

PART 2

We Are Better Together

The needs of our communities and the world can seem overwhelming until we realize that we do not have to shoulder these burdens alone. We are better together because we look after one another, and we are better together because we can work as teams in practicing faithful presence for the common good. In the video, “We Are Better Together,” follow the staff at Lawndale Christian Health Center to see how they practice faithful presence on the job with a marginalized population. Watch as the staff lean into their faith in God for support and how they shoulder together the needs of their clients.

Day 1

Assignment

Watch the video “We Are Better Together”.

Reflection and Practice

1. Christianity matters for our work because it teaches us to care about others beyond ourselves. Dr. Alexander Porte says, “The work I’m doing, to me, does not make any sense without faith. To take a job where you are paid less, doing harder work, it all comes from how I see Christ’s sense of justice, and that Old Testament justice is always paired with how you treat the poor.” How does your Christian faith motivate you to care about others in the work you do?
2. Spend about ten minutes day dreaming about partnering with God in the work of justice. What might this look like in your own life now and in the future. Journal what comes up for you.

Day 2

Reflection and Practice

1. The Lawndale staff discuss the challenges of caring for other people’s burdens. Recall a time when you cared for someone whose needs were not easy to address. How did it make you feel? In what ways did God help you care for another when it was hard?

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2. Dr. Louisa Olushoga talks about her decision to provide care to those living in shelters who have significant psychiatric needs. What were the risks involved with taking the job? What emotions did she feel? What motivates her to do this work anyway?

Day 3

Assignment

Watch the video a second time.

Reflection and Practice

1. The Lawndale staff discuss the importance of teamwork in caring for others. As you watch the video, write down instances where you spot teamwork. What does that look like for the staff? What about teamwork with departments outside of Lawndale? Write a paragraph summarizing why teamwork is important.
2. What does teamwork look like in your own employment or as a student? Ask God to give you insight into how teamwork can help you better care for others. Then look for ways to put that into action this week.

Day 4

Reflection and Practice

Dr. Detmer uses the phrase “Incarnational work.” Write down the definition he gives, word for word, stopping the video as needed. What might incarnational work look like for you right now, whether you are employed or a student? Spend some time talking with God about your life as an incarnational witness.

Day 5

Reflection and Practice

1. Dr. Olushoga writes, “It drops me down to my knees every single time because I don’t actually feel particularly equipped to do that kind of work.” Have you ever felt inadequate in your efforts to make a difference? How did prayer help Dr. Olushoga in those times? How might prayer help you in the workplace?
2. Read and pray Psalm 46.

Day 6

Assignment

Watch the video “We Are Better Together” a third time.

Reflection and Practice

1. Dr. Olushoga talks about being honest with God about what we are feeling. She says, “I serve a God who can contain my anger, my frustration, and I don’t have to pretend that, you know, I’m happy with the things that are happening ... His love is big enough to contain that.” What are your conversations with God like? Have you felt comfortable being honest about your emotions? Why or why not?
2. Take a few minutes to reflect on the past 24 hours. What emotions have come up for you during that time? List as many different emotions as you can recall. Spend some time talking with God about what you have been feeling, then sit quietly to listen for what the Spirit might say to you.