

THE MERCY JOURNEY FOR BUSINESS LEADERS

Bringing hope and healing
to a broken world



A Barna Workbook
Produced in Partnership
with The Reimagine Group

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to a broken world

Research commissioned by
The Reimagine Group, Alpharetta, Georgia

Research conducted by
Barna Group, Ventura, California

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PREFACE

For most of my Christian life, I viewed mercy as a deed or act, likely one of pity. But in the last several years, I have discovered mercy is an *investment*—albeit often a messy and costly one. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says, “God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy.” If grace is amazing, mercy is magnificent. And when we sow seeds of mercy in the lives of others, we are guaranteed to reap mercy ourselves.

In my recent book, *The God Impulse: The Power of Mercy in an Unmerciful World*, I unpacked the reality that God’s first impulse toward us is one of mercy. Imagine a time in your life when, like the prodigal son, you totally blew it—yet when you returned to God, he ran to you with outspread arms. Jesus commands us to “go and do the same” (Luke 10:37). Mercy is a bridge, and God created us for interdependency and community. Our capacity, and much of our

provision, stems from leaning into him and the communities he has provided in a vulnerable and interdependent way.

What if, just as we are desperately dependent on God’s daily mercies, a broken world may depend on daily mercies from us?

The Reimagine Group and I commissioned this Barna study to explore the notion that if we become imbalanced in our understanding of the gospel, then we cease to be a bridge to a lost and hurting world. Barna found that one-third of practicing Christians (33%) views the gospel as a mission of restoration and renewal, begun on the cross and continued in our acts of love, justice and mercy. This view acknowledges that everything flows from the completed work of Christ—his death, resurrection and ascension—and that his work in bringing his Kingdom to earth will be through his spirit and his Church.

But do we *really* understand what mercy is? What is our propensity to demonstrate it to those around us through forgiveness, compassion and justice, to represent a gospel that is about more than our individual, personal salvation?

“If we become imbalanced in our understanding of the gospel, then we cease to be a bridge to a lost and hurting world.”

At times, the results of this study are sobering, and I hope they will serve as a catalyst or, at least, a mirror for my fellow believers. I know they have for me. If I see mercy as a deed, it is easy for me to check it off my list or even outsource it to another party, like I would for landscaping, tax preparation or

automotive repairs. Has this same spirit of outsourcing crept into our displays of compassion? Looking at a number of areas of need, from poverty to incarceration, this study shows that only 17 percent of practicing Christians feel they personally carry a primary responsibility to provide help in person.

Embodied mercy is the full picture of the gospel. Jesus' ministry was hands-on, always seeing the people before him, being moved to compassion, reaching out to touch them and providing physical *and* spiritual relief. His mercy toward us was an *investment* in our eternity. I hope *The Mercy Journey* leads us back to that same type of expression—in our hearts, homes, churches and communities.

Jack Alexander

Founder of The Reimagine Group

Jack Alexander, founder of The Reimagine Group, has a business background as an entrepreneur and has co-founded and built business services and technology companies across diverse industries. He is author of *The God Guarantee* (foreword by Timothy Keller) and *The God Impulse* (foreword by Walter Brueggemann). Jack often speaks at churches, events and conferences and enjoys consulting with business leaders, pastors and ministry leaders. Jack and his wife, Lisa, live in Atlanta and have three sons and six grandchildren.

INTRODUCTION

Embarking on The Mercy Journey in Your Leadership

In a previous Barna Group study, we learned more than half of U.S. adults (53%) say that it's essential to their happiness to have a job where they can make an impact. For Christians, will that impact be a merciful one?

The data show there are plenty of goals (and obstacles) that already demand the time and attention of today's business leaders: navigating economic precarity and industry disruption, resisting the creep of working hours into leisure time, embracing both the costs and opportunities of technological advancement, reimagining environments and policies for the shifting demographics of today's workforce—not to mention finding some sense of calling or vocational satisfaction to begin with, which is an urgent matter for the Millennials (and soon Gen Z) who increasingly make up the marketplace.

