



Kara Martin:

That our life is the school of love. It's how we learn love, and the workplace is a beautiful place to learn how to love.

Joanna Meyer:

You're listening to The Faith & Work Podcast, where we explore what it means to serve God, neighbor, and society through our daily work.

Joanna Meyer:

Hi and welcome to The Faith & Work Podcast. I'm Joanna Meyer, Denver Institute's Director of Public Engagement, and I'm joined today by Abby Worland. Abby serves as our vice president of operations and finance. How is it going, Abby?

Abby Worland:

Good. I'm really glad to be here.

Joanna Meyer:

So fun. We're getting ready for Thanksgiving here at the Denver Institute office, but we're celebrating today with a guest who doesn't celebrate Thanksgiving, our friend from Australia, Kara Martin. Today is the final episode of a five part virtue and vice series, which compliments a downloadable ebook by similar name called Vice and Virtue At Work: Ancient Wisdom for a Modern Age. In both the podcast series and the book, we explored the way work shapes our character in good and bad ways. As our theologian in residence Ryan Tafilowski explained in the book's introduction, work is a unique kind of crucible because sooner or later, it will reveal what we're made of.

Day after day, we wake up and bring our broken selves to work, whether in an office or on a Zoom call. And who do we find there? Other broken selves. To put it another way, there's no context quite like work to remind us that we have no choice but to find a way to live with ourselves and with other people. There's no context quite like work to remind us how difficult that is. Through the series, we've explored five historic virtues of the Christian faith, the dispositions, the actions, the habits and attitudes that conform us to the image of Jesus Christ. We need those virtues as guideposts to highlight the ways that modern working life deforms our characters.

They also point us to practices that can help reform our lives to be more like Christ. Today, we're exploring the final virtue of love, which is fitting because the highest of these virtues that we see in scripture is love. Our guest, author and educator Kara Martin, will shed light on that. But before we



introduce Kara, Abby, I would love to know what comes to mind when you think about being loving at work.

Abby Worland:

I think there are a couple levels to being loving at work. I think the first level is loving your work, that doesn't mean that you have to be happy every day that you go to work, but this idea of wanting to do your work to the highest level of excellence and caring about the impact that your work has, whatever that may be. I think loving at work can be the work itself, but also there's loving those with whom you work and seeing that the people that you work with, your coworkers, are made in the image of God.

When I think about that, I notice I'm a little more willing to listen to their ideas or receive their feedback. I'm a little more patient and forgiving at work, and I think that's something that comes to mind when I think about being loving at work as well.

Joanna Meyer:

That's fascinating. I think there are a lot of nuances to this conversation, which we'll explore both in principle and in practice with Kara. Abby, would you tell us a little bit more about our guest, Kara Martin?

Abby Worland:

I would love to. Kara Martin hails from Sydney, Australia. She's the author of *Workship: How To Use Your Work To Worship God* and *Workship 2: How to Flourish at Work*. She's a lecturer with Alphacrucis College, an adjunct professor with Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Boston. She's also a visiting fellow with the Mockler Center for Faith and Ethics in the Public Square, and she's on the board of the Karam Fellowship here in the US. Kara has worked in media and communications, human resources, business analysis, and policy development roles in a variety of organizations and as a consultant. Kara, welcome. Really glad to have you here.

Kara Martin:

Greetings, Abby. That's way too much, isn't it? Sorry about that.

Abby Worland:

I mean, I could keep going. This podcast could be longer. Let's start this conversation by defining what we mean when we're talking about love. In scripture and in the Christian tradition, love is regarded as the highest of virtues, like Joanna said earlier. There's that famous passage in 1 Corinthians 13 where Paul writes, "And now abide faith, hope, love, these three, but the greatest of these is love." It's fitting that love is the final virtue in this series because it's the virtue that binds all the other virtues together. Kara, I would love to hear how you would define love in terms of it being a virtue of the faith.



Kara Martin:

Well, I think one of the problems is in English we only have one word, love. In most other languages, you have many different words for love. When we hear love, we've probably all got different things in our mind. C.S. Lewis talks about four different sorts of love. He talks about affection, our affection for family. He talks about friendship love. He talks about romantic love as well. But then he talks about the love that's above all loves, agape, which is the sort of love that we see from God.

