



## Minding the Gap - April 2017

A Faith and Work Publication

Welcome to *Minding the Gap*, a monthly thought about faith in the workplace!

### "No!....Not Yet'.....Waiting"

In Matthew 13: 24ff is the parable concerning the **wheat and weeds**. The owner of the field plants wheat, but in the night an enemy comes and sows weeds. The servants want to go out and pull up the weeds **immediately**. The text continues with the 'owner' saying to the servants: *"No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn."* Thus, a primary point of the parable is about the **importance of waiting**

**Waiting**, and its benefits, is a significant theme within Scripture; however, it does not appear to be a discipline strongly admired in the world-of-work. As I've noted in previous MtG's, organizations seem to honor speed, efficiency, decisiveness, productivity, etc. in carrying out their work. Of course, there is likewise danger in waiting too long. But, let's look at what some of the benefits might be.

Again, referring back to my work experience with the Reell Corporation, we practiced a discipline called "**getting to discernment**" which requires time. Almost on a daily basis people with whom I worked would have quick **insights** as to how to solve a problem. If they acted immediately on them - "Let's get it done!", they would often end up with unintended consequences..."Oops, didn't mean for

that to happen!" So, the challenge was to be disciplined in moving from insight to discernment, and this we learned required intentional practices.

What are some 'practices' we might be doing while we **actively wait**? Yes, waiting doesn't mean doing nothing. Two of these practices we found important were **listening** and **prayer** (quiet meditation for those averse to faith practices) as two activities critical to discernment. **Listening** happens both with our eyes and ears. It is the process of 'taking in'. It is significant in that it provides deeper understanding. With our eyes it means noticing factors we may not have initially seen. It additionally challenges us to understand the problem from another person's perspective. **Proverbs 27:17** says: "Iron sharpens iron, and one person sharpens the wits of another." Listening is also input from articles or books, which provide a different point of view. If one remembers that we as individuals are like pieces of a puzzle and in so being only provide one 'piece' to solving the puzzle - we need all the pieces together.

**Prayer** for the person of faith has the wonderful quality of challenging us to be authentic with ourselves, and in so doing to potentially 'reframe' the issue. "How much pride do I have invested in my view?" "I may be smarter than another, but am I smarter than everyone else together?" "God, what am I in my heart and mind missing here?" Prayer disciplines us to pause; to invite the Spirit's influence and to move forward in Its wisdom.

And so, I submit it is this '**waiting**' that brings about the wisdom, understanding and attitude of heart so vital to a decision filled with conviction and energy. Blessings!

- Jim Grubs

Incarnation Lutheran Church, 4880 Hodgson Road, Shoreview, MN 55126