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Covenant Theological Seminary

# **Discipling Christian C-Level Business Executives**

A Dissertation Submitted to  
the Faculty of Covenant Theological Seminary  
in Candidacy for the Degree of  
Doctor of Ministry

By

**Thomas Patrick Lutz**

Saint Louis, Missouri

2017



Covenant Theological Seminary

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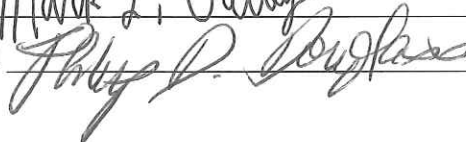
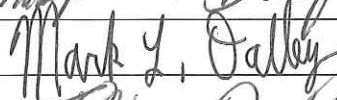
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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to explore how Christian C-level executives experience an increased motivation to pursue spiritual maturity as a result of gaining clarity about their kingdom purpose. The study explores whether these individuals feel more effective and see more impact for the kingdom in their marketplace environment having experienced the discovery of their kingdom purpose. The research questions explore the delta of spiritual fervor before and after participation in this group. To achieve this goal, the following questions guided the research:

1. How do Christian C-level executives describe their motivation to pursue spiritual maturity prior to gaining clarity about their kingdom purpose?
2. How do Christian C-level executives relate the experience of gaining clarity about their kingdom purpose to their increased motivation to pursue spiritual maturity?
3. To what do Christian C-level executives attribute their increased desire for and willingness to expend significant effort to develop spiritual maturity?
4. How do Christian C-level executives expect this increased motivation to impact their future motivation to pursue spiritual maturity?

Three areas of literature were reviewed. The first overviews the extensive faith and work literature in order to understand the research's theological context. Second, leading books on discipling Christian leaders were reviewed in hopes of understanding a baseline for discipling leaders. Finally, business literature related to the importance of leading from a clear purpose and its relationship to job satisfaction, retention, and performance were pursued because there appears to be a relationship between a believer's clarity regarding kingdom purpose and desire to grow in their faith.

This study was designed using applied qualitative research, specifically a case study. Six men participated in a discipleship group for nine months, and these became the participants in the study. The researcher gathered evidence of this spiritual impact from three sources: First, the researcher's own observation that something special had occurred as these men told of their increased desire for spiritual maturity. Second, independent reports from pastors and members provided evidence. Third, the participants' observations, via self-report to the researcher, that they have studied and can articulate kingdom purpose as it relates to their own life and have had a concurrent significant increase in their desire for spiritual maturity.

All participants identified significant change in one of five areas: their understanding of kingdom purpose, their understanding of God's view of their work, their understanding of their view of their work, their understanding of spirituality, and finally their engagement with their life plan.

## **Table of Contents**

<b>Acknowledgements</b>	viii
<b>Chapter One: Introduction</b>	1
Purpose Statement	2
Research Questions	4
Significance of the Study	4
Definition of Terms	5
<b>Chapter Two: Literature Review</b>	9
Faith and Work Literature	9
Discipling Leaders	28
Clarity of Purpose and Job Satisfaction, Retention, and Performance	45
<b>Chapter Three: Methodology</b>	56
Design of the Study	56
Participant Sample Selection	58
Data Collection	58
Data Analysis	62
Researcher Position	63
Study Limitations	64
<b>Chapter Four: Data Report and Analysis</b>	65
Formation of the Group	66
Changes Experience by the Participants	68

Salient Characteristics of the Particular Shared Experience	80
Their Anticipated Future Implications of Change	86
<b>Chapter Five: Discussion and Recommendations</b>	89
Discussion of Findings	89
Recommendations for Further Research	96
Conclusion	100
<b>Appendices</b>	
APPENDIX A: Interview Guide	103
<b>Bibliography</b>	105



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I would also like to thank the five men who graciously gave me the opportunity to lead them in the discovery of their kingdom purpose and to interview them for this study.

Finally, I would like to thank the men and women of Convene Atlanta who have given me the great privilege of walking with them as they live “lives worthy of the calling they have received.”

Scripture taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION.  
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## Chapter One

### Introduction

Even a cursory review of recent faith and work literature makes it clear that much of the church in the West has a flawed theology of work. Evidence presented to reinforce this conclusion ranges from the almost total absence of a theology of work<sup>1</sup> in theological literature,<sup>2</sup> hymnody,<sup>3</sup> and presentations from pulpits<sup>4</sup> to the charge of an unwitting sacred/secular<sup>5</sup> dichotomy taught by many church leaders.

This dichotomy takes many forms. Dorothy Sayers, author, editor, teacher, and contemporary of C. S. Lewis asks, “How can one remain interested in a religion that seems to have no concern with nine-tenths of his life?”<sup>6</sup> Hugh Welchel, former president of Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando and Director of the Institute for Faith Work and Economics in Washington, DC, suggests that the subliminal message is that work is only useful for developing virtue and funding the kingdom and that the work itself is not important.<sup>7</sup> Dr. Amy Sherman, senior fellow at the Sagamore Institute,

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<sup>1</sup> Ben Witherington, *Work: A Kingdom Perspective on Labor* (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2011), 67.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., viii.

<sup>3</sup> Amy Sherman, *Kingdom Calling: Vocational Stewardship for the Common Good* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2011), 67.

<sup>4</sup> Doug Sherman, *Your Work Matters to God* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1987), 16.

<sup>5</sup> Hugh Welchel, *How Then Should We Work? Rediscovering the Biblical Doctrine of Work* (Bloomington, IN: West Bow Press, 2012), 2.

<sup>6</sup> Dorothy L. Sayers, *Creed or Chaos?* (Manchester, NH: Sophia Institute Press, 1995), 106.

<sup>7</sup> Welchel, *How Then Should We Work?* xxii.

Director of its Center on Faith and Communities and senior fellow with International Justice Mission suggests that an “individualistic gospel limited to ‘having a personal relationship with Jesus’<sup>8</sup> is at the core of the problem. Darrell Cosden, Lecturer in Theology and Ethics at International Christian College, Glasgow, sees the flaw in the “idea that somehow some of us have a ‘higher calling’ ... Those with this special call work on the things that really matter. Others do not.”<sup>9</sup> Andy Crouch, Executive Editor of *Christianity Today* summarizes, “The problem is an ineffectual, ‘disembodied’ Christianity, one that makes little difference in culture or even, all too often, in the life choices of its adherents.”<sup>10</sup>

### **Purpose Statement**

In recent years, the research and subsequent literature on discipleship has exploded. The literature review will show that the discipleship methodologies employed have contributed to significant spiritual growth in members of churches that have developed a discipleship culture. These individuals have had significant impact in furthering the traditional church ministries of evangelism, education, and community service. At the same time, many would agree that these well-discipled believers are having little impact in the marketplace. Dr. Timothy Keller, prolific writer and pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City, observes, “Many churches do not know how to disciple members without essentially pulling them out of their vocations and inviting them to become heavily involved in church activities. In other words,

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<sup>8</sup> Sherman, *Kingdom Calling*, 64.

<sup>9</sup> Darrell Cosden, *The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2006), 18.

<sup>10</sup> Andy Crouch, *Culture Making: Recovering Our Creative Calling* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2008), 63.

