



## Minding the Gap - October 2015

A Faith and Work Publication

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

### “Work-Life Balance - Is it Possible?”

Over the past years, we've acknowledged the challenges within the world of work. Everything from leadership; to conflict resolution; to "teleopathy"(goal sickness); to trust, vulnerability, relationships, etc. has been fair game. However, behind, above, below or all-around these challenges, is the whole issue of balancing work life with the rest of life. With the escalation of pace and responsibility, it is understandable that our work lives can dominate - to an out-of-balance degree. It is very possible for work to encompass our entire identity and become our **‘everything’** in life.

We have noted a number of times before the significant place of "rest" within Scripture. From its beginning in Genesis 2, taking time to withdraw from work is significant - "God finished the work that he had done and he rested on the seventh day". One of my favorite passages addressing this theme is Mark 6:30-32 (Phillips NT version) where Mark tells the story of the disciples' return from their work: *"The disciples returned to Jesus and reported to him every detail of what they had done and taught. "Now come along to some quiet place by yourselves, and rest for a little while," said Jesus, for there were people coming and going **incessantly** so that they had not even time for meals. They went off in the boat to a quiet place by themselves"*. And so it is with us that the pressures of work seem to be **incessantly** present to a point where we sometimes don't even have time to grab a sandwich.

So, the question of: "What can be done to create a balance between work and life beyond work?" seems to be quite significant. Following are a number of suggestions of things we might do - all around the theme of relationship - with family, friends, the Creator, colleagues and yourself.

- **Rest:** The idea is to establish one or a number of times, conditions, places throughout the week where you can 'escape' to be with **yourself** and relax, nap, read, exercise, listen to music or a talk, etc.
- **Weekly Rituals:** Work to set aside times each week when you can do an activity with **family and friends**. Realizing that relationships are the bottom-line of life we must be intentional about creating and maintaining them. They don't just happen and our very being longs for them.
- **Control Electronic Communication:** Weird, eh? However, e-mails, texts, internet, etc. have a way - a "siren song" manner of drawing us in and controlling our being. They're meant to be supplemental - not primary to **work relationships**. I once worked with a senior leader who set 10am as the "cut-off" time for doing his e-mails. This didn't separate him from work but put his efforts in a much more "relational" mode which everyone loved.
- **Spiritual Discipline:** In an often unexplainable manner prayer, meditation, Scripture reading or quiet listening are great 'facilitators' for receiving the perspective of our **Creator**, and moving work into a more balanced framework.

Blessings to all of you in your world of work!

- Jim Grubs

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