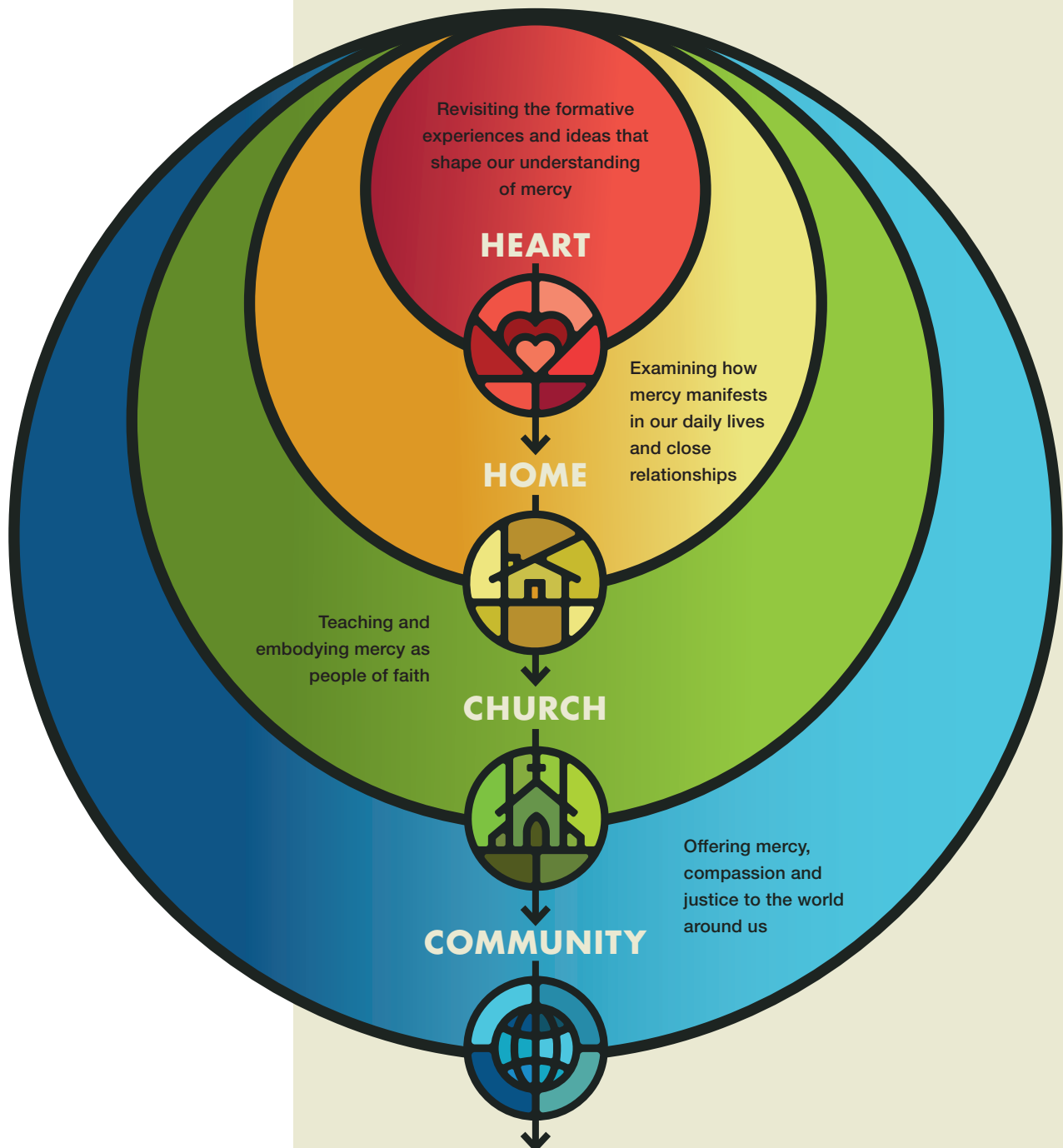
The Mercy Journey is a timely opportunity to pause—a tall order in the era of “always-on”—and reflect on how Christians can provide hope and healing in a broken world. Jack Alexander, founder of The Reimagine Group, and his team first approached Barna to survey perceptions and experiences of mercy for his book, *The God Impulse: The Power of Mercy in an Unmerciful World*. The study, conducted among both practicing Christians and pastors, covers topics such as giving and receiving forgiveness, what mercy looks like and to whom it should extend and how individuals and churches go about providing relief to those in need.

This workbook, *The Mercy Journey for Business Leaders*, explores some of the primary themes and findings as they relate to our daily interactions and decisions. It is intended to help entrepreneurs, managers and others with professional influence go on an interactive exploration of the topic of mercy. Throughout these pages, you'll find relevant data from Barna, applications and discussion prompts for your workplace and insights from experts and practitioners to help you cultivate compassion and kindness in—and through—your company.

The researchers recognize that some of the terms in this workbook—mercy, compassion, forgiveness, justice, truth, empathy and so on—are interconnected. Further, perceptions of these virtues and reports of how they have been either experienced or carried out in the lives of Christians are subjective. But Barna's hope is that this introspective study of how these gifts have been received and offered will produce more thoughtful conversations and compassionate endeavors. In embarking on this journey, the presence of Christians and the work of the Church can become a healing balm in a merciless age.

This workbook is part of *The Mercy Journey* collection, a data-driven exploration of the topic of mercy, based on Barna research conducted in partnership with The Reimagine Group. This resource is set up to first inspire reflection and then action, moving outward from our **hearts**, to our **homes**, to our **churches** and, finally, to our **communities**.

THE MERCY JOURNEY MAP



MERCY IN OUR HEARTS

TURNING POINTS:

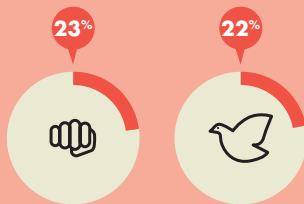
Applications for Business Leaders



Older practicing Christians more often associate true forgiveness with mended relationships (**78%** of Elders and **75%** of Boomers, vs. **65%** of Gen X and **66%** of Millennials), lessening someone else's suffering (**52%** of Elders and **49%** of Boomers, vs. **38%** of Gen X and **39%** of Millennials) and not seeking retribution (**70%** of Elders and **68%** of Boomers, vs. **52%** of Gen X and **49%** of Millennials).