It's the self-sacrificial love. It's putting one's self down to love the other. I think that's probably biblically our highest model of what love is. It's actually being willing to sacrifice some of your own desire so that you can do what is good for the other. That's how I define love.

Joanna Meyer:

Kara, the thesis of your book, *Worship*, flows from the principle that we worship what we love. As we start our conversation with living the virtue of love in our daily work, we should take a step back and explore both the source and the object of our love. From what you've learned, what does it mean to love God and to worship him through our work?

Kara Martin:

Well, this is the revelation that really came to me is that if we don't think about worshiping God through our work, the default position that most of us have is that we actually worship our work. I think that's what a lot of people in our society do. They worship their jobs. They love their jobs. They're devoted to their jobs. Their desk is their altar. But I think there's a possibility of actually seeing that work is a gift from God, a good gift. And that through our work, we can honor God, we can give glory to God. We see that in Hebrews 2:15.

Linguistically, when God takes the human being and puts the human being in the garden to work the earth and keep the garden, the Hebrew roots of those words, to work the earth, *avad*, and to keep the garden, *shamar*, are the same Hebrew roots that are used later to talk about what the priests are doing in the temple. They're serving and worshiping God, *avad*, and they're keeping the law or putting boundaries around the law, the *shamar*. Linguistically, there has always been a link between work and worship. It's actually us who have separated those ideas out.

When they work together, when we put our worship and work and realize that we're reintegrating them, then I think everything finds its place. When we are loving God principally, we work in a way that still honors God. If we can do that with everything in life, actually I think that's the way we're meant to do so. I should eat to the glory of God. I should sleep to the glory of God. I think everything we do should be done with the heart of wanting to worship God.



Joanna Meyer:

I love it. I'd love to know a little bit more about some practical examples. How do we love God at work?

Kara Martin:

I think that Abby's already given us some really good ideas around that. Actually seeing our fellow work colleagues as people who are made in the image of God is one of the really significant things.

Recognizing that they're important. Sometimes I actually ask God, I say, "God, can you help me to love this person the way you love them?" If you're struggling, that's a really helpful way. But I think one of the fundamental things is actually being vulnerable and also seeking to help the vulnerable as well. I think my friend Linda, who is in Durban in South Africa, and not only does she have...

She's working a Christian organization that has programs for the most vulnerable in her society and seeks to be transformative amongst them. She actually lives that out in the way that she leads as well. She is open and authentic in the way that she deals with people, but also she's looking on her team for who's vulnerable, who's missing out, who needs care, who needs to be empowered at this point. I think another great example of this is my friend Alan. He went on a journey. He was teaching in a seminary. He was also a pastor, and then he had to move, he had to leave where he was working.

He was thinking he would get another job and that line of work, but he really struggled. He struggled to find the work. He contacted me because he knows I do this workshop idea. He said, "Kara," he said, "I have to put food on the table for my family." He said, "I'm about to say yes to becoming a hospital orderly." He said, "How can I see that as something that's worthwhile for God?" We had this conversation where I said like, "All jobs are equal in the eyes of God. It's the heart with which we do it that actually matters." I said, "This is an incredible opportunity for you to really understand, to be able to have the opportunity to serve people at their biggest time of need."

He has done that, and it's been transformative for him. He's told me amazing stories. Stories like the time he saw a guy and he wheeled them in for some procedure that was going to happen. He could tell the guy was really scared. He said, "Are you scared?" He said, "Yeah, I'm really, really scared." Alan said, "Well, I should be somewhere else, but I'm going to sit with you for a while and I'll just hold your hand." He held this guy's hand. He said, "Look, I've got to go now." He said, "Do you want me to pray for you?" This guy said, "Please pray for me." He prayed for him, and he said he never would've thought he would have an opportunity to be able to do things like that.

