



The Flourishing Culture Podcast Series

“Prayer, a Remarkable Tool for Building Healthy Culture “

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Barry Slauenwhite

Male: Welcome to the Flourishing Culture Podcast, where you’ll learn how to build a flourishing workplace culture that drives the ministry impact of your organization, your church, or your company, brought to you by the Best Christian Workplaces Institute. Now, here’s your host, BCWI president, Al Lopus.

Al Lopus: Hello, and thanks for joining us again on the Flourishing Culture Podcast. Barry Slauenwhite has had a remarkable 34 years with Compassion Canada. In his time as president and CEO, Compassion Canada has experienced more than a tenfold growth to become one of Canada's largest Christian nonprofits. He is also about to release a new book titled *Strategic Compassion—Reuniting the Good News and the Good Works in the Fight Against Poverty*. There's also a question that I'm going to ask that gets at one of the big questions behind Compassion Canada's remarkable growth, but first, Barry, give us a brief summary about Compassion and what it's all about.

Barry: Well, good to be with you, Al, and grateful for the opportunity to share a little bit of my passion. So, Compassion’s ministry is releasing children from poverty in Jesus’ name. We focus on children in poverty, in what is commonly known as the developing world or the Southern world, whatever you want to call it. We use a unique approach in that we partner exclusively with local Christian churches in these countries. We have about 7,000 local churches that host a Compassion Child Development Center. And we’re currently globally caring for about 2 million children. Our goal is to minister to children in four quadrants, the four biblical quadrants of human development. And based on Luke, where the Bible says Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, favor with God and favor with man, those are the four human development quadrants that we work in: the cognitive, the physical, the socio-emotional, and the spiritual. So every child that enters a Compassion program, regardless of their

background—and the bulk, the majority of children entering our program are from non-Christian-homes backgrounds—that's strategic because we want to both equip and motivate the church to reach into their community, and we recognize that Christ is the ultimate answer to all levels of poverty. So that's, in a nutshell, what we do, releasing children from poverty in Jesus' name.

Al: That's tremendous, Barry. And for some helpful context to our conversation, tell us a little bit about your background and what led you to your current role.

Barry: Yeah, I'm on my third career. I started off in business, and all the while knowing that I had been called by God into full-time ministry. I knew that since I was a child. But most ministers I knew were poor, so I thought maybe I could convince God to at least let me approach it from a different angle, so I started my own business. I was very successful and putting a lot of money into the church and even a lot of my time, almost every night I was at church. I thought I could appease that calling by doing that, but after a few years, it became clear to me that God was just tolerating that; that wasn't really his ultimate goal for me. So I made the big move from business into full-time pastoral ministry, went to seminary, took my training, went into pastoral ministry and loved it, absolutely loved pastoring.

As the years went on, I developed two core passions: one for children at risk, and another for missions. But I couldn't find a way to marry those two passions. I came to the conclusion that one day I'm going to have to choose: working and ministering to children at risk, or missions. And it wasn't until 1983 that I discovered Compassion and Compassion's ministry—they are a mission specializing in children at risk—and I actually thought it was too good to be true, but I knew in my heart that's what God had made me for. So in 1983, I stepped out of the pastorate role that I loved into this role and have found it to be extremely fulfilling over these 35 years.

Al: And, what, Barry, there were probably 10 years before you became the CEO?

Barry: Yeah. So, I stepped into Compassion, mainly as the marketing director, church ministry director. You know, in a small organization you wear many hats, but did that for 10 years, yeah.

Al: So, when you got into your role as president, tell us about the culture challenge that you faced there at Compassion Canada. What were some of the things in your culture that you felt needed attention? What wasn't working?

Barry: Well, to be very frank with you, a lot of things weren't working. Our culture was not as healthy as I and many of us would have liked to have seen. There were a lot of contributing factors, but back then it was not uncommon to have autocratic leadership in organizations, especially Christian organizations. That lack of empowerment of staff, that lack of real strategic attention to culture didn't

make things work as well as they could have. It was an environment where, let's just say there was lots of room for improvement.