Christian discipleship is interpreted as consisting largely of activities done in the evening or on the weekend.”<sup>11</sup>

In discussing Christian executives, author and researcher Kent Humphreys refers to them as “horses” in his book, *Shepherding Horses*.<sup>12</sup> Humphreys puts a spotlight on the importance of discipling Christian CEOs in their kingdom calling, saying:

After reading this far, you may be asking yourself why it is important...to understand or work with such a small group within your church. There are at least two reasons. First, they simply cannot be trained using methods that work for most, so methods must be used that work for them. Secondly, these individuals have key positions of influence and leadership in the community, in their marketplaces, and in their churches. Your mission is to train them to use that influence for Godly purposes, to reach the people in such places for the Lord. The horses need to realize that their positions are actually places of ministry, not just platforms for their own gain, and you are the one to guide them.<sup>13</sup>

Humphrey’s asserts that “methods must be used that work for them [Christian CEOs].”<sup>14</sup> Unfortunately, little literature or research has explored exactly what constitutes methods that work for discipling Christian CEOs. This study addresses that need and analyzes successful methods for discipling Christian business executives.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore how Christian C-level executives experience an increased motivation to pursue spiritual maturity as a result of gaining clarity about their kingdom purpose. The study explores whether these individuals feel more effective and see more impact for the kingdom in their marketplace

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<sup>11</sup> Timohy J. Keller, *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 176.

<sup>12</sup> Kent Humphreys, *Shepherding Horses: Understanding God’s Plan for Transforming Leaders* (Whitsett, NC: DiaKonia Publishing, 2008).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

environment having experienced the discovery of their kingdom purpose. The research questions explore the delta of spiritual fervor before and after participation in this group.

### **Research Questions**

To achieve this goal, the following questions guided the research:

1. How do Christian C-level executives describe their motivation to pursue spiritual maturity prior to gaining clarity about their kingdom purpose?
2. How do Christian C-level executives relate the experience of gaining clarity about their kingdom purpose to their increased motivation to pursue spiritual maturity?
3. To what do Christian C-level executives attribute their increased desire for and willingness to expend significant effort to develop spiritual maturity?
4. How do Christian C-level executives expect this increased motivation to impact their future motivation to pursue spiritual maturity?

### **Significance of this Study**

Dorothy Sayers describes the cultural impact of a flawed theology of work:

In nothing has the Church so lost her hold on reality as in her failure to understand and respect the secular vocation. She has allowed work and religion to become separate departments, and is astonished to find that, as a result, the secular work of the world is turned to purely selfish and destructive ends, that the greater part of the world's intelligent workers have become irreligious, or at least, uninterested in religion. But is it astonishing? How can one remain interested in a religion that seems to have no concern with nine-tenths of his life? The churches approach to an intelligent carpenter is usually confined to exhorting him not to be drunk and disorderly in his leisure hours, and to come to church on Sundays. What the church should be telling him is this: that the very first demand his religion makes upon him is that he should make good tables.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Sayers, *Creed or Chaos?* 106.

These comments are found in a book entitled *Creed or Chaos* in which Sayers set out to define, for post-World War II Europe, the seven dogmas the church needed to reaffirm if it was to fend off the chaos enveloping Europe. One of the seven dogmas was a robust theology of work. Sadly, her prediction has proven valid, as can be seen in the dramatic decline of Christianity throughout Europe.

Many other authors point out how this flawed theology of work has negative consequences in the church's life. These consequences can be lumped under the idea that the average believer functions as a practical atheist<sup>16</sup> in the workplace resulting in a gospel message that the wider culture sees as irrelevant at best or harmful at worst. The anemic theology of work significantly handicaps the church's effort to influence culture.

Without correction, the church is on track to create well-disciplined church members who are well tuned to perform the traditional church ministries (evangelism, education, and community service) but utterly incapable of understanding how to follow Christ in their marketplace roles. Lacking the ability to integrate their own faith into their professional calling, they are hard pressed to explain why their co-workers should entertain the truths of Christianity. This study explores what mix of content, context, and methodologies create disciples with a robust understanding of how God has called, gifted, and positioned them for kingdom impact in the workforce.

### **Definition of Terms**

In order to enhance the reader's understanding of this research, the following terms are defined.

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<sup>16</sup> Doug Spada and Dave Scott, *Monday Morning Atheist: Why We Switch God Off at Work and How to Fix It* (n.p.: WorkLife Press, 2012).

Christian C-level executives – This term usually refers to the individual who is the head of a department in a business. The C stands for Chief as in Chief Operating Officer (COO), Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Chief Technology Officer (CTO), Chief Executive Officer (CEO), et cetera.

Dashboard – During the exercise of life planning, participants created an operational plan for each key role by identifying their activities. The participants then quantified key activities and entered them into a spreadsheet, called the dashboard. The dashboard has columns for targets and actual. Effective use of a dashboard requires a brief (15-20 minute) session each week where the participants reported on the activity of the previous week and scheduled the priority activities for the upcoming week.

Kingdom Purpose Workshop – A three-hour workshop designed to help C-level Christian business executives begin to explore the concept of kingdom purpose as it relates to their businesses. It is an interactive workshop that presents six biblical principles with an opportunity to interact with several questions to define one's kingdom purpose (See Appendix B) The six principles are:

1. Our work is dignified and given eternal value by God's calling.
2. Work is where God's calling meets our design.
3. God's calling is seamless through church, work, and play.
4. Productivity is important since our work has unique eternal value.
5. Faithful work brings blessing which is given to serve God's calling not our pleasure.
6. Since our work is where we live out God's calling it is important that we not compromise.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Lutz, "Discovering Your Kingdom Purpose," (lecture, Perimeter Church, Duluth, GA, 2003).

This workshop, together with the questions in the workbook, was conducted over an eight-week period at the beginning of the discipleship group experience discussed in the interviews.

Kingdom purpose – As taught in the Kingdom Purpose Workshop, God gifts, calls, and positions his image-bearers to fulfill a unique kingdom purpose. The workshop identifies six categories of kingdom calling:

The kingdom purpose of overcoming the curse.

The kingdom purpose of causing God's world to flourish.

The kingdom purpose of extracting potential from creation.

The kingdom purpose of making Jesus attractive.

The kingdom purpose of living “on earth as it is in heaven” in light of and shaping the things to come in eternity.

The kingdom purpose of culture making.

While an individual's calling may contain aspects of some or all of these, one will be the dominant calling.

Life Planning – An understanding and articulation of why God had placed an individual on the earth. A process, effectively described in Pope's *In Pursuit of a Life Plan*.<sup>18</sup> In this research, the participants were asked to define several high level statements including life purpose statement, life vision statement, core values, focus verses and a life quote. The exercise continued by creating an operational plan to apply these broad statements to each role the individual is called to play.

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<sup>18</sup> Randy Pope, *The Journey: In Pursuit of a Life Plan* (Duluth, GA: Perimeter Church, 2000).



Spiritual maturity – Believers who are equipped who exercise consistent spiritual disciplines and who articulate and apply their spiritual experience where they live, work and play.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

The purpose of this study is to explore how Christian C-level executives experienced an increased desire for spiritual maturity as a result of having gained clarity about their kingdom purpose. Participants were selected with the criteria that they could confirm that they had studied and could articulate their kingdom purpose as it relates to their own life and have had a concurrent significant increase in their desire for spiritual maturity.

