



## Minding the Gap - June 2016

### A Faith and Work Publication

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

#### **"Do the Gospel!"**

There is the story of St. Francis of Assisi being summoned to Rome from the town of Assisi to account for his work. I'm not sure how factual the story is, but it makes an excellent point. It appears his work was unorthodox enough that it got the attention of the Pope and his council, and so he travels to Rome to defend his work. He even asks for permission to establish an "order" around it. At one point Pope Innocent III inquires about St. Francis's understanding of the Gospel and Francis is said to have responded with the words "Do the Gospel". I haven't heard how the Pope responded, but do know that eventually Francis was given 'conditional' permission to form his order.

From Matthew 7:21 Jesus states: "Not everyone who says to me 'Lord, Lord' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father." Talk about a statement that might make one uncomfortable, this certainly fits that category. I'm also remembering a recent Sunday morning when Pastor Gary Medin spoke from Luke (Lk. 7:1-10) recounting the story of the Roman centurion (a good and compassionate man but an "enemy" of the Jews) coming to Jesus asking him to heal his servant (a hard-working slave) who is close to death. The centurion has done many good things for the Jews of Capernaum - even built a synagogue for them. Jesus is very much impressed with both his heart and his actions, and makes the statement "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." So, here was a man who is not a Jew; is a commander of a 100 soldiers who have conquered Israel; and probably worships, if he does at all, a number of pagan gods; and yet, Jesus credits him with faith beyond anything he's yet witnessed - Wow!

Yes, this does have the "Wow Factor", and it gives us a great challenge about the nature of faith - our faith. Each of these examples point us to the fact that the credibility of our faith rests not largely in how passionately or clearly we can speak about it, but as much or more, in how much we act it out or do it. Let us trust the Holy Spirit, who dwells within us to give us the discernment and conviction to do the Gospel!

In working I was very blest to be with an organization operating on statements based on Judeo-Christian faith principles. One such statement is: "We are committed to do what is right even when it does not seem to be profitable, expedient, or conventional." Its customer satisfaction was among the best; coworker turnover was minimal; morale was strong even in economically difficult periods; and the company received a number of local and national recognitions for how it operated. Over and over, I observed leaders modeling and followers repeating the principles of the Gospel whether or not they could give a biblical explanation. These folks did and do the Gospel. Whether we are leaders or followers we can, and must, "do the Gospel", and by doing so, "enter the shalom of the kingdom of heaven".

Blessings to you in your world of work.

- Jim Grubs

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