Al: Yeah, well, gosh, it was almost 10 years after you had taken the CEO role you discover the Best Christian Workplace Survey. In fact, I think it was the first year that we offered it in Canada, in 2004, and you jumped right in, you engaged in the survey, and it certainly revealed a number of strengths in your organization as you had had time to work in that role.

And one of the things I remember back then was how strong the culture was around inspirational leadership, especially the spiritual leadership within inspirational leadership, which is one of our eight drivers we've discovered to creating a flourishing culture. You know, I remember back then that, I said, "You've got reason to be encouraged."

Barry: Yeah, and you know, your words were—I almost didn't believe you. I had been surrounded by, like I said, some pretty unhealthy culture. When I stepped into this leadership role as CEO, I really concentrated on trying to change that. But I guess from inside out, I maybe didn't celebrate or see the degree to which things had changed until you came in and through Best Christian Workplace brought that to our attention, and it was a bit of a revelation. You know, it's like when you're down in the trenches and you're digging, digging, digging, if you don't stop to look back at how far you've been digging, you don't get to see that. So that's kind of where I was at that point. I was a bit overwhelmed and, I guess, didn't stop to think we had made as much progress as we did.

Al: Yeah, and you really made a lot of improvement, hadn't you. What are some of the things that you really worked on as you worked to improve your culture?

Barry: The biggest thing, I think, working on was building trust. Trust was not widely embraced or experienced. A lot of suspicion. You know, leadership made that decision; we don't know why. Things like that. One of the things that I discovered, as I began to step out in faith and follow God, I discovered that when God called me to be a pastor when I was a young boy, he actually equipped me with some gifts for that, and I didn't quite realize that. And one of the gifts that God gave me is the gift of shepherding. I love people. I love to see people thrive. I don't have a big ego. I don't need to take the credit or be singled out. I'm quite happy when other people take the credit for success.

And when I was first starting in pastoral ministry, I had a very elderly pastor who was my mentor. And I remember him taking me aside when I got my first church, when I was given the role of being lead pastor of my first church, he said, "Barry, don't forget: love the people you lead. Don't drive them;

lead them and love them.” And that's been my mantra throughout the years in both my pastoral role and in my role here. I view myself as lead shepherd here at Compassion Canada, not so much the CEO.

Al: “Love the people you lead. Don’t drive them, but lead them.”

Barry: Yeah.

Al: Yeah. Wow. That’s great. I bet you’ve got a memorable story about some of the anonymous feedback you received as part of those first surveys that you did back years ago.

Barry: Oh, yes. That’s for sure. Like, for me, trust—I assumed everybody was trustworthy, and I assumed everybody believed me when I said, “Trust me.” What I didn’t quite understand is when people have not had that environment, they become suspicious. So when I stepped into the leadership role and I began to exercise trust in people around me, I discovered to my chagrin that people were suspicious and actually thought my motives may not have been quite pure. And that offended me at first. I was wounded by that. How could you not believe me when I say I'm for you, or how can you not believe me when I give you my word? Why would you ever think I wouldn't follow up with action?

So I remembered a few years later when we did the Best Christian Workplace survey, the trust score came in really high, and I remember you calling me—and I don’t know if you remember this—but you actually challenged me is that maybe we have to do this over again because it's a bit unusual to have a trust score so high. I was willing to do it over again. I don't remember—we might have even asked that question a second time to our staff, and it came out just as strong second time.

Al: Yeah.

Barry: That was an interesting time for me.

Al: Yeah, it really did show—I mean, you had been working on it after you had become CEO, and it really was. I mean, we asked the question. You know, there's a high level of trust between senior leaders and staff in your organization. Yeah, you had remarkable scores, boy. Knowing where you were both strong and even needing some improvement as a culture, what are a couple of the practical action steps that you and your leadership team began to take to reinforce this healthy culture that you had really begun building on earlier in your role as CEO?