Early indications are that these individuals feel that their efforts are, and will continue to be, far more beneficial for the kingdom in their marketplace environment having experienced the discovery of their kingdom purpose.

Three areas of literature were reviewed. The first overviews the extensive faith and work literature in order to understand the research's theological context. Second, leading books on discipling Christian leaders were reviewed in hopes of understanding a baseline for discipling leaders. Finally, business literature related to the importance of leading from a clear purpose and its relationship to job satisfaction, retention, and performance were pursued because there appears to be a relationship between a believer's clarity regarding kingdom purpose and desire to grow in their faith.

#### **Faith and Work Literature**

The literature in this area is extensive. Thus it was important to select representative literature. The process followed included the selection of an original thirteen books with the following criteria

1. Two were previously read by the reviewer.
2. Five were recommended by a trusted pastor on staff at a large church charged with managing that church's faith and work discussions.
3. Three were selected for diversity: two Catholic theologians and one Arminian.
4. Three recommended by others.

In the process of the faith and work literature review, as described above, nine themes were isolated one of which contains six "sub-themes." In order to be considered a theme of the literature, it had to appear in at least half of the sources. The themes have been arranged in a logical order wherein each theme adds to the foundation built in the previous theme. This section explores the following nine themes: flawed theology of work, historical influences, negative consequences in the life of the church, benefits that derive from a good theology of work, mistakes that should be avoided, uber theme of kingdom purpose, how Christians should work, including thinking about work differently, church leadership's role in discipling those in the marketplace. The uber theme of kingdom purpose will explore subthemes, including overcoming the curse, causing God's world to flourish, extracting potential from creation, making Jesus attractive, living "on earth as it is in heaven," and culture making.

### *Flawed Theology of Work*

The first theme was universal in the literature: the church has a flawed theology of work. Evidence presented to reinforce this conclusion ranged from the almost total absence of a theology of work<sup>19</sup> in the theological literature,<sup>20</sup> church hymnody,<sup>21</sup> and

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<sup>19</sup> Witherington, *Work*, 67.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, viii.

presentations in pulpits<sup>22</sup> to the charge of an unwitting sacred/secular<sup>23</sup> dichotomy taught by many church leaders.

This dichotomy takes many forms. Dorothy Sayers, author, editor, teacher, and contemporary of C. S. Lewis asks, “How can one remain interested in a religion that seems to have no concern with nine-tenths of his life.”<sup>24</sup> Hugh Welchel, former president of Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando and Director of the Institute for Faith Work and Economics in Washington, DC, suggests that the subliminal message is that work is only useful for developing virtue and funding the kingdom and that the work itself is not important.<sup>25</sup> Dr. Amy Sherman, senior fellow at the Sagamore Institute, Director of its Center on Faith and Communities and senior fellow with International Justice Mission suggests that an “individualistic gospel limited to ‘having a personal relationship with Jesus’”<sup>26</sup> is at the core of the problem. Darrell Cosden, Lecturer in Theology and Ethics at International Christian College, Glasgow, sees the flaw in the idea that somehow some have a “higher calling ... Those with this special call work on the things that really matter. Others do not.”<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Sherman, *Kingdom Calling*, 67.

<sup>22</sup> Sherman, *Your Work Matters to God*, 16.

<sup>23</sup> Welchel, *How Then Should We Work?* 2.

<sup>24</sup> Sayers, *Creed or Chaos?* 106.

<sup>25</sup> Welchel, *How Then Should We Work?* xxii.

<sup>26</sup> Sherman, *Kingdom Calling*, 64.

<sup>27</sup> Cosden, *The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work*, 18.

Andy Crouch, Executive Editor of *Christianity Today* sums it up as follows, "The problem is an ineffectual, 'disembodied' Christianity, one that makes little difference in culture or even, all too often, in the life choices of its adherents."<sup>28</sup>

### *Historical Influences*

That there are historical influences that have caused this flawed theology of work is a theme throughout the syllabus. Sources inside the church as well as outside are referenced. These influences vary and include, according to Keller, the universal view of pagan cultures that matter, including work, is evil.<sup>29</sup> Theology has been heavily influenced by Greek philosophy from Plato to Aristotle,<sup>30</sup> as well as Greco/Roman mythology,<sup>31</sup> both of which see matter as evil and, according to Miroslav Volf, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California, look forward to a "paradise" where work will not occur.<sup>32</sup> Volf, explains that this, essentially Gnostic view, flowered in the medieval church with the development of the Christoplatonic concept of *vita contemplativa* as distinguished from *vita activa* wherein the former is viewed as more pleasing to God than the latter, which exists only as a vehicle to develop our spiritual selves and is deemed to have no intrinsic value of its own.<sup>33</sup> Reformation figures including Luther, Calvin,<sup>34</sup> and later Puritans come in for

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<sup>28</sup> Crouch, *Culture Making*, 63.

<sup>29</sup> Timothy J. Keller, *Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work* (New York: Dutton, 2012), 36, 45.

<sup>30</sup> Whelchel, *How Then Should We Work?* 57.

<sup>31</sup> Witherington, *Work*, viii.

<sup>32</sup> Miroslav Volf, *Work in the Spirit: Toward a Theology of Work* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 126.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

criticism as well. Volf complains of Luther's lack of consistency in his new man/old man distinction,<sup>35</sup> while Ben Witherington, Professor of New Testament at Asbury Theological Seminary, criticizes Luther's "two kingdoms" model<sup>36</sup> and further states, "The Lutheran view also establishes an unhelpful dichotomy between faith, which ostensibly serves God, and works, which ostensibly serve our neighbor."<sup>37</sup>

Finally, a fundamentally mistaken view of Heaven, according to Welchel,<sup>38</sup> seems to permeate the modern church, creating a vague notion of the spiritual and eternal as somehow non-physical.

According to Andrew V. Abela and Joseph E. Capizzi, editors of *A Catechism for Business Tough Ethical Questions & Insights from Catholic Teaching*, "At work, many managers who consider themselves to be faithful are all too willing to check their religion at the door."<sup>39</sup> They sum up the thoughts of most of these writers when they say, "This split between the faith which many profess and their daily lives deserves to be counted among the more serious errors of our age."<sup>40</sup>

### *Negative Consequences in the Life of the Church*

Many authors point out the negative consequences in the life of the church of this flawed theology of work. These consequences can be lumped under the idea that the

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 105.

<sup>36</sup> Witherington, *Work*, 27.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>38</sup> Welchel, *How Then Should We Work?* 27.

<sup>39</sup> Andrew Abela, *A Catechism for Business: Tough Ethical Questions and Insights from Catholic Teaching* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2014), xv.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 25.

average believer functions as, what Amy Sherman calls, a “practical atheist”<sup>41</sup> in the work place with the result that the gospel message has come to be viewed as irrelevant at best and harmful at worst by our culture, thus significantly handicapping the church’s effort to influence culture.

