demonstrates the importance of prayer while seeking his Father's will. We are called into that same prayerful relationship with Jesus. By listening to the Lord's still, quiet voice, we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to fulfill his great commandment to love one another. We can become instruments of the Lord's love and mercy if we rely upon the Holy Spirit to give us the knowledge and wisdom necessary to be his presence to others.

PRAY: *Lord, help me to seek, know, and understand your will that I might be a more worthy instrument of your love.*

REFLECT: *How is the Holy Spirit guiding you to answer the Lord's calling?*

DISCUSS: *Think about a coworker who is going through difficult circumstances. How is the Holy Spirit calling you to be the Lord's presence?*

Ron Schmalz is semi-retired and is the past president of the Santa Cruz Chapter in California. He and his wife Terri live in Connecticut and enjoy exploring New England.

WEEK 3 *By Steve McShane*

State of Mind

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. (Colossians 3:15)

Sometimes, finding peace begins with taking care of ourselves in our workplaces and at home.

I recently experienced complications associated with a birthday party my wife and I planned for our daughter. I found myself rushing around the house with a long to-do list to complete before guests arrived.

As the morning ensued, I became increasingly angry and unreasonable and began to sabotage the event. Ultimately, I blamed Satan for the situation and drove off way too fast to get ice.

It took awhile before I realized it's not always Satan's fault. I had not eaten breakfast and had not gotten a good night's sleep. I was ripe for conflict.

Once I took responsibility for my state of mind and ate some food, I was much better prepared to be of service. I was able to pray and seek God's intention for the party ahead. Hours later, God delivered on an incredible event for the 6-, 7-, and 8-year-olds at our house.

Unbelievably, that lesson came back around in my work for a small nonprofit. I recently found myself being a wet blanket in a staff meeting when a colleague presented an awesome new project. As soon as I realized it was 2:30 p.m. and I had not had lunch yet, I bit my tongue.

In our home lives and workplaces, once we take responsibility for our state of mind and properly take care of the temple we live in, we are much better prepared to be of service. When we do this, our prayer, family, and work lives improve, and our walk with the Lord is much richer.

PRAY: *Lord, strengthen me to always take care in order to be my best in service to you.*

REFLECT: *When have you blamed Satan or the world when you needed to take more responsibility?*

DISCUSS: *How can you grow peace around you by taking better care of yourself? What steps can you take today?*

Steve McShane is president of the WorkLight Monterey Chapter and is the past president of the WorkLight Salinas Valley Chapter.

PRESIDENT'S NOTE:

Stepping Into Peace

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

Conflict tends to find us whether we go looking for it or not. It is found in workplaces, families, churches, even ministries. And the temptation is almost always to avoid, smooth over, or wait until the storm passes. Spoiler alert: Jesus did not do that.

Jesus walked straight into hard conversations. He challenged Peter. He confronted the Pharisees. He turned over tables in the temple. And yet he never lost his center. Even from the cross he was praying for those who wounded him.

That is the pattern we are invited into. Something harder and holier than avoidance or aggression. We are called to bring restoration to broken places by carrying truth without losing love. The more we remain calm, the more grace can abound. The more grace abounds, the more we invite the Holy Spirit in to guide our steps.

Personally, this is one of the most difficult disciplines in my own life. I struggled with it when my best friend died in a car crash during our freshman year of college. It hit hard when the mother of my daughter abandoned our marriage without warning.

But in life's greatest tragedies there is no reaction that can fix the problem. I have learned that lesson the hard way. More importantly, I've learned that Jesus was there the whole time, and he's shown me how a single deliberate breath and a short interior prayer that centers on eternal truth over temporal sin can change everything. A quiet "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God most high, have mercy on me" at the right moment, and with a tiny pause, makes room for my wounded heart to rest and for the Holy Spirit to lead.

If we can learn to let Jesus into the heat of the moment, we can leave the rest in his hands. The Holy Spirit is ready and waiting.

With you all in Christ,

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WEEK 4 *By Nancy Huddleston*

Finding Peace

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24-26)

When you're the editor of a weekly community newspaper, stress and tension come with the job. Editors enforce deadlines. They often do extra duties as reporters and photographers. And the editor serves as an intermediary in tense situations with sources and readers. Unfortunately, the job does not radiate peace.

When Joy walked into our office, I was busy editing articles for the next publication. The receptionist came to my desk and said, "There's a lady here to see you. She said you've been trying to talk to her about her daughter."

I'd called Joy many times over the past week in hopes that she would talk to us about her daughter, who was one of the 13 people who lost their lives when the 35W bridge fell into the Mississippi River in Minneapolis. But she never called back.