Barry: Yeah. There were a couple steps that to me seemed no-brainers, or natural. I didn't realize until many years later how strategic they were and how impactful they would be. The first one was, when I

became CEO, our board of directors was ostracized from our staff. So our staff didn't know them; our board didn't know our staff. They had board meetings off site, so there was never an opportunity to build relationship. Again, that feeding into this distrust, because if you don't have relationship with people, it's hard to trust them. The board would make decisions. They would be cascaded down through the CEO. But because staff didn't know the board, they didn't trust all of those decisions.

So the first thing I did is I brought those two groups together. I actually printed up photographs of the board and gave them to our staff, and we started praying for the board by name and by photograph. And then I did the same thing with the board. Give them a little booklet of all of our staff photos. And we held our first board meeting on site, we ate a meal together, we did devotional and prayer together, and that began a journey that has become incredibly precious. Our staff today, many times larger, absolutely love our board and trust them explicitly, and our board so appreciates our staff. So that was one thing.

In tandem with that, I had and still have a real passion for team leadership. I don't lead as a one-man show. I don't lead as an autocrat. I love to push responsibility out. And so I began to assemble and build a leadership team around me, and I empowered them to lead the organization. That had a profound impact on our culture, I found. So those two things were two of many moves that I felt God inspired me to do.

Al: Well, I remember early on in our discussions, I was really impressed with the way that you had addressed and created values. Tell us about the exercise that you went through to codify the values that you wanted to have and was the basis for building this really healthy, even flourishing, staff culture.

Barry: I'll tell you a little secret, Al. I don't tell many people this, but during those 10 years before I became CEO, you know how you can work in an environment, organization, and you can complain, right? You see all the things that go wrong.

Al: Yeah, right.

Barry: I did this before Compassion. I did it when I was in pastoral role, too. I found it very valuable to learn from other people's mistakes, that it was less painful than making them myself. I felt God convicting me one day when I was complaining. I felt God convict me. I made up a little file folder, the old-fashioned cardboard file folder, and I wrote on the folder, "If I Were President," and whenever I had a complaint or whenever I saw something I didn't like or I thought could be done better, rather than take that complaint and spread it around as gossip, I sat at my desk and I wrote it down on a card

or a note paper, and I tucked it away in that file, never ever dreaming that one day I would be the leader. I just did it more of an act of saying to God, I'm not going to complain to others; I'm just going to complain to myself, and I'm going to keep those complaints secret. But when the board appointed me as president and CEO, I pulled that file out, and I had a rich, rich collection of ideas of how to do things and how I thought things should be done.

So the first thing I did with our staff is I closed the office down for two days and took the staff on a retreat. And I used the same approach. I took a piece of paper, and I typed on the top of it, "If I Were President, I would..." And I handed each staff that sheet of paper, and I said, "You go find a quiet place, and I want you to make as long a list as you can of the things you would do if you were me." And, Al, some of my best ideas came out of that. Some of the things I'm most known for as being smart and wise came out of those, the compilation of that list. That was profound for me, and I learned later it was very empowering for my staff to be able to speak in to my leadership role at that first day, the very early stages.

Another exercise I did with them is I took them through the biblical principles of culture. Really, culture is people care, right, soul care. So I help walk them through, what does the Bible teach about how we should get along, how we should work with one another, how we should care for one another. And I challenged them. I said, "I have a dream of creating a workplace where everybody looks forward to coming to work every day." That's my dream because that wasn't our reality. And I shared with them my heart, and I made a list of items that I felt needed to be in place. That list eventually became our corporate culture as we built on that. Those two exercises of the others we did were profoundly important in us changing direction and building a new culture.

Al: Yeah. Wow, that's a great story. I love both of those. "If I were president, I would..." How empowering that would be. But I also love this, just asking the question, what would it look like if we were a workplace where everybody wanted to come to work every day, and after looking at that from a Biblical perspective, you know, I've looked at your values, and they really are inspiring. What's a favorite before-and-after story about how your culture changed and improved for the better? I bet you've got a couple.