He might not have had that opportunity unless he created the space to sit with this guy, unless he asked the questions, unless he offered a loving, caring, compassionate hand, and unless he offered to pray. Those experiences happen all the time to Alan. He's finding actually he's doing more pastoral care and more living out of theology in the hospital wards than he does from the pulpit or in the classroom. It's



just been brilliant for him. But if we think about probably the best definition of love in the Bible is 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, and that is actually really practical for helping us think through this. Let me just say it.

If you want to be loving at work, be patient. Be kind to people. Don't get jealous, one I struggle with. Don't brag. Don't be arrogant. Don't act in an unbecoming way. Don't be provoked. Don't remember wrongs. Don't keep a record of wrongs. Don't rejoice in something that goes wrong, but actually rejoice in truth. Try and bear things for yourself and for others. Believe what is possible with God. Show hope in the workplace. Don't fail others. There's some really practical ideas and that's straight out of the Bible.

Abby Worland:

I love that. I had never thought about that passage in terms of how I approach work before. It's always read at weddings.

Joanna Meyer:

It's so much more than a wedding verse.

Abby Worland:

That applies if you have a partner, but it also applies if you're in a meeting with somebody. I'm going to keep thinking about that. Kara, as Joanna mentioned at the beginning, the podcast series right here is in conjunction with an ebook that we produced called Virtue and Vice at Work. The ebook is looking at the historic vices as they relate to our modern working lives, and the podcast series is focusing on the virtues as they relate to our modern working lives. I don't think you can think about virtue without thinking about vice, and vice versa, if you will. But the virtue and advice have to go together. I'm curious, how can our understanding of our vices point us toward more loving behavior?

Kara Martin:

That's really cool. I was trying to think of the opposite of love and I ended up with two. One is lust, and that's probably the classic vice when compared to love. Lust, we might immediately think of sexual temptation. Heck, the workplace is rampant with that sort of stuff. But there's also lust for money. There's also lust for ambition or success. There's all sorts of different forms of lust. The problem with lust is lust wants to take something and it wants to claim it for itself and use it for itself. Lust actually deforms the thing that it desires. And that's the difference with love. Love actually wants the good of the thing it desires.

It actually empowers and enlivens and allows the other to flourish. That's the act of love. That's why lust is obviously a vice and it's also rampant in the workplace. It's something that tugs at our souls all the time in the workplace, those sort of temptations. But the other thing, the Bible also names fear as the



opposite of love. 1 John it says, perfect love drives out fear. I think sometimes Christians are really fearful in the workplace, fearful or defensive about their faith, fearful or defensive about trying to honor God in some way. I think that's another vice that is the opposite of love. If we truly want to love God, then we need to be less fearful.

I think we're empowered to be less fearful because of God's love for us and how much he's able to demonstrate that for us in Jesus. Actually we can be empowered to love effectively in the workplace.

Joanna Meyer:

Thank you. I'm curious to know, I think often we prize a competitive spirit in the workplace or feel like it's essential to be able to get ahead. And yet as a Christian, that might have a tempering aspect on that kind of unbridled ambition. What do you think it looks like to be committed to doing good work and not overly competitive? This is building off the reference you said about jealousy. I'm like, well, over competitiveness and unbridled ambition really is just jealousy in action, right?

Kara Martin:

Yeah, totally. Absolutely. I think this is a really hard thing to talk about in some ways because if you are ambitious in some way, then almost you feel like you have to crush that down and pretend not to be ambitious. There's this fakery around it. You fake humility or something. I think the Bible is okay on ambition, being ambitious, but being ambitious for God. Actually God might open up opportunities. He might create opportunities. What the Bible is down on is selfish ambition. And that's that last thing again. That's actually wanting something for myself. Well, the Tower of Babel is the classic thing.

Why did they build the big tower? Not to honor God, not to worship God, but to make a name for themselves. And that's the thing I think we have to be a bit careful of. Why are we doing this? Why are we wanting this? Are we wanting this to make a name for ourselves, to build our ego to? We can justify it in lots of ways. We're very good at saying things like, "I want it so I can have a platform for God."

Joanna Meyer:

And ourself, right?