- ⊕ Is there generational diversity represented on your team and in your office? How does this affect conflict resolution?
- ⊕ Create a “resolution template” for your company—a blueprint for giving apologies or offering forgiveness. In a calm, conflict-free meeting, talk over and commit to this standard. Circulate or hang this template in a central spot as a reminder.

Around one in four practicing Christians (**23%**) has a person in their life who “they just can’t forgive.” More than one-fifth of practicing Christians (**22%**) reports struggling with receiving forgiveness for something they have personally done wrong.



- ⊕ Is there a personal misstep, flaw or bad habit that you have not yet been able to acknowledge with those under your leadership?
- ⊕ Find a chance to clear the air and model repentance by example. Call a meeting, write a memo or maybe even host an informal gathering to be apologetic and

transparent with your team about where you think you’ve fallen short—and how you’d like to move forward, with their forgiveness and help.

This study suggests that those who experience radical forgiveness are more willing to forgive others. Among those who say they have received forgiveness, almost nine in 10 (**87%**) say they have given it in return (compared to **64%** of those who have not received it).

- ⊕ Can you think of a time in your career when an employer or manager was merciful with you when you didn’t deserve it? How did this influence your attitude or ethic in work?
- ⊕ Come up with a way to give your team a “clean slate” in an area that has been a source of frustration. Some ideas: Is it possible for everyone to agree to delete their inbox and start over (with no lingering unanswered messages)? Is there a particular meeting, conversation or pitch for which someone could use a redo? What if the managers took the initiative to tidy up a staff kitchen, warehouse or supply closet that’s long been in need of attention? Is it possible to give an extra staff-wide day off once you hit the deadline on that major project?

Integrating Faith & Work

One of the goals of this workbook is to inspire entrepreneurs, executives, managers and other leaders in the workplace to ask: What does it look like to apply a theology of mercy in the daily goings-on of my company and for the relief of those under my authority?

In a separate 2018 study conducted in partnership with Abilene Christian University, Barna posed a similar question to employed U.S. Christians, challenging them to consider what qualities they, as people of faith, have a responsibility to represent while on the job. As covered in the report *Christians at Work*, the top responses reflect a general moral code: Working Christians feel it is “completely” important to act ethically (82%), tell the truth (74%) and demonstrate morality (72%). Being open to friendships with non-Christians (66%), practicing humility (63%) and withstanding temptation (59%) are also priorities as these employees go about glorifying God through their work (58%). Respondents don’t really sense a spiritual responsibility to mold the culture of their workplace (35%) or share the gospel (24%).

Working Christians feel it is “completely” important to act ethically (82%), be honest (74%) and demonstrate morality (72%)

Responses from Christian Millennials imply they have some vocational lessons left to learn: When asked to point to values they should exhibit in the workplace, traits like speaking the truth, demonstrating morality, acting ethically or withstanding temptation diminish in importance among Millennials, particularly compared to Boomers. But even if younger workers don’t place the same level of importance on these spiritual opportunities in work, Millennials are still the most likely generation to say it’s completely important for Christians to mold culture (40%, compared to 35% of Gen X and 33% of Boomers) or serve others (58%, compared to 51% of Gen X and Boomers) at their jobs.

