

their dislike? Plumbing, treetopping, or car sales are great careers if you love them. But if you are trapped into them only because they provide a good living for your family, they can be a continual trial and testify to a man's sacrificial dedication. It's the old George Bailey story all over again, which makes for a great movie but a hard twenty to thirty years to live out.

Yes, families and careers are often at odds. But no one knows this better than the men who carry the weight of caring for and supporting single-wage-earning families.

Maynard Nordmoe
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Elizabeth Corey is astute in recognizing that the problem with the search to balance career and motherhood is not one that will find its answer in sociopolitical reform. I wonder, however, whether she is right that career and motherhood have "fundamentally different existential orientations": work toward "self-culture" and motherhood toward "self-giving."

In the Fall of Man, our loves became disordered and, as a result, our approach to work *and* to family changed. Jonathan Edwards once wrote, "Before, and as God created [man], he was exalted, and noble, and generous; but now he is debased, and ignoble, and selfish." In other words, self-giving is God's original design for both work and family, and self-culture is a distortion of that design.

Corey does a great job in describing the self-giving nature of motherhood as God originally intended it. Yet she barely touches on the distorting effects of self-culture on motherhood. What about mothers who are hyper-present or set inflexibly high standards? Are they always driven by self-giving love or is their interest at times distorted by self-culture?

In the context of career, she does the opposite: She misses the opportunity to describe self-giving as God's original intention for work and instead suggests that self-culture is fundamental to it. Yet there are companies that promote humanized workplaces, where managers value

excellence and leisure, where investment decisions are made to benefit the common good. On what virtue are such workplaces built if not self-giving love?

The real tension, therefore, is not between work and career but between God's original intention of self-giving and the Fall's distorting effect of self-culture. Even here, however, there is hope.

Edwards continued: "But God, in mercy to miserable man, entered on the work of redemption, and by the glorious gospel of his Son, began the work of bringing the soul of man out of its confinement and contractedness, and back again to those noble and divine principles. . . . And it is through the cross of Christ that he is doing this; for our union with Christ gives us participation in his nature."

May we live, therefore, coherent and wholehearted lives at home and at work as we pursue the restoration of self-giving in both career and family.

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