So, when I got up to talk with her, I had my response ready: "Thank you for coming in, but we're close to our deadline. Can you and I make an appointment for next week?" But when Joy smiled at me through her tearful eyes, those words fell to the floor.

We talked for several hours about her daughter and how she lived her life. She cried. I cried. No formal prayers were said, but at times during the interview, I felt we were praying together.

Joy and I stayed in touch after the story was published. The experience showed me that when we shut the door to stress in our workplaces and open our hearts to peace, the Lord multiplies our blessings.

PRAY: *Lord, help me find peace in my life, especially in my workplace, where stress abounds.*

REFLECT: *What kinds of conflicts are you faced with every day? How can you make those interactions peaceful?*

DISCUSS: *Share about a time when the Lord softened your heart after you had your mind made up.*

Nancy Huddleston is the editor of The Flame and can be reached at nancy.huddleston58@gmail.com.

Troubles Will Come

By Randy Raciti

I've come to realize that it has been during times of trouble when I've experienced the greatest growth in my relationship with God.

On one troubling occasion, I realized I had made a trading error for one of my financial clients that was in the tens of thousands of dollars. I shared this with them and told them I was committed to making it right.

After I called the person in our organization responsible for assisting advisors, I learned this error would not be covered by my errors and omissions insurance because I had failed to complete the required documents to perform this transaction. My imagination began to run wild.

As I was praying about this, I sensed God saying to me: "Randy, all the things your imagination is saying that might happen are not going to happen, but even if they did, I would have something even greater in store for you." That was a defining moment in my life—no matter what troubles walked into my life, I could trust God to be with me every step of the way.

Soon afterwards, I started working with another person in our organization who thought he could help me resolve this situation. He worked tirelessly on my behalf, spending many hours advocating for me. My clients were extraordinarily patient with me. In the end, they were reimbursed in full for my error and my insurance covered most of the claim.

Heart of God

In the years that have followed this episode, I've noticed a significant change in myself. It was a gradual increase in mercy and compassion for others who have made mistakes.

Sadly, I can be harsh and rude, especially toward those closest to me, like family. Who am I to judge when what I judge is so strongly present in me? Troubles have a way of allowing me to see myself for who I am, as a person deeply in need of God's help.

The troubles we experience may be of our own doing or may be ones that others are going through: broken relationships, sickness, financial setbacks, career failures, or declining physical and mental capacities. When faced with troubles like these in life, we have a choice—we can run from them, or we can embrace them and allow God to grow us in the process. Having a deeper union with God is the greatest desire of my heart.

Randy Raciti is a board member of WorkLight who lives in South Bend, Indiana. He is a member of the South Bend–Elkhart Chapter and he and his wife Tami reside in Granger, Indiana.

Become a WorkLight Torchbearer

Being a torchbearer means being God's disciple by lighting the way for those lost in the darkness. At WorkLight, Torchbearers do this by dedicating a monthly or quarterly gift to help sustain our ministry and growth. Help spark a new generation of Christians by joining Team Torchbearer.

Go to worklight.org/support-us to become a Torchbearer today.

Poor in Spirit: Good Poverty's Generosity

Beatitudes at Work

The good poverty of the first Beatitude is freedom. The ability to receive everything freely and to give everything freely. We grow into this freedom by experiencing God's faithful providence, setting aside the ego with its pretensions and demands, and learning to rely on the Lord alone.

True Good Fortune

Because the poor in spirit aren't holding onto their "riches" too tightly, they can live not only for the splendor of God's love but for the love of others as well.

They can join together to address those who are poor, weak, and powerless—the poor and marginalized of the world; those who are vulnerable to injustice, catastrophes, conflict, or oppression.

We don't have to be wealthy to be philanthropists. We can all be generous for the welfare of others and supplying what others need.

In the Holy Spirit, we are poor in spirit, so the richness of his Kingdom shines forth for all. Like Jesus, our poverty of spirit is for the good of others. It transforms us inwardly so that our lives may have an outward impact on a broken world with so much inequity.

Our WorkLight Mission

While we detach from the things of this world; we do not detach ourselves from our mission as his disciples. We are free to fulfill the purpose for which we've been created. At WorkLight, we intentionally include our workplaces. Together, we turn toward the generosity that flows from this good poverty.

As we gather together in love, we begin to experience the peace of God's Kingdom—a peace that endures even amid the hardships and austerity of life. From that peace, a new and radiant dawn begins to break forth, bringing hope not only to our own lives but also to the world around us.