There are some Christian workers who exhibit more

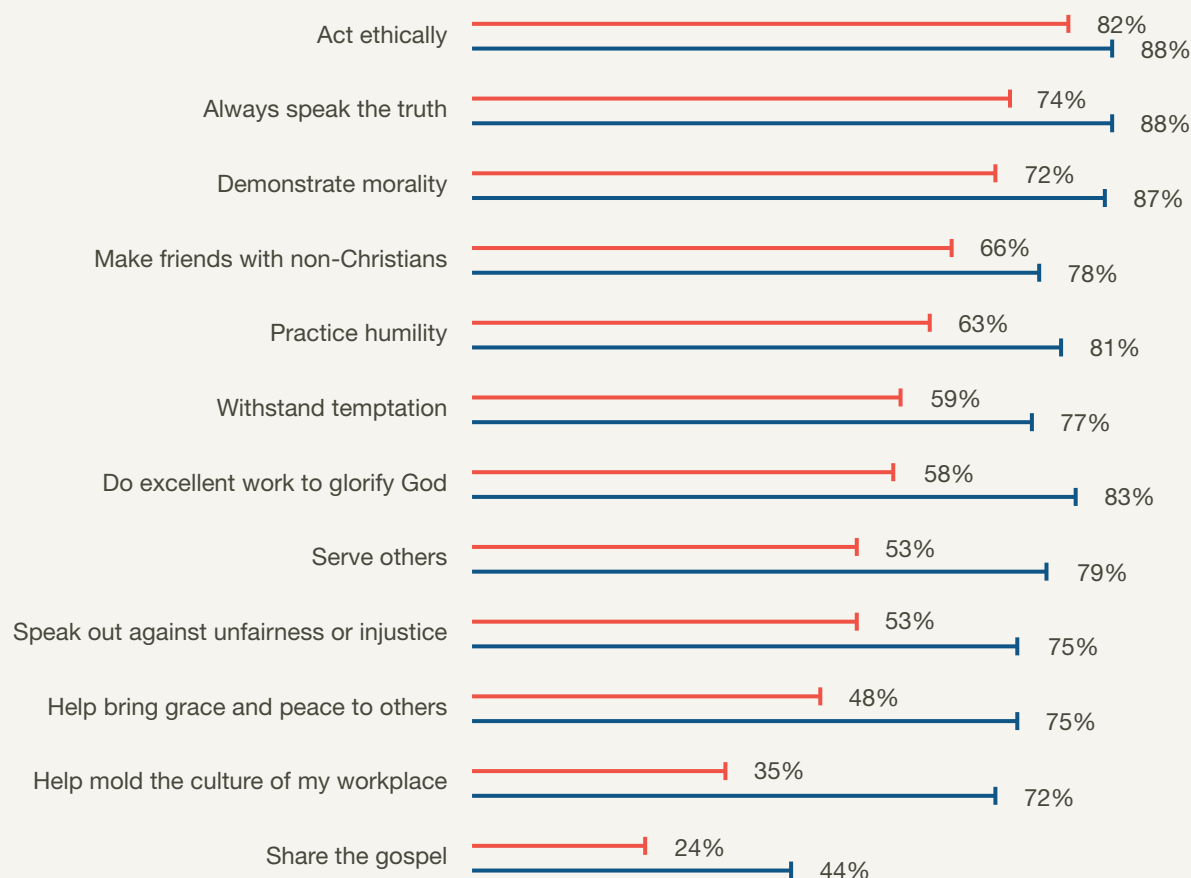
willingness to set the bar. For instance, practicing Christians, distinguished as those who see their faith as very important and regularly attend church, have higher standards across the board (and likely reap the benefits, as shown in a greater sense of satisfaction and purpose in their career).

Leading the way are faith-work Integrators, exemplary workers who Barna defined by their ability to see how their work serves God or a higher purpose, the purpose and meaning they find in their work, their desire to make a difference in the world and their belief that it is important to help mold the culture of their workplace. Integrators require more of their jobs, but also of themselves—as workers and as people of faith. When shown a range of activities or offerings that Christians might be called to bring into the workplace, this group holds standards of professional integrity that the Church would be well represented by. Integrators are rooted in a conviction that Christians should act ethically (88%), speak the truth (88%), demonstrate morality (87%) and confront injustice (75%) in the workplace. Eighty-three percent believe that people of faith have a responsibility to do excellent work in an effort to bring glory to God. On a more personal, spiritual level, they say working Christians should be guided by an attitude of humility (81%) and service (79%). Their desire to make a difference

WHAT ARE CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE WORKPLACE?

% "completely" important

○ All Christian Workers
○ Integrators



n=1,459 employed U.S. Christians, 2018.

is still accompanied by a boldness in their faith (44% say it's completely important for Christian workers to share the gospel), even in a time when spiritual conversations are increasingly rare. Accordingly, Integrators hope to make friends with non-Christian colleagues (78%) and bring grace and peace to others (75%).

Sadly, Integrators' professional principles are even more exceptional in contrast to some from the total sample in Barna's survey. For example, a little over half of working Christians (53%) place a high importance on speaking out against unfairness and injustice, more than 20 percentage points behind Integrators. One might expect the idea of workplace injustice

to feel more urgent to respondents—particularly Christians commanded “to do what is right, to love mercy and to walk humbly” (Micah 6:8). When it comes to building merciful companies known for fairness, respect, accountability and generosity, faith-work Integrators might need to lead their fellow Christians and colleagues in being proactive.

*Adapted from Christians at Work (Barna Group, 2018).
Produced in partnership with Abilene Christian University.*

Corporate Mercy

A Q&A with Jeffrey Wright

Q. You have a philosophy about how God uses corporate entities to bestow mercy on his world. Can you tell us about that?

A. This scenario is not unlike biblical narratives where groups of people organized for the production of goods and services that people needed to survive—from Joseph running the food industry of Egypt, to David or Nehemiah undertaking building projects, to Ruth joining those who were gleaned from the harvest. These corporate structures became agencies through which God purposed to get stuff done.

“Corporate structures became agencies through which God purposed to get stuff done.”

I argue that, if we look through the lens of corporate and business activity in the Bible, God is using these leaders in the same way he could be using leaders of corporate entities today for acts of mercy. But we split things into corporate vs. sacred, or for-profit vs. nonprofit.

For Christians in business, a fundamental shift is required, from seeing salvation as personal redemption only to seeing salvation as God using people, individually and corporately, to make a difference through acts of grace and mercy. Given our influence in the U.S., that's not optional; it's required. We make up a small proportion of the planet's population, but we have the most advanced corporate structure, goods, knowledge and more that can lead to flourishing of life on this planet.

What might that look like practically?

- We all have some sort of excess or waste in our business. Can we do something with it that might be an act of mercy? We see restaurants doing this, being intentional about donating food or making it available to ministries. That's the kind of “oneness” that Jesus talked about in John 17.