Kara Martin:

Yeah. I've seen someone who's like that. She throttle all over other people because she was going to give a platform for God. The problem is that by the time she got there, no one wanted to hear about God from her because there was all these dead bodies that she'd crushed on the way through. We've got to be, I guess, clear and legitimate about our ambitions. I have a friend who... She says it sounds dumb



when she says it, but she is actually not very ambitious at all, and yet she ended up really high up in an organization. The doors just opened for her.

Part of the reason why the doors opened for her was that she is a wonderful leader, and she's a wonderful leader because she seeks to empower the people on her teams. She just creates opportunities for the people on her teams. Her teams perform well because they know that she genuinely cares for them and is going to give them opportunities. And then people see this. They see that she is a leader of a high functioning happy team and they give her more opportunities so the doors keep opening and she keeps moving up through the organization. To do that, she hasn't had to step on anybody.

She hasn't had to really promote herself or push her brand or anything like that. She's just genuinely done good work and been loving and compassionate to people around her.

Joanna Meyer:

When we think about God being the source of love and object of our love and our work, it's easy for that to shift and for work itself to become the object of our love. It becomes an idol. What signs with indicate that we've started to worship the work itself rather than God?

Kara Martin:

I think if you have made something an idol, it's the thing you think about all the time. It's the thing that you are focused on. It's the thing that you spend most of your time at. It's the thing you talk about all the time. Those are some of the red flags. If you can't stop thinking about work, if you are spending more time than you know really should at work, if you're getting all your self-esteem from your work, if the way you feel good about yourself is by achievements at work, if when you're talking to people you can't stop talking about your work, I think those are some of the red flags. Sometimes we can't see it ourselves.

Sometimes we're blinded to it. It's what vice is like. You're blind to it sometimes. You need people around you and you need to give them permission to tell you when you're becoming a little bit obsessed. Some people are more prone to this than other people. Some people are workaholics. Some people become addicted to work and they need people who can say to them, "That's not good enough. You got to stop that." I think it's part of the reason why God created Sabbath, because the word shebat means to cease, to stop. If you are unable to stop work, that's probably the biggest red flag of all. You've got a problem.



Jeff Hoffmeyer:

Hi, I'm Jeff Hoffmeyer, Vice President of Advancement here at Denver Institute for Faith & Work. I would like to invite you to become a part of our new monthly partner community. Whether it's a monthly commitment of \$25, \$50, or any amount, your generosity will support Denver Institute's ongoing efforts to help men and women love God, their neighbors, and society through their day to day work, including this podcast. To say thank you as a monthly partner, you will receive a welcome box.

You'll have exclusive access to private digital content, personalized vocational coaching, and discounts for Denver Institute content and experiences. To become a monthly partner, simply visit denverinstitute.org/give or see the show notes in today's episode. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Kara Martin:

Well, think about addiction to any other thing. Even when you're not taking it, you're thinking about when you're next going to take it or something, your next drink or whatever it is. It's same with work. Sometimes we find it hard to stop doing something, but what we can do is fill our mind with something else. That's often an easier thing to do.

Joanna Meyer:

I like that. Can we talk about Sabbath for a second? I'm wondering what you think is deviating from what you thought I was going to ask you about. What do you think an effective Sabbath practice looks like?

Kara Martin:

Okay, I can see with you guys, we'll have to start small.

Joanna Meyer:

Kindergarten level.

Kara Martin:

Yeah, that's right. Well, I think you can start off by having one hour a day, and then one day a week, and then maybe a weekend a month where you just are really conscious about switching off and stopping, and switching off and stopping. And as I say, it may be by actually trying to think of some practices that you're going to do that actually distracts you from that. I think Sabbath is multidimensional. Actually I'm working on a book about Sabbath with Gordon-Conwell right now. Well, I love Walter Brueggemann's work about Sabbath as Resistance, or A.J. Swoboda who says Sabbath is subversive.



There's that element of Sabbath, especially in our culture, where everything is about work and talking about work to actually say, "No, I'm going to rest from work. I'm going to switch off from work," as a healthy whole practice. I think that's actually something that would really speak to other people. You need to see people are wanting that. Actually someone told me that Denver is a place where... Because hiking and skiing is so big here that actually people can switch off from work here. It'd be easier than some other places. But I still think having these practices of Sabbath, which is not just about stopping, but it's also about really re-attuning ourselves to God.