Barry: Yeah. There were many. Prior to our dramatic change in culture, there was a strong sense of individualism amongst our staff team. Each person was kind of guarded. They were looking out for themselves, their own interests. There was like a whole bunch of silos around the building. If an employee saw another staff person struggling, there was no incentive to come alongside them and offer to help them for the sake of the outcome of the ministry.

Once our new culture took root and was established, I saw dramatic changes in behavior. First thing, we came up with this idea—and the idea didn't come from me, came from my staff—of cross training. So each staff at that point knew their job, but they didn't know the other person's job beside them and had no appreciation for struggles they might have. So we began pretty aggressive cross-training program, which had powerful impact on each staff person understanding and appreciating what the other did. And that opened the door for innovation, where when staff were compartmentalized, living in their own little individualistic silo, they never neither voiced or came up with or thought up ideas how the bigger picture could be more efficient. Once we got thinking that way, it seemed like a daily—it was probably not that often—but it was a regular incidence, where new ideas were coming forth. And we were improving efficiencies that were just unheard of, unheard of before that time. That really was a huge benefit and outcome of that change of culture.

Al: Wow. That's an interesting approach to innovation. So, cross training leads to innovation. That's great.

I trust you're enjoying our podcast. We'll be right back after this brief word about a valuable tool that can pinpoint the true, measurable health of your culture.

Male: What if you could get an upper hand on unwanted turnover, relationship conflicts, struggling morale, and unproductive staff, and, at the same time, increase the effectiveness and impact of your organization? You can with the Best Christian Workplaces Employee Engagement Survey. This popular, proven resource pinpoints the true health of your workplace culture and ways to improve it.

You'll get a detailed breakout summary of the eight essential ways your culture and your organization can flourish, all from a principled, practical, faith-based approach that works. Join the more than 800 satisfied organizations, churches, and Christian-owned businesses who have said, "Yes." Sign up online today at bcwinstitute.org. The Best Christian Workplaces Employee Engagement Survey. It's your first important step on the road to a flourishing culture.

Al: All right. Now, let's hear more from today's guest.

Barry, I bet you've got another story to share about how building a healthy culture really caused your people to flourish and for the ministry to flourish.

Barry: The one that comes to mind—it's a little bit embarrassing because we're a Christian ministry, right? We're a mission organization. You would think that prayer would play a pretty big role. But when culture isn't healthy, prayer doesn't always get done. Just like in a family or in any relationship, in a marriage, when people aren't getting along, they don't stop to pray together, because if they

stopped to pray together, they'd probably get along better, right? So we began to have weekly staff prayer meetings. Again, not my idea. This came out of me asking the staff. We started praying every Wednesday morning. We came early. Those that wanted to, before the office opened, and we met in a room, and we prayed. That led into creating actually a prayer room. We built a prayer room in our office, and we actually gave staff permission to leave their desk and go to that prayer room during working hours and pray. This had a profound impact on the way people worked together and how they valued one another's contribution.

In the process of this, we affirmed our commitment to making Christ the center of our ministry. And as you look back at the growth charts, you can actually point to the time, the year, and the month, when we began doing this, because our growth went from being flat to beginning to grow exponentially. And we have never stopped growing from that day on.

Al: So, prayer is the link to growth. That's a great story. But, you know, going back to that point I made earlier about inspirational leadership, and your staff of over 100 people now love the level of fellowship and the depth of spirituality that they experience at work, and they believe the leaders are keeping a focus and putting Christ first in daily decision making—two of our key inspirational leadership questions—so you've talked about prayer, but what are some of the practices that you've put in place to create such a deep spiritual experience for your staff?

Barry: And I might add with the prayer item, it's not just the praying to God—which, I mean, that itself has an amazing impact—but I think equally was staff praying to God for one another. When you pray for the person you work with, it changes your attitude. It's hard to argue with somebody or disagree all day long when you're praying for them and they're praying for you.