Sherman characterizes the issue when she points out, “some Christians simply turn off their faith at work.”<sup>42</sup> Sayers suggests that people have fallen into “economic confusion”<sup>43</sup> as a consequence of our poor theology of work. Cosden suggests that it has resulted in alienation from our “inner man.”<sup>44</sup> Volf takes this one step further when he suggests that we have become “indifferent to alienation in work” believing that “virtually every type of work can be a vocation, no matter how dehumanizing it might be – provided that in doing the work one does not transgress the Commandments of God.”<sup>45</sup>

The resulting state of affairs is characterized in several ways. According to Doug Sherman, “Christianity has become insignificant as a force of influence on American life.”<sup>46</sup> He continues to call the church a “triviality...inappropriate and irrelevant to the marketplace.”<sup>47</sup> Welchel calls the church “ineffective.”<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Sherman, *Kingdom Calling*, 100.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Sayers, *Creed or Chaos?* 90.

<sup>44</sup> Cosden, *The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work*, 46.

<sup>45</sup> Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 107.

<sup>46</sup> Sherman, *Your Work Matters to God*, 263.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>48</sup> Welchel, *How Then Should We Work?* 108.

One should not be shocked to hear Abela and Capizzi conclude, "Dividing the demands of one's faith from one's work in business is a fundamental error which contributes to much of the damage done by businesses in our world today, including overwork to the detriment of family or spiritual life, an unhealthy attachment to power to the detriment of one's own good, and the abuse of economic power in order to make even greater economic gains."<sup>49</sup> According to Sherman, there is "no significant difference between the church and the unchurched in their ethics and values on the job."<sup>50</sup>

*Benefits that Derive from a Good Theology of Work*

Nonetheless, many of our authors recount the many benefits that derive from a good theology of work. These benefits include the deep satisfaction and purpose as well as the renewed passion for their faith that develops in believers as they begin to understand their work as kingdom calling.

The benefits of a good theology of work are variously characterized. Keller points to "change, redemption and renewal"<sup>51</sup> in his congregants' lives at work. According to Doug Sherman it allows people to "put work in proper perspective with the rest of life."<sup>52</sup> Sayers tells us that a proper theology allows us to experience God's plan for the "rhythm" of "leisure" and "the delightful purpose of getting on with our work."<sup>53</sup> Abela and Capizzi write that individuals see that "they are participating in the work of the creator"

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<sup>49</sup> Abela, *A Catechism for Business*, 24.

<sup>50</sup> Sherman, *Your Work Matters to God*, 16.

<sup>51</sup> Keller, *Every Good Endeavor*, 243.

<sup>52</sup> Sherman, *Your Work Matters to God*, 199.

<sup>53</sup> Sayers, *Creed or Chaos?* 103.



and can thus experience the “grandeur and awesome responsibility of their vocation.”<sup>54</sup> Amy Sherman recounts many tales of kingdom workers discovering “newfound joy, meaning and intimacy with Christ,” while “the church significantly improves its effectiveness in bringing to neighbors near and far a greater foretaste of shalom.”<sup>55</sup> John Bolt, professor of systematic theology at Calvin Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, Michigan, likens the gaining of proper theological perspective on work as delivering “a renewed passion for faith and work,”<sup>56</sup> while Witherington suggests “...when we find our calling, purpose, vocation, or ministry it will bring deep satisfaction when we do it.”<sup>57</sup>

### *Mistakes that Should Be Avoided*

As one would expect, many of the authors give examples of specific mistakes that should be avoided when discipling Christian business executives. These mistakes cover a large field but tend to be in reference to the faulty assumptions that are prevalent within our theological communication. According to Sayers these include the idea that work is “merely”<sup>58</sup> a place where people earn money to support the “really important”<sup>59</sup> activity at church or, according to Welchel, where people can help their co-workers “escape”<sup>60</sup> from an evil world. It finds its expression, according to Cosden, in the language

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<sup>54</sup> Abela, *A Catechism for Business*, 21.

<sup>55</sup> Sherman, *Kingdom Calling*, 21.

<sup>56</sup> John Bolt, *Economic Shalom: A Reformed Primer on Faith, Work and Human Flourishing* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian's Library Press, 2013), xii.

<sup>57</sup> Witherington, *Work*, ix.

<sup>58</sup> Sayers, *Creed or Chaos?* 98.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

<sup>60</sup> Welchel, *How Then Should We Work?* 10.

Christians use, such as “full time Christian work;”<sup>61</sup> the hymns they sing, such as “Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace;”<sup>62</sup> and the metanarratives that float through people’s minds, which cause them to see every spiritual reference in scripture as meaning something fundamentally non-physical, which ultimately creates a view of eternity as a place where disembodied souls float about in a different dimension rather than a new heaven and new earth which are fundamentally physical.<sup>63</sup> Crouch warns, “It is a great misreading of both Genesis and Revelation to suppose that the only way we will ultimately love God wholeheartedly will be through something like what happens in church on Sunday morning.”<sup>64</sup> Amy Sherman also writes that it sends the wrong message when people speak of “church-centric activities as the primary arena for exercising our calling as followers of Jesus.”<sup>65</sup> Volf warns against putting “the emphasis...on...an ethic of work as opposed to a theology of work,”<sup>66</sup> which in his opinion leads to an overemphasis on how people work and not enough emphasis on why they work. Finally, Doug Sherman summarizes, “Let me mention four of these assumptions: (1) God is more interested in the soul than in the body; (2) the things of eternity are more important than the things of time; (3) life divides into two categories, the sacred and the secular; and (4)

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<sup>61</sup> Cosden, *The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work*, 17.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 87, 104.

<sup>64</sup> Crouch, *Culture Making*, 172.

<sup>65</sup> Sherman, *Kingdom Calling*, 12.

<sup>66</sup> Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 74.

because of the nature of their work, ministers and other clergy are more important to God's program than the laity."<sup>67</sup>

### *Uber Theme of Kingdom Purpose*

The antidote proposed to this sad state of affairs is for the church to begin to preach what can be considered the uber theme of kingdom purpose. The message here, according to Bolt,<sup>68</sup> The Lay Commission on Catholic social teaching and the US economy,<sup>69</sup> Whelchel,<sup>70</sup> Witherington,<sup>71</sup> and Crouch,<sup>72</sup> is that God made a fundamentally physical world and placed his image-bearers therein with clear instructions to tame it and develop it for its intended purpose. The intended purpose to which the image-bearer is pointed is found in the final chapters of Revelation where God lives in the midst of his church as they live, work, and play in the fundamentally physical new heaven and new earth tending the original garden at its center.

Throughout the literature, every image-bearer has a unique kingdom purpose which they are gifted, called, and positioned to fulfill. Overall six categories of kingdom calling were identified. While an individual's calling may contain aspects of some or all of these, it would seem that one will be the dominant calling.

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<sup>67</sup> Sherman, *Your Work Matters to God*, 46.

<sup>68</sup> Bolt, *Economic Shalom*, xv.

<sup>69</sup> Lay Commission on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy, *Toward the Future: Catholic Social Thought and the U.S. Economy: A Lay Letter* (New York: Lay Commission on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy, 1984), ix.

<sup>70</sup> Whelchel, *How Then Should We Work?* 93.

<sup>71</sup> Witherington, *Work*, xii.

<sup>72</sup> Crouch, *Culture Making*, 164.