Having some practices where you actually try and focus in you or different ways about God. Some people fast on the Sabbath. Some people do some Christian meditation on the Sabbath. Some people do Christian mindfulness exercises. When I have a Sabbath practice, sometimes it's not possible for me to do it on a Saturday or Sunday because I'm working. I like to go to the beach, because the beach is a place where I feel closest to God. It's a bit hard here I recognize, but where do you feel closest to God?

For some people, it's in the forest. For some people, it's in the mountains. Find a place. For some people, it might be a bookstore. Find a place where you feel close to God and you can connect to God. I think that's part of a Sabbath practice. It's about place, as well as about the time that you set aside.

Abby Worland:

I like that, that Sabbath is both about stopping, but it's also about how you fill that time to be closer to God. We're going to switch gears a little bit. I used to work in human resources, and so this is coming from that aspect of me. I think you've worked in HR before as well. But as we're thinking about love in the workplace, what about appropriate professional boundaries in the workplace? I know. Can it ever be risky to show love to a coworker and what might cross the line? I'm just curious, how do we think about that as the risks involved and how do we think about that in a professional sense?

Kara Martin:

I think part of the problem here is that we're thinking about love as showing affection, and that's an aspect of love. But if you remember the original definition, it's wanting the good for the other. If you want the good for the other, you've got to respect their boundaries and understand where they may be coming from. I think sometimes we can get misinterpreted as well. We need to be really careful about that and be aware of the danger of that. What I might see as a friendly action may be interpreted by someone else as a come on. You want to be careful not to lead someone else down that path.

I think being aware of boundaries and being clear. I often with work colleagues talk about how I value friendship in the workplace. It's immediately making it clear that I'm coming from a basis of friendship love. It just begins to put that boundary there straight up front. I'll throw that into a sentence. If I'm trying to create a loving atmosphere by saying, "Let's do lunch together," I'll say, "Let's do lunch, friend." It's just right there. [Crosstalk 00:26:08] I think compassion is a beautiful thing, but being clear about



where that compassion comes from. Saying that I want to show compassion because I've experienced compassion from others in my church and ultimately from God.

Actually trying to communicate the basis and the foundation for why you're doing these acts is helpful as well. But I think people are really, really hungry for this. I was in a local church on Sunday. We had in Australia we call it G'day time, but I think you call it something different in your churches.

Joanna Meyer:

I think we can call it G'day time.

Abby Worland:

It's a new trend.

Joanna Meyer:

But if it was G'day time, I think we'd be more excited about it.

Kara Martin:

There was this awkward start with this guy next to me. He was in the roofing and solar business, and then we started talking a bit more about solar and things like that. And then I think within about 90 seconds he told me how actually he was really not enjoying work and he was wondering what God wanted for him to do. He felt there was something else he should do. And then he told me he had just broken up with this long-term girlfriend and then he told me how he'd had an arm operation. He was healing from it. I just thought, I think it was because I listened and I demonstrated that I was interested in him and I wanted to hear what he had to say.

I think just having those listening skills, people actually want to open up. They've got to trust you. Once they trust you, they want to be open and honest, because sometimes people don't have a lot of places where they can actually be that and do that. You can have a profound impact in a very short space of time just by listening really attentively and then showing care.

Abby Worland:

I like that. We've been talking about loving God through our work. And with that, there's also this idea of experiencing God's presence with us in our work. Would love if you would elaborate on that. What does it look like to experience God's presence with us at work?



Kara Martin:

I think a lot of people think about going to work, and my friend used to have this image almost as if she was taking God in her backpack to work. Then when she got to work, she'd let him out briefly. She'd say the J bomb, the Jesus word or something, or she'd talk about church or something and then she'd put him back in the backpack and then get on with her work. I think that's our mental image sometimes of what we're doing when we go to work. But what we need to realize is, of course, God is omnipresent. He's everywhere. He's at work. He's at work at our work. He's in the workplace. He's working amongst our colleagues.