- Can we unleash capacity through technology platforms? Ride-sharing is an example of providing access to the resource of transportation, which could be seen as an act of mercy. You see God in the orchestration of tech breakthroughs, bringing hope and transformation to people's lives.
- You can share and give of your knowledge. That costs you nothing, but it can be a transformative enterprise.

Can you do well *and* do good? There isn't anything that says you can't. You can have a triple bottom line. I believe that for us to be globally merciful, from a place of abundance, is a call and a creative challenge to the business community in the U.S.



Carl Jeffrey Wright is CEO of Urban Ministries (UMI). His specialties include business development, media industry management and corporate law. He is a contributing author to *Nonprofit Leadership in a For-Profit World*.

MERCY IN OUR HOMES

TURNING POINTS:

Applications for Business Leaders



Family relationships may inspire or shape forgiving attitudes. For example, married practicing Christians are more likely to associate forgiveness with repaired relationships (**72%** vs. **62%** of never married) or not seeking retribution (**61%** vs. **51%** never married). Parents, though more compassionate toward others, are more likely to say there is something for which they personally struggle to receive forgiveness (**30%** vs. **18%** of those without children in the home).

- ⊕ Do you have similar standards for behavior at work and at home? Do those in your household get to see the best version of you?
- ⊕ Have a candid conversation with your family members and housemates about work-life balance. When is it hardest to be attentive and present at home? Would you like to hear more or less about each other's professional lives? How can you help each other to keep work or school matters designated to specific devices, rooms or hours, preserving the rest for meaningful shared moments?

One-fifth of practicing Christians (**19%**) regards themselves as “always” merciful. The plurality of respondents (**42%**) gives a more modest assessment, feeling that they usually operate mercifully.



- ⊕ Beyond your professional identity, how would you describe your personality or character? What do people closest to you know you for, if work successes are set aside?

- ⊕ Like you would create job descriptions for employees, collaborate on profiles of the roles that family members and housemates play in your home. Include: what each person uniquely offers, special skills or qualifications, responsibilities each individual should fulfill—and, importantly, how they can expect to be acknowledged.

Practicing Christians see their inner circles, such as family members or church friends, as highly deserving of mercy—more so than those who have committed a wrongdoing, such as a personal offense or a crime.

- ⊕ Where have you limited your expressions of mercy or compassion with people you know or don't know? Why?
- ⊕ Look at your schedule for the week. Insert an event or task that gets you out of your bubble and into contact with new faces, people you disagree with or other relationships (not work-related!) that aren't necessarily comfortable or convenient.

Bringing Relief to Workers & Families

A Q&A with Rachel Anderson

Q. Often, company decisions are made based on resources, time, staffing and so on. How would you encourage business leaders, especially Christians, to also consider “softer” values, like compassion and mercy, as an important part of their decision making? Specifically, what might that look like—in terms of company culture, policies and employee care?

A. One of the many tasks of managers and leaders is to humanize the workplace. A workplace fitted for humans makes room for and affirmatively prepares for the needs, strengths and responsibilities of human life. This includes the calling to take responsibility for family and loved ones. It is this particular calling that the Center for Public Justice has devoted recent attention to through its Families Valued initiative.

Family life involves attention to both the everyday rhythms of family life as well as its extraordinary responsibilities. What nearly every parent can tell you is that family life is a series of predictable irregularities: the sleeplessness that accompanies the birth of a new child, a bout of seasonal colds or flus, a parent who falls and needs emergency care and rehabilitation, the sibling who needs a place to stay.

“Mercy also manifests in systems prepared to handle the predictable irregularities of human life.”

Mercy in the workplace could come in the form of an open door and a “yes” to requests for help when any one of these situations arises. But mercy also manifests in systems prepared to handle the predictable irregularities of human life. It can look like a process for exchanging and making up shifts or a commitment to provide paid family leave in addition to routine sick and vacation time. An explanation of the process for securing flexible work arrangements can serve as a lifeline for a worker

who might otherwise be afraid to ask, thinking he is the only one who needs it.

Mercy is both a compassionate response to a particular challenge as well as systems in place for everyone with human challenges, which is all of us. Mercy is a reserve stored up, slack in the system, the edges of the field left untouched and ready when one needs it most.



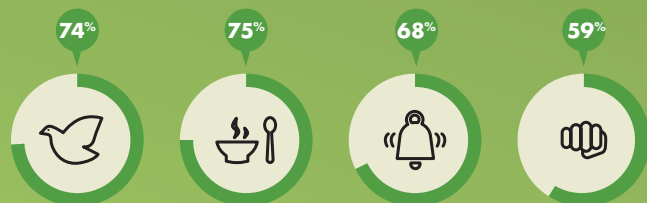
Rachel Anderson is a resident fellow with the Center for Public Justice leading the Families Valued initiative.

MERCY IN OUR CHURCHES

TURNING POINTS:

Applications for Business Leaders

Three-quarters of practicing Christians (**74%**) say their pastor or someone else has taught about mercy in their church at least once in the past three months. A majority of practicing Christians says their church also encourages them to help poor people (**75%**), those in distress (**68%**) or someone who has wronged them (**59%**).