## Overcoming the Curse

Many of the writers insist that some believers are, uniquely, called upon to focus on restoring the creation to its original purpose. Keller says Christians are called to "redeem all things that had been broken."<sup>73</sup> Cosden would have us understand that God has plans for the physical earth including the service of a physical image-bearer in the restoration and thus states, "Were God not to save nature, including our work, then he would not be saving us as we really are."<sup>74</sup> Volf insists that work is in fact "cooperation with God" in the "*transformatio mundi*."<sup>75</sup> Welchel recalls that evangelism is not an end in itself when he says, "Redemption leads to the restoration of all things."<sup>76</sup> The Lay Commission puts it this way, "The task of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, educating the unlearned, and assisting the millions of all nations to attain their own economic well-being is now a matter of vast social necessity. Economic activism is no longer an avocation of comparatively few; it is indispensable for the entire human family."<sup>77</sup> Amy Sherman calls it participating with God in "re-creating paradise."<sup>78</sup> Steven Garber, principal at the Washington Institute for Faith, Vocation, and Culture illustrates this kingdom purpose by describing the work of The International Justice Mission.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Keller, *Every Good Endeavor*, 13.

<sup>74</sup> Cosden, *The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work*, 87.

<sup>75</sup> Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 98.

<sup>76</sup> Welchel, *How Then Should We Work?* xviii.

<sup>77</sup> Lay Commission on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy, *Toward the Future*, 32.

<sup>78</sup> Sherman, *Kingdom Calling*, 85.

<sup>79</sup> Steven Garber, *Visions of Vocation: Common Grace for the Common Good* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2014), 46.

## Causing God's World to Flourish

Another kingdom purpose theme arises from the idea that, in the creation mandate, the image-bearer was called to work together with the creator for shalom, a truly flourishing world. Amy Sherman defines the calling to make God's world flourish when she states, "In the Bible shalom means universal flourishing, wholeness, and delight. Shalom is characterized in four fundamental relationships: peace with God, peace with self, peace with others, and peace with the creation."<sup>80</sup> Keller calls people to view "work as a contribution to the good of all and not merely as a means to one's own advancement."<sup>81</sup> He reminds the church that in Jeremiah 29:7, God called the exiles to work for the "peace and prosperity of the city."<sup>82</sup> Cosden insists, "He uses whatever we do to direct us toward his purposes, which always means toward our flourishing as created beings."<sup>83</sup> Abela and Capizzi add, "Building a productive organization is a primary way in which business people can share in the unfolding of the work of creation."<sup>84</sup> Doug Sherman would have the image-bearer remember, "An engineer who designs a bridge or a sewage treatment plant actually accomplishes God's work of providing for humanity's needs."<sup>85</sup> Garber insists that Christians should learn "to see ourselves implicated in history, to see we share a common vocation to care not only for

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<sup>80</sup> Sherman, *Kingdom Calling*, 33.

<sup>81</sup> Keller, *Every Good Endeavor*, 18.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 242.

<sup>83</sup> Cosden, *The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work*, 91.

<sup>84</sup> Abela, *A Catechism for Business*, 21.

<sup>85</sup> Sherman, *Your Work Matters to God*, 55.

our own flourishing, but for the flourishing of the world.”<sup>86</sup> Bolt conveys an important reminder that this kingdom purpose existed prior to the fall when he states, “Adam and Eve's royal office implied dignity and freedom for creative production; for using the manifold riches of creation to enhance human flourishing.”<sup>87</sup> Crouch says that when Christians do the work of causing the world to flourish, they are following the example of their creator God.<sup>88</sup>

### **Extracting Potential from Creation**

The essence of this kingdom purpose is the idea that an infinite God created this world and imbued it with infinite potential. God then instructed his image-bearers to extract it. Keller expresses, "...the word subdue indicates that, though all God had made was good, it was still to a great degree undeveloped.”<sup>89</sup> He further explains that every advancement in learning, every work of art, every innovation in health care or technology or management or governments is simply God "opening his book of creation in revealing his truth to us.”<sup>90</sup> Crouch insists that it was always meant to be so, “From the beginning, creation requires cultivation...”<sup>91</sup> Cosden emphasizes the importance of this calling. "Although many Christians have thought that heaven is simply a return to Eden, this is not the case in this vision.”<sup>92</sup> In fact the garden is now found in the midst of a city.

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<sup>86</sup> Garber, *Visions of Vocation*, 18.

<sup>87</sup> Bolt, *Economic Shalom*, 29.

<sup>88</sup> Crouch, *Culture Making*, 21.

<sup>89</sup> Keller, *Every Good Endeavor*, 36.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

<sup>91</sup> Crouch, *Culture Making*, 106.

<sup>92</sup> Cosden, *The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work*, 75.

Everything required to go from garden to city requires work. In fulfilling this kingdom purpose, the image-bearer images his creator. According to Welchel, "Only God can create something out of nothing, but we are made in the image of God so that we can create something out of something."<sup>93</sup> The Lay Commission expands, "They can justly consider that by their labor they are unfolding the creator's work."<sup>94</sup> This kingdom purpose may be best explained by the Lay Commission. "Creation is not finished. Much of use to humans remains hidden within it. Humans become co-creators through discovery and invention, following the clues left by God."<sup>95</sup>

### **Making Jesus Attractive**

This kingdom purpose may, at first glance, seem to apply primarily to the work of the clergy and non-profit workers. While true that this kingdom purpose might be primary for them, it should not be overlooked as an option for the marketplace believer. Evangelism in the workplace is far easier when the seeker asks to be told more about what they already find attractive. Doug Sherman states, "our greatest need in the workplace right now is for Christians whose lifestyle and work style are so unique and so distinctive that coworkers will want to know why."<sup>96</sup> Amy Sherman writes, "prayerful pursuit of holiness" in the workplace will allow believers to "shine like stars in the universe."<sup>97</sup> Witherington suggests that as the believer "serves as Christ would do"<sup>98</sup> in

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<sup>93</sup> Welchel, *How Then Should We Work?* xviii.

<sup>94</sup> Lay Commission on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy, *Toward the Future*, xii.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>96</sup> Sherman, *Your Work Matters to God*, 51.

<sup>97</sup> Sherman, *Kingdom Calling*, 52.

<sup>98</sup> Witherington, *Work*, 31.

the marketplace, people will notice and respond. Volf<sup>99</sup> argues that as the believer in the marketplace takes work seriously as a calling from the creator, others may come to see their work as having spiritual significance. Crouch recalls the impact the early church had as they went about making Jesus attractive in the early centuries. "The belief of Christians that Jesus of Nazareth had been raised from the dead made them culture makers, and the culture they created was so attractive that by the fourth century A. D., an entire empire was on the verge of faith."<sup>100</sup>

### **Living “on Earth as It Is in Heaven”**

In the Lord’s Prayer, believers pray that God’s will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Believers who pray this prayer should begin to think that it calls them to do their work as they may do some day in heaven, only absent sin and absent the results of the curse. Cosden offers, "...work, and the things that we produce through our work, can be transformed and carried over by God into heaven."<sup>101</sup> Volf goes so far as to proclaim that the product of a believer’s work “will form the building materials from which – after they are transfigured – ‘the glorified world’ will be made.”<sup>102</sup> Amy Sherman points to many stories in the Bible that offer “glimpses into what life will be like in the New Heaven and the New Earth,”<sup>103</sup> as guides to those called to this purpose. The believer should care, according to Garber because “...there is also a greater economy, the kingdom of God,

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<sup>99</sup> Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 118.