So then it becomes much more about, where is God at work in my workplace? Where can I see him? Where can I see signs of his activity of goodness, of truth, of love, of compassion? Where can I see those signs around me? Once you're beginning to look for those signs, it actually makes it much easier to feel God's presence at work, I think. There's a friend of mine, Catherine, she's a university professor. She was really determined to be the good Christian at work. She was in a department where she was the only Christian. She would take every opportunity to just evangelize where she could. She said to me for 10 years, it was just a wasteland.

It was just desert. She had no fruit for all that work of trying to be present for others and to be the God person at work. There was one guy in particular, a really hard case. She called him the world's biggest atheist. She found him a really hard nut to crack. Anyway, she had a real transformation when she began to realize that God is present in her workplace and how could she connect. What she did was she really changed. She started to look for signs of God's presence in the lives of the people that she worked with. She started asking questions and she started listening. She said everything switched.

Everything changed. She started to see, well, here's an opportunity to partner with what God is doing. This person's actually struggling a bit. It turned out that the world's biggest atheist actually was a single dad and he was finding some things really hard. She shared some parenting tips with him and he really appreciated it. There was someone else that she was working with who was caring for an elderly mother and she offered to provide some help and brought in a meal one day this person could take to the elderly mother and her work colleague was just flabbergasted. No one had ever thought of doing that before, and conversations just flowed.

She was so excited about this because she really felt there was some momentum now. Finally, she could see, this is what it means to be a loving Christian in this workplace. And then she got chronic fatigue and she couldn't work anymore. She was so angry at God. She said, "Finally, after 10 years, I've discovered what it means to fill God's presence at work and work with God at work," and then she gets chronic fatigue and she's home. But then her work colleagues started calling her and the world's biggest atheist called her up one day and said, "Can I pray for you?" And she said, "What do you mean? You don't even believe in God."



He said to her, "No, but you do and you know he loves you. I want to pray for you to this God." She was tearing up when she was telling me this and I was tearing up because I mean, who would've imagined that could happen? And yet he did. He prayed in this stuttering weird way for her to a God he didn't believe in, but who he knew loved her. Amazing. I think that is one of the big keys to working in God's presence is just begin to become aware of how God is at work around you already and connect with that and pray that God will open your eyes to it.

Abby Worland:

To pay attention.

Kara Martin:

Absolutely.

Joanna Meyer:

We often say that God uses our work as a tool for spiritual formation. I am intrigued by a concept that the philosopher James K. A. Smith introduces. He actually wrote a book about it called *You Are What You Love: The Spiritual Power of Habit*, and work is one of the most habitual things we do. I believe like James Smith does, that work is a place where our loves are shaped. But I want to know, how does that happen? How does God shape our loves through our work?

Kara Martin:

Oh, he does fantastic work there.

Joanna Meyer:

Tell me more.

Kara Martin:

Think about it. If I want to learn love, do I do that in church? Well, okay, there's some good models for people loving each other at church, loving well. But heck, that's not where I'm going to learn love. I'm going to learn love when God puts me beside a work colleague who is horrible, because there I have to choose to love, there I have to learn how to love the unlovable, and there I learn, well, that's what God does for me. So then I need God's supernatural help to love this person. I grow in love as I learn to love this person and I grow and wonder at how much God loves me, because he knows me and knows how horrible I am, but he still loves me.



If we look through that list from 1 Corinthians 13, patience, where do you learn patience? Well, you learn it at work when you're surrounded by people who are impatient and you're impatient with what's happening at work. You have to learn to wait with hope, which is what patience is. That's where you learn how to do it. How do you learn to be kind? You don't learn it at church where everyone's overwhelmingly nice and kind to each other. You learn it at work where people don't pretend to be kind.

That's where you have to choose to be kind. It's hard to do it from yourself. You've got to work with God to be able to do it. God does all his primary shaping of us actually in the places where we find it hardest to be like Jesus, and that's often the workplace.

Abby Worland:

Kara, you have this amazing new podcast called Worship on the Way to Work, and it helps listeners focus their minds and their hearts before they head into whatever the workday might hold. Would love to hear similar to what you were just talking about and what you talk about on the podcast, what are a few practices that we could do to prepare us to be more present, to pay better attention to the presence of the Lord, and also be more loving to our coworkers?