- ⊕ How often is mercy addressed at your church, either through sermons or programs?
- ⊕ If you haven't yet, sign up to volunteer with a specific program, outreach or department of your church. Pray about whether you'd like this to be an extension of your professional skills or expertise, or perhaps an original way of helping to impart mercy through the local church.

Younger seminary graduates are more likely to say their education emphasized mercy, but experience is also a teacher: Older and more tenured pastors feel most prepared to preach about mercy.

- ⊕ Does this finding about pastors reflect your line of work at all? Are values like compassion represented or taught in business classes or the marketplace? How does understanding or expression of these concepts change or deepen over time?



- ⊕ Create a cohort with a few other business leaders from your church—of similar or different industries, but definitely of multiple generations. Establish meeting times to talk about integrating faith and work, pray for each other and encourage one another to be merciful influences in your companies, community and economy. If possible, strategically pair older and younger business leaders for mentorship opportunities.

Practicing Christians don't significantly differ from the general population in reporting feelings of high compassion for those in distress (**55%** vs. **52%**), the poor (**50%** vs. **46%**), someone who has wronged them (**13%** vs. **9%**) or someone who has committed a crime (**9%** vs. **6%**).

- ⊕ Whether or not your company is explicitly connected to faith, do you recognize any Christian values or principles at work within it?
- ⊕ Commit to a prayer focus for the next week or month: that your example would stand out in the marketplace and represent Christ well.

Being an Entrepreneur for Good

A Q&A with Jack Alexander

Q. Where is a starting point for being merciful in the marketplace? Is this good for business?

A. I think the simplest definition for mercy is an “engaged heart.” People in personal relationships know whether your heart is engaged—whether you really care, see them and hear them. Business is no different.

I think of the gospel as “vertical” (the calling of God and substitutionary work of Christ) and “horizontal” (the laying down of our lives for others in the power of the Holy Spirit). The laying down of ourselves begins with an engaged heart for others and a desire to know their story. As leaders, we need to learn the stories of others and be a bridge for some of them as they navigate the challenges and issues of life.’

I think it is smart business to be merciful. Proverbs 19:11 (NIV) says, “A person’s wisdom yields patience; it is to one’s glory to overlook an offense.”

Q. How can those in technology industries be innovative in merciful ways—to connect, inspire or provide relief to others?

A. Technology is so rooted in science and reason and can easily lose the heartbeat of love and faith. I am currently chairman of a tech company called onQ, and we talk about the challenge of “humanizing the digital connection” or “creating listening organizations.” A commitment to mercy as well as truth, while embracing the promises of technology, is a powerful combination.

Q. How can entrepreneurs and leaders build workplace environments or business endeavors that are representative and supportive of minorities?

A. So many organizations mishandle this area by looking at diversity and inclusiveness as an “appendage” that needs to be monitored and measured. Unfortunately, many times organizations want these leaders to perform a function rather than truly shifting power to them. I was in a group with about 20 African

American pastors, some of whom were being recruited by white churches. One leader said, “If they do not have people of color in leadership, but they have a black janitor, don’t work there.”

“A diverse culture will be richer and more representative of God’s heart.”

A diverse culture will be richer and more representative of God’s heart. Yet Barna reports that nine in 10 evangelicals do not have meaningful relationships with people who look or believe differently than them. This “bubble” mentality is not sustainable.



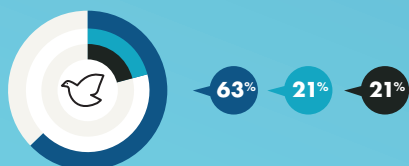
Jack Alexander is an entrepreneur and speaker, founder of The Reimagine Group and author of *The God Guarantee* and *The God Impulse*.

MERCY IN OUR COMMUNITIES

TURNING POINTS:

Applications for Business Leaders

Nearly two-thirds of practicing Christians (**63%**) say mercy affects how they speak and act. One in five respondents says mercy doesn't influence their actions (**21%**) or that they don't think much about its role in their lifestyle (**21%**).



- ⊕ What factors are typically at the helm of the decision making in your company?
- ⊕ Conduct a “mercy audit,” ideally with a trusted or outside committee. Look over your business model, company handbooks, products and more with this guiding question: *Does this extend compassion or bring relief to others—not only to the people on our staff, but also to our clients, customers and communities?*

Practicing Christians see people facing discrimination as a group for whom they have a personal responsibility to take action, whether monetary or hands-on.

- ⊕ Does the climate of your workplace allow discrimination to persist? Who might feel least comfortable or welcomed there?
- ⊕ As part of the mercy audit, pay attention to whether any hiring practices, wages, leave policies or authority structures could possibly (even in subtle ways) reinforce discrimination, homogeneity or inequality in the workplace.

Practicing Christians with some proximity to economic hardship—either through personal experience or through a relationship with someone

who has been at risk of homelessness or in need of public assistance—exhibit more compassionate attitudes and actions.

- ⊕ What's the toughest thing you've ever gone through? Has it changed the way you live now or the way you respond to people in similar situations?
- ⊕ Create an empathy curriculum for your team—perhaps a collection of films, a reading list or a day trip to a nonprofit or museum that will expose everyone to perspectives and contexts other than their own.