<sup>100</sup> Crouch, *Culture Making*, 159.

<sup>101</sup> Cosden, *The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work*, 2.

<sup>102</sup> Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 91.

<sup>103</sup> Sherman, *Kingdom Calling*, 27.



and in it we live and move and have our being – or not.”<sup>104</sup> In the words of Bolt, "Seeing our work from the perspective of eternity also leads us to confront the purely utilitarian understanding of work."<sup>105</sup> Witherington, commenting on some thoughts of Volf, agrees that “a theological interpretation of work is only valid if it facilitates transformation of work toward ever-greater correspondence with the coming new creation.”<sup>106</sup> Crouch concludes, "In the new city our work will be praise."<sup>107</sup>

### **Culture Making**

Theologians refer to the cultural mandate when referring to the original command given to the image-bearers in the garden. Humanity was put on the earth to fill, develop, and subdue the creation for God’s glory. Christians must remember that this calling was prior to the fall. While the world is currently in an interim period, many authors fully expect that this calling to work will continue into paradise. For all of eternity image-bearers will never exhaust the potential placed in the creation by their infinite God. Welchel puts it this way, "God changes culture through Christians’ faithful participation in our vocational calling.”<sup>108</sup> Witherington suggests that “culture creating is inevitable for human beings.”<sup>109</sup> The Lay Commission agrees and suggests that this kingdom calling “is so much the duty and responsibility of the laity that it can never be properly performed by

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<sup>104</sup> Garber, *Visions of Vocation*, 135.

<sup>105</sup> Bolt, *Economic Shalom*, 34.

<sup>106</sup> Witherington, *Work*, xv.

<sup>107</sup> Crouch, *Culture Making*, 174.

<sup>108</sup> Welchel, *How Then Should We Work?* 103.

<sup>109</sup> Witherington, *Work*, 104.

others.”<sup>110</sup> Amy Sherman would have believers understand that they have been placed in positions of influence in order that they “would use it for the common good, not for individual gain.”<sup>111</sup> Lest the church think this calling to culture-making is exclusively for this world, Welchel adds, “Vocational work was part of a larger grand story of God. I was discovering a story that started in the Garden of Eden and continues when Jesus returns and establishes the New Heaven and the New Earth.”<sup>112</sup>

### *How Christians Should Work*

Given that believers are called to ministry in their work, these authors present many suggestions about how each believer should work. Such a worker is called to work according to God’s ways to accomplish his purpose by focusing on the things he cares about. First and foremost, believers should understand with Keller, “...it means that all jobs – not merely so called helping professions – are fundamentally ways of loving your neighbor.”<sup>113</sup> Cosden states, “Adam must go about his work in God’s way.”<sup>114</sup> Sayers writes that the primary duty of the worker is to “serve the work”<sup>115</sup> or, as she puts it elsewhere, “The very first demand his religion makes upon (the carpenter) is that he should make good tables.”<sup>116</sup> Bolt insists, as did Amy Sherman, that believers are to do so

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<sup>110</sup> Lay Commission on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy, *Toward the Future*, 1.

<sup>111</sup> Sherman, *Kingdom Calling*, 20.

<sup>112</sup> Welchel, *How Then Should We Work?* xxiii.

<sup>113</sup> Keller, *Every Good Endeavor*, 79.

<sup>114</sup> Cosden, *The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work*, 92.

<sup>115</sup> Sayers, *Creed or Chaos?* 111.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.

“to benefit others.”<sup>117</sup> Additionally, Witherington requires the church to ask of its work, “Is this work that foreshadows the kingdom and its ends and means and character?”<sup>118</sup>

### **Thinking About Work Differently**

As might be expected, these authors fully expect that workers who have a proper biblical theology of work should think about their work differently. Doing so will eventuate in many of the benefits that derive from a proper theology of work. No one states this clearer than Sayers, who writes that work should be looked upon,

...not as a necessary drudgery to be undergone for the purpose of making money, but as a way of life in which the nature of man should find its proper exercise and delight and so fulfill itself to the glory of God. That it should, in fact, be thought of as a creative activity undertaken for the love of the work itself; and that man, made in God's image, should make things, as God makes them, for the sake of doing well a thing that is well worth doing.<sup>119</sup>

As believers do work well worth doing, Keller adds, “we do so as Partners with God.”<sup>120</sup>

When the church incorporates such teaching, the next obvious result, according to Cosden, is that the Spirit will enable them “to re-envision, redirect, and integrate our own life stories into God's bigger creation story.”<sup>121</sup> With this redirected thought, according to Volf, humans come to treat work “as an end in itself” through which they “reshape the world of work in light of the promised new creation.”<sup>122</sup> Doug Sherman agrees with

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<sup>117</sup> Bolt, *Economic Shalom*, 43.

<sup>118</sup> Witherington, *Work*, xv.

<sup>119</sup> Sayers, *Creed or Chaos?* 89.

<sup>120</sup> Keller, *Every Good Endeavor*, 151.

<sup>121</sup> Cosden, *The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work*, 81.

<sup>122</sup> Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 197, 25.

many authors when he says, "you as a layperson have the same dignity in your work as the pastor or missionary. But this implies that you also have the same responsibility to honor God in your work."<sup>123</sup>

### **Church Leadership's Role in Discipling Those in the Marketplace**

Doug Sherman says, "In regard to the layperson in his work, Ephesians 4:11-12 must be our point of departure. Recall that in chapter 3, I said that this passage describes the role of the 'clergy' and the role of the 'laity.' The laity are responsible for getting God's work done, while the clergy are responsible for preparing these workers to get His work done."<sup>124</sup> In order to understand this duty, Sayers would have the clergy work from the premise that a "secular vocation is sacred...as true a vocation...as one called to specifically religious work."<sup>125</sup> In order to assist clergy in preparing to raise questions with congregants, the authors of *A Catechism for Business*<sup>126</sup> raise and answer many questions under the theme that business practices should be developed that will have the effect of bringing the kingdom to earth as it is in heaven. These are a series of questions that ought to be addressed from the pulpit. As they do so Amy Sherman warns, "...much teaching on the integration of faith and work neglects the inherent value of work. Church leaders should indeed teach and preach on becoming certain types of workers – honest workers, ethical workers, caring workers, faithful workers and salt – and – light workers.

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<sup>123</sup> Sherman, *Your Work Matters to God*, 124.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., 216.

<sup>125</sup> Sayers, *Creed or Chaos?* 105.

<sup>126</sup> Abela, *A Catechism for Business*.

But such teaching is insufficiently biblical if there's never any mention of the inherent value of the work itself."<sup>127</sup>

### **Discipling Leaders**

It was the original intent of this section to review books on the topic of discipling Christian business owners and executives written by pastors. Unfortunately, the reviewer could find no literature that meets this two-fold criteria. While not exhaustive, the search was thorough. The reviewer is personally well read in the faith and work literature and was aware of only the Kent Humphrey's books listed in the bibliography. While suitable to the topic, they failed to meet the criteria of being written by a pastor.