Some of the things that we continue to do is we make sure that our mission is front and center. It's clear; it's visible. Our mission is simply releasing children from poverty in Jesus' name. We make sure that's never forgotten or hidden. We have been for all these years conducting weekly staff chapels. Every month—one chapel is what we call a prayer chapel—the entire hour is devoted to prayer, and we're very creative in how we do that with the staff. We also have empowered each work group to have daily times of prayer. So like one of our work groups that answer the phone, they meet before their shift around the photocopier because they have to be close to the phones in case one rings. They meet around the photocopier every morning and they commit the day to prayer. Other groups do it differently.

We provide for each of our mid-level and our senior-level leadership staff the opportunity to have an annual spiritual retreat. We pay for that. They can go away to a hotel or retreat center for a time alone

with God, to be refreshed and refurbished. And that's part of the expectation that we have for them, and we budget for that.

We make prayer a constant and a consistent part of every meeting. It's not unusual. We don't just open in prayer. It's totally not unusual to be in the middle of a discussion and somebody will say, "Can we just stop and pray about that," especially if it feels like we're not coming to an agreement.

We study books together. These are just some of the disciplines that we do.

The thing about creating a spiritual environment, it's a lot like pastoring a church. You can't do the same thing over and over again. People get tired of that. So when it comes to prayer, it's one of the hardest things to maintain in a Christian workplace because people get bored. So you've got to be very creative. We actually have assembled a prayer team—so people from our staff have volunteered—we have a creative prayer team, and it's their job to come up with creative ideas of how we can keep prayer alive without it becoming either boring or ritualistic.

Al: We've got a number of Christian leaders who are struggling and do struggle with this aspect of spiritual leadership and the health of the spiritual aspect of culture in a Christian workplace. And this is really enlightening here. Weekly, and then monthly, staff chapels, daily prayer, annual spiritual retreats, book studies, and a prayer team. Wow, that's fantastic. Something for a lot of organizations to consider as they look at this aspect. You know, at the start of our podcast I said I wanted to ask you a big question, and here it is. You know, over the last 14 years Compassion Canada has surveyed the health of your workplace culture many times. Tell our listeners why as president you believe it's so important to survey your culture with consistent regularity.

Barry: Well, I believe that culture, like a healthy marriage or any kind of a healthy relationship, requires constant attention. The moment you assume that it's self-propelled, you make a fatal error. And as a pastor I see this in couples, married couples, in my church. They spend time, deliberate time together at the early part of the relationship, but then over time, they put it on autopilot, and before you know it, things start to erode. So I want to make sure that I don't allow culture to become on autopilot.

I've discovered also that the enemy works overtime to erode culture and Christian organizations. He knows, he knows, that if he can negatively impact culture, he can also negatively impact the outcome and the impact of the ministry. So we never take our eyes off the road, so to speak. So culture is like an automobile you're driving; you don't take your eyes off the road because you will hit a tree. So we keep culture front and center.

And it begins at the highest board level and cascades down to the executive level and then to management and ultimately to the entire staff. There's never, never a leadership meeting—and we have monthly leadership meetings with our exec team and our mid-level managers—there's never a meeting that we don't talk about culture. Maybe it's just the question, how's culture going? How's it going in your team? How's it going corporate wide? So we keep it front and center. We make sure that it's cascading down. We're making sure that our managers, for example, in our one-on-one sessions, in our evaluation sessions, that they're talking about these things.

I've learned that unless you inspect, you often don't get or achieve what you want. So that's why I believe it's important to regularly survey our culture to ensure that we are periodically taking the temperature, so to speak, and getting an accurate reading. We've found—we've looked at many different tools for this—and we've found the Best Christian Workplace is the best tool for us to take this temperature, to do that assessment.

Al: You know, in your mind, Barry, what's the benefit or advantage for an organization like yours to survey your culture regularly versus just once?

Barry: Well, like I said before, you can't put culture on autopilot. You get what you measure, and you measure what's important. For us, culture is extremely important, so we measure it regularly, because you have people changing. You have staff leaving, you have new staff coming in. For us, we're growing, so we're always adding staff. Circumstances change. All of these can impact our culture, so if you only survey once, you'll not have an accurate understanding of the current culture, and that could be very dangerous.