The plurality of practicing Christians feels that churches and other Christian organizations and nonprofits should usually shoulder the responsibility to provide for various groups in need.

- ⊕ What responsibility do businesses have in administering justice or imparting mercy? How might they play a role alongside individuals, nonprofits or churches? This could apply to efforts such as practicing creation care and limiting your environmental footprint; paying employees of all levels fair, living wages; or ensuring there is no sweatshop labor or trafficking associated with products.
- ⊕ If you haven't yet, determine at least one charity partner or focus for your workplace—maybe just for the year or for the long term.



The Business of Mercy

A Q&A with Cheryl Bachelder

Q. How should business leaders consider the way that their products or services bring mercy or relief to others?

A. Here are four principles from my experience in leading Popeyes:

- **Figure out why you are in this business.** I was in the quick service food business because I thought it was an amazing part of the American dream; 41 percent of the restaurant owners were immigrants to the U.S. The restaurant business was their path to taking care of their families and prospering. It allowed them to educate their children, buy their first homes, bring other family members to join them in the U.S. and receive medical care not offered in their homelands. I felt this was mercy expressed to people who immigrate to our country, as well as Americans who want to be entrepreneurs.
- **Figure out how your business can help.** In the restaurant business, owners are generous in their communities. They often donate food, sponsor schools, raise money for charity. We had an industry-wide event called Share Our Strength that raised money to feed hungry children in America. This was mercy expressed to the people in the communities where we did business.

“You are teaching people ethics when you lead a business.”

- **Make sure your business operates ethically.** You are teaching people ethics when you lead a business. Take it seriously! In restaurants, we are often the first job for young people. We teach them how to arrive on time, dress appropriately, speak kindly to customers and work together in teams. We give them training, coaching and feedback to help them grow and mature. We often hire people who need second chances, such as people coming

out of prisons or rehabilitation. This is mercy.

- **Think globally.** We expanded Popeyes, building 1,000 restaurants around the world and bringing job opportunities to developing countries, just as we had done in the U.S. As we grow internationally, we have the opportunity to teach business ethics—and we often have the opportunity to demonstrate mercy to people who have never heard of Jesus.



Cheryl Bachelder was CEO of Popeyes Louisiana Kitchen for nearly a decade and has served in executive leadership functions for Pier 1 Imports, Domino's Pizza and KFC. She is the author of *Dare to Serve* and mentors young leaders.

CONCLUSION

It can be tempting to quantify our professions in terms of what they bring to us—income, satisfaction or benefits. Certainly, this is part of making a living, providing for a family and carving out a place for ourselves in the world. A hard day's work and a prompt paycheck can feel like more than enough, given the instability, stress or simple mundanity that can shape our working lives or business endeavors. But if you've completed this workbook, you are likely of the mindset that your career can and *should* mean something more, defined not only by what you gain but by what you can bring to others.

Of course, as an executive, leader or entrepreneur, there are plenty of other resources available to you, covering topics like communicating well, dreaming big and working tirelessly. There are even books, groups and tools about the importance of giving back and doing good in business; these aren't new or radical concepts, and indeed, they often top bestseller lists. But this particular workbook is a challenge to you, as a Christian in business, to envision a more merciful marketplace and your unique role within it. We hope it's caused you to think about the ways that these other established functions of leadership—communication, efficiency, generosity and so on—can be

infused with Christ-like compassion. If you are among the 63 percent of practicing Christians who say their belief in mercy affects how they speak and act, your words and actions in turn can have a profound influence on products, employees, policies, consumers and industries.

It might seem that this influence is manifested only in the final phase of *The Mercy Journey*: community. But for Christian business leaders, the goal is not just public impact, but personal transformation, in hearts, homes and churches as well. You can't be merciful at work without cultivating mercy in your heart and home too.

Whatever you create, fix, provide or communicate through your company, you have an opportunity to point to a God who is just, generous, long-suffering and compassionate—or, as Paul put it, “whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31).

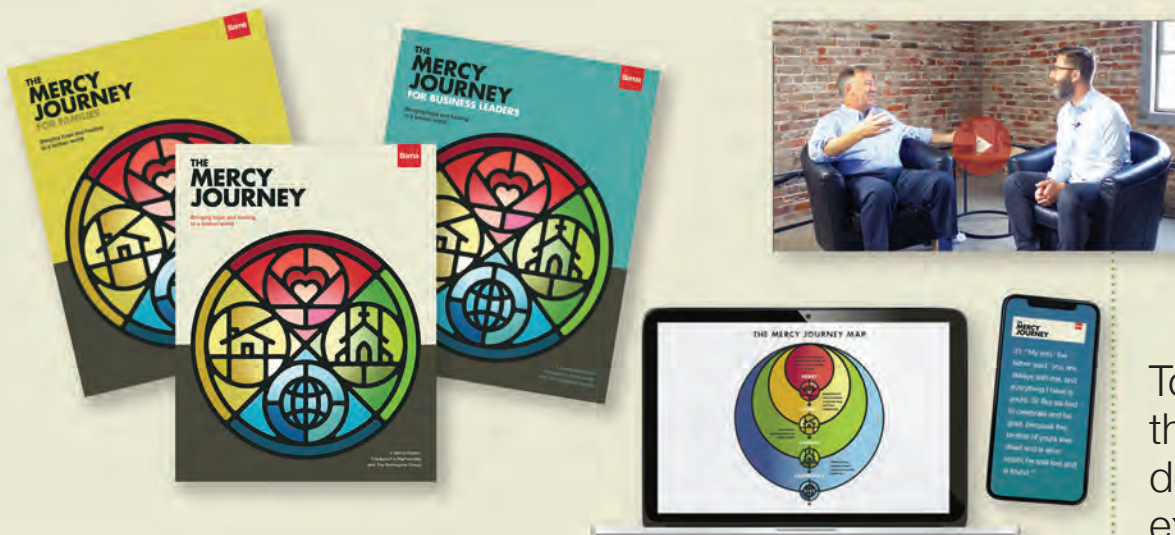
Travel *The Mercy Journey* with Your Church or Organization