Recommendations were sought from professors at Covenant Theological Seminary, who were similarly unaware of any literature meeting this criterion. A network of individuals active as leaders in the faith and work arena as well as authors Amy Sherman and Steven Garber were also consulted. The latter search netted several references to the Humphreys books but no additional titles. Researching the Amazon database of book titles for the subject "discipleship" netted approximately 280 titles on the subject of discipleship. Despite the fact that many of the books were focused in their discipleship target, including AA members, high school seniors, feminists, youth, families and even "horse trainers," no additional titles focusing on discipleship of the Christian C-level executive came to light. Finally, the associate librarian at a seminary searching that seminary's available resources, attained similar results. While disappointing this lack of literature also points to an area of opportunity for ground-breaking research.

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<sup>127</sup> Sherman, *Kingdom Calling*, 104.

Instead, the researcher selected the Humphreys books as well as several thought leaders in the modern evangelical discipleship movement, including the Ogden titles and Randy Pope's book, *InSourcing*.<sup>128</sup>

### *Defining Success*

While each author uses slightly different terminology, they all agree with Pope when he says, "Here is how we define the finish line: mature, equipped disciples who invest in the maturing and equipping of other disciples."<sup>129</sup> This concept of multiplication is common through the literature. Ogden, explaining the rationale for Jesus' ministering in the lives of the few, offers, "Jesus multiplied his life in the twelve so that there would be more of himself to go around."<sup>130</sup> Similarly, Humphreys says, "...the exciting thing is releasing leaders to use their platforms and gifts. You will have developed men and women who are equipped to do the work of the ministry in their own spheres of influence and are reproducers as well. It is what Jesus did, what He modeled for us to do, and what he will empower you to do."<sup>131</sup>

### *Results*

Not surprisingly, each of the authors has seen significant results in the spiritual growth of the disciples who have been through their program. Pope says, "I've consistently seen the men I disciple will take up the mission of Jesus, and as a result, their

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<sup>128</sup> Randy Pope, *InSourcing: Bringing Discipleship Back to the Local Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013).

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 136.

<sup>130</sup> Greg Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2003), 69.

<sup>131</sup> Kent Humphreys, *Lasting Investments: A Pastor's Guide for Equipping Workplace Leaders to Leave a Spiritual Legacy* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2004), 16.

hunger for the word increases."<sup>132</sup> Pope also confirms the importance of understanding one's mission, explaining, "When there is a missional bias in these types of groups, you get nurture thrown in. If you focus only on nurture, you may or may not get mission."<sup>133</sup> Humphreys points to another result, namely that the disciple will become more committed to the church's mission, "If you choose to adopt this plan, the scope of your church's evangelism, outreach, and discipleship can significantly expand. You likely will find that key leaders have more time to spend meeting the volunteer needs of your church and that their involvement has a freer and more fulfilled quality."<sup>134</sup> Ogden refers to the seven marks of discipleship, each in turn point in the direction of maturing believers.<sup>135</sup>

*Based on Jesus as Model*

In his endorsement of Randy Pope's book *InSourcing*, Bob Buford refers to "discipleship...the progression and dynamism that has powered evangelical Christianity as the fastest growing social movement of the past quarter century."<sup>136</sup> While not identical in detail, each of the books selected for review have much in common when it comes to fundamental principles of discipleship. This similarity should not be surprising because each states that Jesus is the pattern from which their model of discipleship is drawn.

In defining his perspective on discipleship, Pope says, "My use of the term has to do with taking on the mission of Jesus. Which was? To seek and to save the lost. How did

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<sup>132</sup> Pope, *InSourcing*, 35.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 107.

<sup>134</sup> Humphreys, *Lasting Investments*, 15.

<sup>135</sup> Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 24ff. Note that one mark is that "discipleship affects all of life."

<sup>136</sup> Pope, *InSourcing*.

he do it? By preaching and healing. We call it word and deed, explaining the gospel and meeting people's needs."<sup>137</sup> In fact, Pope devotes a chapter to the topic, titled, "WWJD? Where in the Bible is the Life-On-Life Model?"<sup>138</sup> Similarly, Humphreys states, "This book is... a study of how Jesus related to the workplace leaders who he encountered and how he equipped his disciples for ministry in the world."<sup>139</sup> Finally, Ogden also points to Jesus as his model for discipleship in the second section of his book which he calls, "Doing the Lord's work in the Lord's way. Chapter 3 Why Jesus invested in a few."<sup>140</sup> Pope's discipleship model, in his book *InSourcing*, will begin the literature review then the other authors will be contrasted or compared with Pope's principles.

### *Life-On-Life Missional Discipleship*

Pope refers to his discipleship model as Life-On-Life Missional Discipleship (LOLMD). He defines LOLMD saying, "Life on life missional discipleship is laboring in the lives of a few with the intention of imparting one's life, the gospel, and God's word in such a way as to see them become mature and equipped followers of Christ, committed to doing the same in the lives of others."<sup>141</sup> While not as concise, Ogden uses similar terminology in part three of *Transforming Discipleship*, titled, "Multiplying Reproducing Discipleship Groups. Church-based strategy for disciple making."<sup>142</sup> Ogden carried the

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., 77ff.

<sup>139</sup> Humphreys, *Lasting Investments*, 15.

<sup>140</sup> Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 57ff.

<sup>141</sup> Pope, *InSourcing*, 106.

<sup>142</sup> Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 119.



theme throughout the book as Chapter Six is titled, “Life investment - it's all about relationships.”<sup>143</sup>

Ogden suggests he will provide three hinges or principles upon which to build a process that leads to an intergenerational multiplication of fully devoted followers of Christ. The first principle is life investment. In other words, discipleship cannot be a program, it must be about relationship. The second principle is multiplication; the third principle is transformation. Relational investment allows for reacting to what is going on in a life. The program requires the disciple to conform, whereas a relationship allows flexibility with circumstances as they arise. Humphreys shows his essential agreement with this approach when he states, “The key to equipping is modeling. Most of what we learn is observed – caught not taught. Jesus said, a disciple is not above his teacher but when he is fully trained he will be like his teacher (Luke 6:40, PH).”<sup>144</sup>

#### *TEAMS Based*

It is the relational focus that sets the concept of discipleship, as described by these authors, apart from mere Bible study or small group study. Pope identifies five emphases which he claims have helped the church where he pastors create mature and equipped believers: Truth, Equipping, Accountability, Mission, and Supplication (TEAMS).<sup>145</sup> Again, while defined differently or using different terms, each of these concepts is found in all three authors. These are essential similarities; in other words, each author is confident that discipleship does not occur unless these five, in proper balance, are

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<sup>143</sup> Ibid., 121ff.

<sup>144</sup> Humphreys, *Lasting Investments*, 65.

<sup>145</sup> Pope, *Insourcing*, 31ff.

present. Each will be discussed prior to non-essential similarities, which are themes that, while very important, are not essential to their basic concept of discipleship.

## **Truth**

While each of the authors agrees on the fundamental principle that truth is based upon the word of God – Ogden sees it as one of three necessary climactic conditions.<sup>146</sup>

They also indicate that discipleship is much more than Bible study. In reinforcing this principle, Pope states,

Let me rephrase the questions posed above more alarmingly: what if the pastoral/attractational model of church produced an army of Christians who are consumeristic, shallow, and bland? And what if the influential model of church cranked out wild-eyed activists who do loving acts without the love that springs from spiritual maturity? What if the church marched on, resolutely doing many of the right things, but without being the right people?<sup>147</sup>

Truth alone without the other emphasis will not a disciple make.