Kara Martin:

Well, I guess that's why my co-host, Stephen Field in Melbourne, and I, why we developed the podcast, because we really wanted to begin to help people to think about these things as they go to work. Worship on the Way to Work, it's 15 minutes, so it's like as long as the shortest commute to work. There's a bit of Bible in there. There's a reflection, a devotion that's linked to the Bible passages. Then there's an opportunity to reflect, to think about what you've heard and to apply it directly to your workplace. How does it make sense? We ask some questions to lead that. And then there's an opportunity both to pray to God, but also to be prayed for in that.

And then there's a call to action because we want to think about application as well. One of my favorite ones recently, and it lines up with this if you're thinking about fruit of the spirit, what I challenge people to do is to actually get a fruit and take it to work. For Monday, it'll be a banana, and banana is love. You put it on your work desk. Every time you look at that banana, you think, "I've got to be loving." And then the next day might be grapes and grapes are for joy. Today, I'm going to really practice being joyful every time I see those grapes. Trying to think of really practical, tangible things to remind you to link these things together.

And then the final thing in the podcast is a benediction, a commissioning, being sent out. I think those practices are really helpful. There are other spiritual practices. We can sit at our desks and just take a time to close our eyes for five minutes and just breathe deeply and just try and become more aware of God, more aware of where we're at, where God is at, ask him to prompt us, to show us. That awareness activity, just taking five minutes to be quiet and to listen and to smell and to just become more aware



with all our senses of where God is at. That's a really simple practice as well. Most of the things we hear about as spiritual practices we can actually do in the workplace.

They don't necessarily take a lot of time. We've just got to adjust them. The thing that most people point to at retreats is that line, be still and know that I am God. Often when we hear that line, we're thinking of going away from work. We're thinking silence. We are thinking somewhere beautiful. But if you read the song that it comes from, it's in the midst of the city. It's in the midst of chaos. There's earthquakes. There's storms. It's in the midst of all that that God says, "Be still and know that I am God." Actually it's in the midst of the busyness of our workplace that we need to think about practices that enable us to be still and know that he's God.

Abby Worland:

Earlier in the podcast you said that our desks could become an altar in the sense that we might worship our work, but also our desks can be altars in terms of sitting at our desks and worshipping God. I'm going to carry that away with me.

Kara Martin:

You see, that's the difference between worshipping work and at your workplace worshipping God.

Joanna Meyer:

Such rich food for thought. I would love to give you the final word, Kara, a little charge. You mentioned benediction at the end of your book. But I'm wondering if you would either challenge our listeners to cultivate the virtue of love in their work or send them out with a blessing towards more loving work.

Kara Martin:

I think this is a hard thing to do. My favorite 12th century monk Arid of Rovo said that life is the school of love. It's how we learn love. The workplace is a beautiful place to learn how to love. My challenge is to really seek to ask the question, how does my workplace teach me to love and to love better. And in loving better, then actually you're becoming more like Jesus. I pray that everyone who hears this might have the opportunity to love like Jesus in the workplace this week.

Joanna Meyer:

Kara Martin, thanks for joining us. A few next steps, we will put links to Kara's two books in our show notes, WorkShip 1 and WorkShip 2. We also encourage to download the ebook Virtue and Vice at Work: Ancient Wisdom for Modern Age. It's available for \$13 or completely free to our monthly partners. That's another perk for being a monthly supporter. We also encourage you to listen back to the five episodes in



this series. Just a reminder of what those were. We talked to author and journalist Caitlin Beatty about humility, talked to Andy Crouch about temperance.

Ultra runner and philosophy professor Sabrina Little talked to us about courage. Last week, we talked to Helen Young Hayes, a local entrepreneur, about justice. And then today, of course, we're talking with Kara about love. The final reminder is that we're just a few days away from Colorado Gives Day, which is Tuesday, December 6th. That's a significant day for Denver Institute in being able to support us financially and help ensure the future effectiveness of our work. A few simple calls to action. We're thrilled to have you with us today, Kara. Thank you for being part of our conversation.

Kara Martin:

Well, thank you so much.

Joanna Meyer:

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