"Beatitudes at Work" is an ongoing series exploring the practical and formative aspects of the Beatitudes found in Matthew's recording of the Sermon on the Mount. These eight character traits equip us to be Christ in the workplace.

Next Month:
Poor in Spirit: Blessed Mourning

From Pg 1: Where's My Referee?

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. (Ephesians 4:31) When we speak harshly, bitterly, or destructively, the Spirit "blows the whistle." When we listen for and respond to the whistle then our opportunity for successful conflict resolution increases.

The Bible teaches us that the Holy Spirit acts as our internal referee in conflict by restraining sinful impulses, producing Christlike character, convicting us when we're wrong, guiding our speech, and promoting resolution. Who wouldn't want that?

Like any good referee, the Holy Spirit doesn't "take sides" in a conflict between two people. Instead, he takes God's side, shaping both disputants toward holiness and reconciliation. If our opponent doesn't take advantage of having a good referee, that's their loss. The Holy Spirit always leads us to be Christ in a conflict; we just need to pay attention.

Come Holy Spirit. Give me clarity to see this conflict truthfully, patience to listen before I speak, wisdom to choose what is right, and gentleness to respond without anger.

Jules Miller is a member of the WorkLight Board of Directors and chairman of its Governance Committee.

NEWS

KEEPING OUR MISSION BEFORE US

At our WorkLight Board meetings, a simple practice has become part of our rhythm. Before discussing plans, budgets, or ministry decisions, the Board begins by reading WorkLight's Mission, Vision, and Values together. It is a small reminder with an important purpose. Every decision we make should be viewed through the lens of why the Father has called this ministry into existence: "*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.*" As we continue serving together, may our Mission continue to shape how we pray, discern, and follow Jesus Christ together. Our Mission, Vision, and Values are printed on the back page of *The Flame*. How can you incorporate our Mission into the rhythm of your Small Group or Chapter meetings?

VALUES SERIES: NURTURING BROTHERHOOD AND SISTERHOOD

As we continue our Values Series, this month's focus is Nurturing Brotherhood and Sisterhood.

The updated verb "nurturing" in our third value captures something important about how relationships grow within WorkLight. The friendships formed through Challenge Weekends and shared life in Jesus Christ are not built once and left alone. The Holy Spirit nurtures them over time through prayer, presence, and mutual care. This language better reflects the ongoing cultivation of Christ-centered relationships that remain at the heart of what the Father is calling us to build together. Consider how nurturing occurs within your WorkLight circle.

Upcoming Challenge Weekends

Join us in prayer for our ongoing local group meetings and upcoming Challenge Weekends:

- **Beaverton/Portland Men's Chapter**
  September 26, AC Hotel Portland Beaverton, 15705 Northwest Blueridge Drive, Beaverton, Oregon
- **Fresno Men's Chapter**
  October 3-4, St. Anthony's Retreat Center, 43816 Sierra Drive, Three Rivers, California
- **South Bend - Elkhart Men's/ Women's Chapter**
  October 23-24, Marian University's Ancilla College, 20097 9B Road, Plymouth, Indiana
- **Minneapolis Men's Chapter**
  November 6-7, location to be determined
- **Mississippi Men's and Women's Small Group**
  November 13-14, Woodlawn Church, Gathering Place, 1452 Old Highway 98E, Columbia, Mississippi
- **Salinas Valley Men's Chapter**
  November 13-15, Mission San Antonio de Padua, 1 Mission Creek Road, Fort Hunter Liggett, California

Father in Heaven, may these events bring honor to your name and transform those who participate – for your glory and building of your kingdom. Come Holy Spirit!

Check out these events and more at WorkLight.org/events

The flame
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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

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"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me."
–Galatians 2:20

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WORKLIGHT.org

Vision

Being Christ at Work

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

- *Growing and Being Transformed in Christ*
- *Manifesting the Gifts of the Holy Spirit*
- *Nurturing Brotherhood and Sisterhood*
- *Building God's Kingdom in All Aspects of Our Lives*
- *Unity in Jesus Above Earthly Differences*

WORKLIGHT™

Accept the Challenge

CHALLENGE WEEKEND

Deep immersion into a work life rooted in Christ with teaching sessions, real life stories, reflection, and small group discussions

Build the Kingdom

SMALL GROUPS

Build relationships and experience discipleship in a continuous, supportive small group setting – all centered on shining bright for Christ at work

Grow in Faith

DAILY RESOURCES

Be inspired and encouraged with biblical content, thoughtful reflections, and moving sharings of the Lord at work in our lives at work

Be part of a movement to transform the workplace. Find out how at WorkLight.org and find a chapter near you!