

Occupational Health & Safety / A time to die

Tammy: My neighbor was doing some welding at the bike repair shop. It was hot so he was only wearing his trousers...and sandals. Normally he would wear a shirt when he's welding as the boss wants his workers to be protected. The boss was away so they had relaxed a bit. After a while his skin started to feel very hot like it was sunburned. That night, big blisters came up on his face and neck...and on his arms and chest...."

Carol: Hello, I'm Carol and I want to welcome you to Women of Hope. Tammy is telling us about her neighbor and I really want to know what happened. Tammy, how is your neighbor?

Tammy: Well, I can best explain it by asking if you have ever seen anyone welding two pieces of metal together. That's what my neighbor was doing. The lights and the flashes from the welding can actually burn a person's skin, even if it's brown like my neighbor's.

Carol: I remember walking by a construction site once and seeing a shower of sparks flying all around a man who was welding. What caught my eye was how pretty they looked – but when I was closer, I could see the work that was being done and how hot that work was. And I remember wondering about what those little sparks were doing to him.

Tammy: Well, Carol, you are right. The flashes and sparks shower all around someone who is welding. I guess my neighbor forgot how hot those pretty sparks can be because that night his skin was all blistered and burnt. And it became worse. He could not see very well that night as he still had lights in his eyes from the welding flashes. It really frightened his wife.

When he woke up the next morning he could not open his eyes. They felt like they had sand in them and he couldn't see anything.

Carol: Oh dear, I can almost imagine what happens next. His wife must have been very worried. What did she do?

Tammy: Well, she was worried and she began thinking the worst and imagined she would have to start taking care of her husband and the children and possibly find work as well, just to provide food for the family. It was too much for her. She was worried that her husband would be blind forever.

She asked a friend to watch her children and took her husband to the doctor.

Carol: I am really glad she got some help and was willing to go to a doctor. Your eyes are very sensitive and precious.

Tammy: Well, The doctor gave them some cream for his skin and drops to put into his eyes. The doctor told him to keep his eyes covered for 3 whole days.

Carol: OK, Let's stop for a minute and think about this...

Skin can look very bad when it's burned but it gradually repairs itself and settles down. But your eyes? They don't necessarily heal so well. Our eyes are so important for everything we do in life, aren't they? It would be very hard to be blind. In many countries it would probably mean you would not be able to get another job.

Tammy: My neighbor had his eyes covered for 3 days, and they still felt like they had sand in them. But slowly they began to feel better. His sight came back again and he was able to go back to work. But he could not see as well as before. He had to squint, and for a long time his eyes looked red and irritated.

The doctor asked them to come back in a couple of weeks to check his eyes. And the doctor told him he was very lucky as he could have been blind, or had very poor sight forever.

Carol: This is all fitting together now. Remember I told you I saw a construction site where a man was welding? He had on a mask. It was metal and it hung over his face and there was a little window where he could see what he was doing but the sparks could not get into his eyes or on his skin.

We've just talked about Tammy's neighbor and the injuries he received by not protecting himself while he was working.

Tammy: We learned that the flashes from welding can burn your skin, on your body and your face, but worse than that, without wearing anything to protect your eyes they can be badly damaged. My neighbor was lucky. He did not make him blind. He got protective goggles, and after that he always wore them. He learned to always wear proper clothing, too.

In some countries there are laws that protect workers who do jobs that are dangerous like working with sparks or electricity. Do you have laws like that in your country?

Carol: You know Tammy, I was just thinking that this had a lesson for all of us. Now, we might not do welding, or some dangerous job, but as women we work every day at many things and we have a lot of people who depend upon us. We have to be careful; we have to take care of ourselves so that we too won't become injured and unable to work.

Tammy: You're right, Carol. Right away I could think of several things we do as women where we need to be sure and protect ourselves.

Carol: Like, working in the garden, we need to wear gloves to protect our hands and clothing over our skin if we will be in the hot sun. And in the kitchen, working with sharp knives and hot liquids or things we are cooking on the stove or in the oven. You could easily be burned or injured. Make sure that you go nice a slow and be careful. Wear something on your hands before you handle something hot. And if you are working with cleaning liquids in your home; be careful as a splash of cleaner in your eyes could cost you your site. And this is just the beginning. We need to think of our family members as well.

Tammy: Well, my neighbor's wife did that for her husband. She surprised him with special shoes and boots she found in the local market. And she encouraged her husband to always protect his face and skin when he was welding.

You know, Carol, sometimes we are so busy thinking about what we want to get done that we don't think about the work and how it might harm us in some way – like our skin or our eyes or our feet.

Carol: I agree, Tammy. We need to think about what we will be doing before we do it. If there is even a small chance we could be injured, we need to wear goggles to protect our eyes, gloves to care for our hands, or special shoes to make sure our feet do not get injured. People depend upon us and love us, and we need to take care of ourselves.

We all love our family and friends so we need to help each other. Gently remind your husband to wear the right clothing if his job might cause him harm. Tell him you love him and don't want to see him injured.

Tammy: And like my neighbor, check your local market for gloves, special shoes or clothing that can be used to protect you or your loved ones as you work.

Do you need good shoes to protect your feet while you work? How about good gloves to protect your hands?

Carol: It is always good to know how to protect our body, but I was just wondering about how we can protect our soul or our spirit? That's an important question, so you know we have a friend with us today. Ros is here to share some ideas with us today.

Tammy: Ros, do you have a story for us today?

Ros: I do. We all love stories don't we? I heard a story about a man who *loved* watches. Do you have a watch to tell you what the time is? Maybe you have a clock to tell the time. Or maybe the time is not so important to you.

But this man loved to know the time and he loved watches of all kinds. He collected watches. His favorite was an old watch that had belonged to his father. He took great care of it.