Al: Yeah. I like your previous comment, the enemy really works to negatively impact culture and to hurt the relationships amongst the staff and that that ultimately then impacts outcomes of the ministry, doesn't it?

Barry: Absolutely. So true.

Al: You know, at the Best Christian Workplace Institute, we believe a healthy culture is a true and worthy end in itself, and we also believe that a healthy to flourishing culture leads to organizational growth and even greater ministry impact. How has growing your culture influenced your organizational impact and outcomes? What's the big connection that you see between culture and outcomes?

Barry: I mean, you're spot on. A healthy culture is a true and worthy end in itself, making the workplace a desirable place to be and a good experience for all. But in addition, I've found that culture

has a huge impact on productivity. So to restate it, a healthy culture makes it a good place to work, a fun place to work, but a healthy culture, from my perspective as leader, has a profound impact on productivity. We can actually point to our growth charts and the times when we have improved culture and see the direct impact on growth. If you were in a for-profit organization, you would say the shareholders really benefited when we did that. In our ministry's situation, the impact of our mission, of our ministry, really, really improved and increased when we improve our culture. So passionate and engaged staff produce far more than apathetic or disgruntled staff.

Al: Oh, yeah.

Barry: When the culture is healthy, when the staff are healthy, the ministry is healthy. When the ministry is healthy, the impact and the outcomes are far greater.

Al: You know, Barry, you recently announced your retirement as president and CEO, and first of all, congratulations on a quarter of a century of leadership and —

Barry: Thank you.

Al: —all that Compassion Canada has achieved over these years for the sake of God's kingdom here on Earth. Here you are, a year away from stepping down after 25 years, and your board has selected your successor. Say a little bit about how you've navigated this succession process. What can you share with other leaders who are about to go through this process?

Barry: I'm happy, first of all, to say that my retirement was my idea. I say that tongue in cheek because I have lots of friends who are in CEO or leadership roles who have been asked to retire. So one of the things I did nine years ago now, in 2009, I presented our board with a fairly lengthy paper outlining my plans over the next 10 years, and I announced to my board then that October 2019—that would have been 10 years from that point—I would be stepping out of my role as CEO. I wasn't prepared for their response. They actually surprised me because they kind of chuckled and laughed, going, like, "Wow, that's a long ways away. Why are we talking about that now?" But fast forward, and my board pretty regularly thanks me for initiating that conversation. I say that not to boast. I say that because I believe a really good leader will initiate his or her own transition. They won't wait for somebody to do it. That's when it can hurt. I felt in my heart that I needed to put the stake in the ground, and I needed to get the board thinking about the next generation of leadership here at Compassion Canada. That paper that I presented became the roadmap for the boards, well, pretty well all their initiatives over the next 10 years, and they've done a superb job of managing the succession process. I am so proud of them.

One of the key factors that I presented to the board is that I believe succession in a Christian ministry ought to be an act of worship. I've seen far too often when leaders hang onto power too long, and they jeopardize the future or the impact of the ministry that they lead. I didn't want to be that kind of leader, Al. I wanted to be a leader that prepares the way for my successor, and I wanted to do that in a way that honored God. It was actually my act of worship.

But I discovered that in order for succession to be an act of worship, the current leader must understand the concept of stewardship. As leaders of Christian ministries, as pastors of churches, as CEOs of Christian NGOs or organizations, we must understand that we do not own these ministries. We are caretakers, we are stewards of what belongs to God. This ministry of Compassion Canada is not mine. I spent 35 years here, but it's not mine. It belongs to God. If I believe this sincerely, I will put in place every possible structure to ensure its success well beyond my time.

So fast forward to today. My successor, as you said, has been announced, and I couldn't be happier with how my succession process is going. I truly believe with all my heart God is being honored in our process, and I'm also very, very excited, believing that God will bless this ministry as a result of our honoring him. That's the journey I'm in now. I've got one year left. We're in the transition period. And I'm fully planning to end well.