Scripture mandates that the people of God are to “love mercy” (Micah 6:8). Jesus once instructed a group of listeners to “go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice’” (Matthew 9:13).

God desires his people to be living expressions of his mercy on earth. How can we honor his instruction? Where does mercy fit into our understanding of the gospel? How can we embrace mercy so it overflows into our actions, conversations and relationships?

New data from Barna Group show that the Church at large lacks consensus in answering these questions. Informed by these findings, Barna and The Reimagine Group have produced a comprehensive suite of tools that will help you lead your church, family or team to a deeper awareness and embrace of mercy—in your hearts, homes, churches and communities. Shaped by the insights of ministry experts and practitioners, these tools include:

- Sermon development outlines created by a teaching pastor
- Small group discussion and leader guides
- Presentation slides and note-taking templates
- Customizable promotional images for social media, digital communications and print materials
- Video interviews with key faith and business leaders
- Weekly email templates to reinforce and encourage content engagement among your group
- *The Mercy Journey* workbooks for business leaders and families



This holistic toolkit—the first of its kind from Barna—will maximize your ability to lead your church to embody the whole gospel.

To get access to these tools and deepen your experience, visit **www.barna.com/mercyjourney**

METHODOLOGY

This study is based on quantitative surveys of 1,007 U.S. adults, 1,502 U.S. practicing Christian adults and 600 U.S. senior pastors of Protestant churches. Among pastors, Barna oversampled to include more perspectives of black pastors (100 respondents total). Interviews were completed online and by telephone between April and August 2018. The rate of error is + / - 2.3 percent for practicing Christians, 3.9 percent for pastors and 2.9 percent for the general population, at the 95 percent confidence level.

Practicing Christians are self-identified Christians who say their faith is very important in their lives and have attended a worship service within the past month.

Gen Z were born 1999 to 2015 (only 13- to 18-year-olds included).

Millennials were born 1984 to 1998.

Gen X were born 1965 to 1983.

Boomers were born 1946 to 1964.

Elders were born before 1946.

In the 2018 study conducted in partnership with Abilene Christian University, Barna scored and grouped individuals based on their combined responses to these four statements:

- “I can clearly see how the work that I am doing is serving God or a higher purpose.”
- “I find purpose and meaning in the work I do.”
- “I am looking to make a difference in the world.”
- “As a Christian, I believe it is important to help mold the culture of my workplace.”

Christians who agree strongly with these attitudes are referred to by Barna as **Integrators** of faith and work.

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ABOUT THE PROJECT PARTNERS

Barna Group is a research firm dedicated to providing actionable insights on faith and culture, with a particular focus on the Christian Church. Since 1984, Barna has conducted more than one million interviews in the course of hundreds of studies, and has become a go-to source for organizations that want to better understand a complex and changing world from a faith perspective. Barna's clients and partners include a broad range of academic institutions, churches, non-profits and businesses, such as Alpha, the Templeton Foundation, Fuller Seminary, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Maclellan Foundation, DreamWorks Animation, Focus Features, Habitat for Humanity, The Navigators, NBC-Universal, the ONE Campaign, Paramount Pictures, the

Salvation Army, Walden Media, Sony and World Vision. The firm's studies are frequently quoted by major media outlets such as *The Economist*, BBC, CNN, USA Today, the *Wall Street Journal*, Fox News, *Huffington Post*, *The New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times*.

Barna.com

The Reimagine Group was formed in 2011 to provide a variety of video, book and study guide resources to help Christians grow and mature. Inspired by Jesus' words to his followers in Matthew 5, Reimagine has helped thousands of Christians to look at the deeper heart issues in life and "reimagine" generosity, stewardship, mission, overcoming fear, mercy and many other topics.

In 2018, Reimagine released *The Generosity Pivot*, building the case for the Church to adopt a more holistic, relational approach to generosity. Reimagine's founder and chairman, Jack Alexander, has written two books: *The God Guarantee: Finding Freedom from the Fear of Not Having Enough* (2017) and *The God Impulse: The Power of Mercy in an Unmerciful World* (2018).

TheReimagineGroup.com