He also loved clocks, so he collected clocks as well. He had plain ones and very fancy ones. He had a clock in every room and he loved to look at his clocks and his watches and know what the time was. These watches and clocks could tell him how much time he had before he needed to go somewhere or do something.

I wonder how important 'time' is in your life. Do you need to know the time of day so that you can make sure you're not late for whatever you have to do? Or perhaps you just get on with what you have to do for the day, and the time it takes doesn't really matter.

Carol: Our friend Ros is telling us the story of a man who loved watches and clocks – so much so – that he had collected a lot of them.

Ros: He did. For this man, the time was important. But there was one thing his watches and clocks could not tell him...*how much time he had left to live.*

Do you ever think about this? How much time you have left to live?

We're not going to live forever are we? Some of us will die of old age - others will die from sickness or health problems at a young age. Boys will die in war and women will die in childbirth. It's a fact at some point in time we will all die. In God's word, the Bible it says: 'For everything there is a season. A time for every activity under heaven. A time to be born and a time to die. (Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 NLT) And God tells us to use our time well. He says: 'Whatever you do, do it well. For when you go to the grave there will be no work or planning or knowledge or wisdom.' (Ecc 9:10 NLT)

Are you ready to die? Am I ready to die?

You might think *that's a strange question! How can anyone be ready to die?* Some people think that when you die, that's the end. Everything just stops, so they don't bother to think about it. They don't believe in life after we die. Others think that when our physical body dies we come back and live life as another creature or a different person. But many people I've talked to *hope* that when the time comes they *might* have been good enough to get to heaven. It will depend on how good or bad they've been here on earth. What do you think? How do you feel about death? ...and life after death?

The Bible has a lot to say about death. There are some very special words in John chapter 3 v16. Jesus had been talking with a religious teacher about life after death and he said this: "This is how God loved the world: he gave his one and only son, so that everyone who believes in him will have

eternal life.” God’s word tells us there is only one way to have eternal life - by believing in Jesus Christ. God’s word also says, ‘Everyone has an appointment to die once, and after that (he or she will) be judged by God.’ (Hebrews 9:27 GNT) So God’s word tells us two things - we only die once and God will judge us.

So what does it mean to be ‘judged by God’?

Tammy: We’ve heard the story about the man who loved watches and clocks – he loved to know the time, but one thing his watches and clocks could not tell him was how much time he had left to live.

Ros has told us that God’s word says we all have an appointment to die – once – and after that to be judged by God.

Ros: That’s right. So what does this mean and just what is God going to judge us for?

We’ve talked often on Women of Hope about God’s servant, Paul, who travelled about and told people about God. One day he was explaining to Jesus’ followers about how we can be made right with God. Firstly he said, “It has nothing to do with the law...” (Romans 3: 21b) And he went on to say, “God puts people right through their faith in Jesus Christ...everyone has sinned and is far away from God.”

So after we die what will God judge us for? Our sin – those things we have said and done that separate us from God. But the good news is that God knew we could never be perfect, so he did what only a loving Father would do for his children – he made a way for us to come back to him. He gave his only son, Jesus Christ to die in our place – to be judged in our place. When Jesus died on the cross he took on himself *all* our sin. He died so we would not have to be judged for our sin when we die.

And later in God’s word, while Paul was still talking to Jesus’ followers he said, “So now there is no condemnation – or judgment – for those who belong to Christ Jesus.” (Romans 8:1 NLT) And he went on to say to those who believed in Jesus, “And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit of God gives you life because you have been made right with God.

Wow – isn’t that good news!

Carol: In many ways – it is the BEST news. Friend, God has your time in his hands – he knows how much time you have left. And if you believe in Jesus and what he has done for you – you will not be judged by what you have done, but God will accept you *just as you are*. He will see you as perfect through his son, Jesus.

Tammy: Three days after Jesus died he came back to life. One day, soon afterwards, he came to say goodbye to his disciples. He said to them, “Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my father’s home. I am going to prepare a place for you, so that you will always be with me where I am. When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am.” (John 14:1-3)

Carol: What a promise! What a hope! At this very moment Jesus is preparing a special, wonderful home for us in heaven; A home where we will be with our father, God forever.

Ros: Do you wonder about heaven? Do you wonder what it will be like? I do.

It will surely be a wonderful place. Maybe another day soon we can talk about heaven. We can look at God’s word and see what he says about heaven and eternal life.

But for now, we don’t know how much time we have. So let’s do what we heard from God’s word earlier – use our time well...remember? It says, ‘Whatever you do, do it well. For when you go to the grave there will be no work or planning or knowledge or wisdom.’ And the most important part of living well is trusting that Jesus has a plan for us. He can give us hope and a future with him. Jesus said to his followers that day when he said goodbye to them on earth, “I am the way, the truth and the life. No-one can come to the Father except through me.”

Let’s say *thank you* to God for his son, Jesus. Would you like to join me?

Father God, Thank you for providing the way...not only for hope in this life, but for a future with you, in heaven. Thank you for your son, Jesus Christ – for his life on earth and for his death to save us from being judged after we die.

Please help us to trust you and to live well each day. In Jesus’ name, Amen

Carol: Thank you for spending time with us today and for having us in your home, or wherever you are right now. We love being with you and we look forward to our next time together.

Tammy: As always, we would love to hear from you. You can write to us in care of this station or at TWRWomen of Hope. The address: TWRWomenofHope@twr.org. That’s TWRWomenofHope@twr.org.

Carol: If you have missed a program or would even like to hear one again you can do that on our website TWRWomenofHope.org that’s TWRWomenofHope.org. or by visiting us on our Facebook page.

Tammy: Remember, take care of yourself. We do hope you will be with us again. God bless, and have a great week.