Al: Wow. I don't know that I've ever heard of an idea that succession is an act of worship for Christian organizations. That's something to really reflect on, and I know all of us will be. You know, and Barry, you've written a book, *Strategic Compassion—Reuniting the Good News and Good Works in the Fight Against Poverty*. Give us a little bit of an idea, what's the message that you want to leave your readers when they buy your book and read it?

Barry: Well, yeah, it's interesting because over these 35 years, I've traveled and worked in over 60 countries. I've seen firsthand really, really good mission work, and I've seen really, really lousy mission work. I've come to the conclusion that way too much of our church-mission strategies have been helter-skelter or hit and miss. They're all over the map. We haven't sat down and put together a plan or a strategy. And so my call in the book is for leaders, pastors, to really think through their church's mission strategy, because if you just use the old shotgun approach and hope you hit something here and there with a pellet, you're not going to be very effective at the end of whatever timeframe you look at, then you will have expended a lot of money, a lot of energy, people working and traveling.

The other part of that strategic approach is for us as individual Christians, the answer to poverty is heavily, heavily weighted toward Jesus Christ. If Jesus isn't—if he isn't the main focus of our poverty-alleviation efforts, we're just doing good deeds, we're just putting Band-Aids on symptoms. And I have

found that way too many Christians are funding poverty-alleviation methods that have no Christ component in them at all. Yeah, they're providing food, they're providing health care, education—all good things, all necessary things. But at the end of the day, they're just making life better for people; they're not preparing people for eternity. So, my call in the book is to do both, both the feeding of the poor and the presenting of the Gospel.

Al: Amen, Barry. That's sounds like a fantastic book, and I look forward to reading it. When will it be available?

Barry: It just went public a few days ago. It's on Amazon. And we've also—I have a website: strategiccompassion.ca, and people—

Al: Yeah.

Barry: — can get it there. And also you can subscribe to my monthly email and video train teaching. So, yeah, we're looking forward to God taking that tool and equipping Christians around the world to do more effective mission work.

Al: Yeah. Wow, well, Barry, considering your immense experience in ongoing transformation and greater health of your culture there at Compassion Canada, give us one final thought that you'd like to leave with ministry leaders who are listening right now.

Barry: I'll go back to that concept I just presented. I'd like to encourage Christian leaders everywhere to serve as stewards of the ministry God's entrusted to them, which includes the human resources God has given them. When we think of stewardship, we often think of financial stewardship. But I would really, really encourage leaders to love, care for the people around them, the staff and the volunteers. As I said earlier, I would give leaders the same advice my mentor gave me: love the people you lead. And my mentor gave me one other piece of advice that I haven't told you yet. He said, almost in the same breath, he said, "Love the people you lead,"—then, he took a very poignant pause and said—"and leave while they still love you."

Al: There you go. Okay, that's great advice and something that doesn't happen every day, that's for sure. Well, Barry Slauenwhite, president and CEO of Compassion Canada, thank you for sharing your wisdom, insights, and stories, and thank you for extending your ministry to the leaders who've been listening and benefitting from all you've shared with us today.

And I want to thank you, our listeners, for joining on the Flourishing Culture Podcast and for investing this time in your workplace culture today. If there's a specific insight, story, or action step that you've

learned from Barry or that you've enjoyed in these past few minutes, then, please share it with others so that they can benefit as well, and please, review the show wherever you listen to podcasts.

This program is copyrighted by the Best Christian Workplaces Institute. All rights reserved. Our writer is Mark Cutshall, our social media assistant is Solape Osoba, and this is Al Lopus, reminding you that a healthy culture drives greater impact and growth for your organization. And I'll see you again soon on the Flourishing Culture Podcast.

Male: For a free transcript of today's podcast, visit blog.bcwinstitute.org. Join us next week for another one-to-one interview with a respected Christian leader. The Flourishing Culture Podcast with Al Lopus is a presentation of the Best Christian Workplaces Institute, helping Christian organizations set the standard as the best, most effective places to work in the world.