



Minding the Gap - December 2015

A Faith and Work Publication

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

"Why Wait?"

I'd have to say that the practice of **waiting** is for me one of the toughest that I encounter. I'm not very patient when it comes to *waiting*. I just want to stand up, get out there and get it done! The only problem is I can't tell you how many times I've ended up saying to myself and others "I only wish I'd *waited* a bit".

Each year we, as people of faith in Christ, celebrate **Advent** for the four Sundays before the birth of Jesus - Immanuel - "God with us". Yes, this is a time of **waiting** in anticipation of a great event. Waiting is challenging but it is good when done in the context of a promise or hope. However, it can be unhealthy and immobilizing when it happens in a milieu of dread or chaos. One only needs to see or read Samuel Beckett's play "Waiting for Godot" to get a taste of two people who wait and wait but are in despair because Godot never comes.

We, on the other hand during this Advent time, know what we're *waiting* for --- The coming of the Savior and his promise of a new way of living --- a way of love and not hate; of release and not control; of lifting up and not beating down. In Scripture, Isaiah 49:4 promises: "He (the Savior) will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established justice (right relationship, shalom) in the earth; and the coastlands *wait* for his teaching." Then in Acts 1:4-5 we read: "While staying with them, he (Jesus) ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to *wait* there for promise of the Father...the Holy Spirit not many days from now." So, we have both **teaching** (reason for our convictions) and **accompaniment of God** (Holy Spirit) on which to base our thinking, feelings and actions. Not too bad, eh?

These teachings and God's accompaniment are very timely as we play out our lives in the workplace. Here, we are surrounded by coworkers who may be caught up in the darkness and despairing of our current domestic, national and international challenges (social, economic, environmental and political situations). That's no wonder because what we see and hear is a constant cacophony of events and statements of violence, retaliation and rage. To be honest I struggle too, finding myself worrying about what the coming 'days' will hold for our kids and their kids (grandchildren).

As people who have premised our lives on a belief enacted in this Christmas event - on our Lord's works and teachings, we find ourselves in a unique but challenging position. We're living in a 'world of hurt' with a message of **love** and **justice**. Our actions and conversations, based simply on loving and holding sacred those with whom we solve problems and make decisions around work will give them a taste of the goodness and authenticity of Jesus's way. And, we must find ourselves doing such regardless of coworkers' faith or political persuasion - it's as simple as that!

By doing such, we bring realness to our deep-seated belief that while we **wait** for God's reign to be **fulfilled**, we certainly give testimony to the fact it has been **enacted**. "The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight"!

Have a great Christmas celebration!
- Jim Grubs

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