

Uninterrupted employment

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Sometimes the prospects for finding a job can look bleak, owing to claims that we are too old or too inexperienced, perhaps, or that job opportunities are few or nonexistent. I've learned, though, that during trying times we still have help at hand.

Years ago, the wise proverb to "trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding" (<u>Proverbs 3:5</u>) guided me to listen to my spiritual intuition and move across the ocean, where I ended up in a fulfilling, ever-expanding role at a not-for-profit organization. I stayed at this organization for more than twenty years.

When I was less than seven years from retirement, it was disconcerting, to say the least, to hear discussions at the office about a restructuring involving the delocalization of over a hundred roles, including my team of eleven. As over two thirds of the headquarters roles were being moved to other countries, there was a lot of anger and fear in the office atmosphere.

At first, I couldn't contemplate working anywhere else. But I had turned to God and the pastor of the Church of Christ, Scientist—the Bible and the Christian Science textbook, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy—for help finding solutions and direction throughout my career, so it was natural for me to do so again during this challenging period. I also had the valuable prayerful support of a dedicated Christian Science practitioner.

As I began to pray about new job prospects for *all* concerned by the office restructuring, I found it important not to outline the source and nature of those prospects. This idea came to me from reading about Jesus' temptations in the Bible, where it states that when he was hungry in the wilderness, he faced the temptation to "command that these stones be made bread." Note how the tempter refers to *these* particular stones. The temptation was to outline the specific form in which his supply would come. However, rather than falling into this trap, Jesus said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:3, 4).

In today's society it is common to think that supply comes from our employer in the form of a regular sum of money. On the contrary, Jesus' encounter illustrates the need to faithfully rely on every word of God. Malachi 3:10 promises that God will "pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Not only is a blessing poured out *to* us in the form of interesting and satisfying work, but *we* are also poured out *as* a blessing in our place of work. When we are preparing a curriculum vitae, application letter, or work performance report, we can reflect on how God has been pouring *us* out as a blessing.

We can bless when we know that we are the very expression of God, good, at every moment, wherever we are—at home, at work, around town, abroad, and so on. <u>Proverbs 18:16</u> assures all that "a man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men." We are each gifted in unique ways. Under God's guidance, we can discover, nurture, and express our God-given talents.

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In her book *Retrospection and Introspection*, Mary Baker Eddy supports this point when she writes: "No person can take the individual place of the Virgin Mary. No person can compass or fulfil the individual mission of Jesus of Nazareth. No person can take the place of the author of Science and Health, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science. Each individual must fill his own niche in time and eternity" (p. 70). When I read that paragraph many years ago, it struck me that each individual perfectly fits his or her mission—not only the Virgin Mary, Christ Jesus, and Mary Baker Eddy, but every one of us also has our own special niche. It was very comforting to reflect on that inspiration again at this challenging time.

As a team leader, I have been involved in a lot of recruitments over the years. I find it interesting that human resource specialists now speak about recruiting someone who best fits the position, rather than looking for the best-qualified candidate. The most successful recruitment occurs whenever there are open and honest conversations about what the organization and team are looking for and what the candidates can bring. Because everyone has a God-ordained niche, there is in reality no competition for jobs. No one else could truly want a job that is made for us, and we wouldn't want to take a job that is tailored for someone else.

Under my circumstances, to fully eradicate the fear that it would be impossible to find a job locally because other companies and organizations in the region were also delocalizing work, I found it helpful to ponder the question, "Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?" (Psalms 78:19). The answer was and is and always will be a resounding "Yes!" For example, when Moses placed full reliance on God, he found water and manna in the wilderness to feed the children of Israel and himself. This truth was also beautifully demonstrated after Mrs. Eddy learned that a local farmer's well was empty, which was affecting his cows' ability to produce milk. She said, "Oh! if he only knew, Love fills that well." The next day his well was full of water, to the utter surprise of the farmer, as there had been no rain for days (see Mary Baker Eddy: Christian Healer, Amplified Edition, p. 177). These experiences reassured me that there would be fulfilling employment for all concerned in the delocalization, in spite of the appearance of a tight job market.

Clinging to all these prayerful ideas ultimately and quickly resulted in a harmonious transition for me to an equally satisfying and progressive position in a much larger organization. I also want to note that about a year after the move, an employee at my former employer said that I had left at the right time, and an employee at the new workplace remarked that I had arrived at just the right time. Through this experience I better understood that my work and career belong to, and are in reality governed and impelled by, God. Happily, everyone else in my team also found new employment.

In God's kingdom, supply and demand always balance each other. Understanding God's kingdom—His supreme government of all—to be the true reality we live in, an employer cannot lack competent and diligent staff, nor can eligible candidates be without a demand for their services; there cannot be any gaps or holes in God's creation. We cannot be without purpose, usefulness, or value. God never wastes His work—not even one speck! God's plan for good is complete and unfolds at the right time for everyone in a harmonious and orderly way.

As we focus on loving God—daily affirming our identity as His always-employed, cherished, and worthwhile idea, and doing the good work He directs—the needed opportunities to express Him come along, and the truth of uninterrupted employment is inevitably proven.

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