## **Equipping**

For each of these authors, the importance of coaching or equipping is essential. In fact, Pope says, "The difference is that they've been equipped rather than merely taught. Equipping adds modeling, explaining, and asking questions."<sup>148</sup> All agree that the impartation of truth without help or assistance in applying it is futile. Pope discusses the situational leadership paradigm of Ken Blanchard to emphasize the importance of never going from directing to delegating without having coaching in between.<sup>149</sup> Similar to Blanchard's stages, as quoted by Pope, Ogden suggests four developmental stages.

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<sup>146</sup> Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 162.

<sup>147</sup> Pope, *Insourcing*, 25.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., 36ff.

Developmental stage one: Jesus, the living example. During this stage the leader is highly directive. This could be characterized as "I do, you watch". We might call this the observe/imitate stage. This observe/imitate stage does not stop when the disciple moves to stage two. We see it at their very last time together when Jesus washes their feet and encourages them to do the same.

Developmental stage two: Jesus, the provocative teacher. The stage might be called "I do, you help". By creating cognitive dissonance, Jesus causes them to question their basic worldview. This stage shows up frequently when he has private discussions with the apostles when they come to him to ask further elucidation of a parable or statement. "Jesus intentionally troubled the disciples by challenging their cherished assumptions." It's a high point when Jesus asks the disciples "who do you say I am." Another key point was when he instructed the apostles to feed the crowd like an apprenticeship. Several benefits accrue from this process. First: the disciple gains a sense of value. Second: public identification deepens the ownership of the disciple. Third: apprenticeship heightens the learning curve.

Developmental stage three: Jesus, the supportive coach. This is reflected when Jesus sends the twelve and the seventy out on the short-term mission opportunity. This stage can be called "you do, I help." During this stage several things are needed: One, clear instructions; two: clear authority. Three: clear expectations. Several benefits accrue from this mission activity. First, they gained confidence. Two: they grew in competence. Third, the disciples also faced their shortcomings. It's essential in this that the disciples go out and test their skills. Even if they don't feel competent to do so.

Developmental stage four: Jesus, the ultimate delegator. This might be called "you do, I watch." The result of these four stages is that the ministry carried on long after Jesus had departed.<sup>150</sup>

## **Accountability**

Pope sees this emphasis on accountability as foundational to the success of LOLMD even as it is for the Alcoholics Anonymous Twelve Steps model, "Why do AA – type recovery organizations work? When I asked numerous recovering addicts to help me understand the reason for their success, the answer was twofold. 'We have an

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<sup>150</sup> Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 83ff.

accountability group and a qualified sponsor."<sup>151</sup> Ogden sees accountability as one of the essential climactic conditions for discipleship success.<sup>152</sup> For Humphreys, accountability is the primary role of the pastor whose "most important job...is to do these two things. You must spend time with your leaders and send them out."<sup>153</sup>

## **Mission**

Pope, in discussing the mission component, indicates, "In my opinion this is the most challenging of the five emphases. In a certain respect, it is the lead domino of spiritual formation."<sup>154</sup> For Pope the term "mission" has a very specific reference and is related to evangelism and acts of mercy. He explains, "My use of the term has to do with taking on the mission of Jesus. Which was? To seek and to save the lost. How did he do it? By preaching and healing. We call it word and deed, explaining the gospel and meeting people's needs."<sup>155</sup> Humphreys seems to long for a less church-centric definition of mission. He stresses the importance of discipling "horses" as he calls them to minister in their sphere of influence. Humphreys states, "The purpose of this book is to help you, Pastor, understand these wild ones, and learn to train them to come under God's control and become the ministers *in their world* that God intends for them to be."<sup>156</sup> Nonetheless, Humphreys shows his essential agreement with Pope's limited definition when he states, "Ministry must have as its long-term eternal focus either evangelism or discipleship as

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<sup>151</sup> Pope, *Insourcing*, 63.

<sup>152</sup> Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 168.

<sup>153</sup> Humphreys, *Lasting Investments*, 33.

<sup>154</sup> Pope, *Insourcing*, 34.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Humphreys, *Shepherding Horses*, 2, emphasis added.

defined by Jesus and the great commission (Matthew 28:19–20).”<sup>157</sup> Humphreys’ “mission field” is larger, going formally and intentionally into the workplace, but the essential mission is the same: evangelism. The same tension arises in Ogden who states, “God’s call is to all who believe to be Christians in all we do,”<sup>158</sup> on the one hand, and “The church is the focus of ministry,”<sup>159</sup> on the other.

## **Supplication**

The final pillar in the TEAMS approach is prayer, which all agree is essential.

### *Prerequisites*

Many elements repeat throughout the literature. While not essential to the basic philosophy of discipleship, they are worth mentioning as environmental or context prerequisites. While they do not make or break discipleship, they increase the fertility of the ground the discipler is tilling.

## **Small Groups**

While each of the authors recognizes the importance of teaching or training activities in larger group contexts, they believe that discipleship, while it may be supplemented by larger group activities, can only occur in a small group context. These groups must be small enough to be able to share intimacy with a group that can truly tackle life together. Ogden insists on groups of three whereas Pope suggests the optimal size might be six to eight. While Humphreys does not offer specific size suggestions, his descriptions assume small group contexts.

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<sup>157</sup> Humphreys, *Lasting Investments*, 53.

<sup>158</sup> Greg Ogden, *The New Reformation: Returning the Ministry to the People of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1990), 195.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, 199.

## Patience

Patience is key in starting a movement of discipleship. Humphreys says, "It will take 6, 12, or even 18 months for the fire to start. When it does start, you will never be able to put it out."<sup>160</sup> In Chapter Seven of *InSourcing* titled, "The Tortoise and the Negative Split. Getting started," Pope writes, "As I've indicated, the process of discipleship is more like a marathon than a sprint. In our experience at Perimeter, the impact of our discipleship has broadened and deepened over time, and it continues to affect the character and quality of fellowship in our church."<sup>161</sup>

## Stages

Each of the authors supports their plea to have patience by indicating that one can discern progress because discipleship flows through stages. Pope explains,

Let me clarify what I mean by the word discipleship in the life-on-life model:

- The first component of discipleship involves helping people get from *unbelief to belief*. Personal evangelism and public preaching qualifies this kind of discipleship.
- The next stage involves coaching a new follower to move from *belief to maturity*. Small group Bible studies, Sunday school classes, Seminars, and Sermons can be effective, though limited, means to lead a new believer toward spiritual maturity. The life-on-life dimension of discipleship has the potential to bring about a deeper, longer-lasting maturity.
- The life-on-life model doesn't end with the personal maturity of the believer. The process of equipping moves a follower from *maturity to leadership*.<sup>162</sup>

As quoted previously, Ogden suggests four developmental stages.

Developmental stage one: Jesus, the living example. During this stage the leader is highly directive. This could be characterized as "I do, you watch". We might call this the observe/imitate stage. This observe/imitate stage does not stop when

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<sup>160</sup> Humphreys, *Lasting Investments*, 50.

<sup>161</sup> Pope, *InSourcing*, 128.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

the disciple moves to stage two. We see it at their very last time together when Jesus washes their feet and encourages them to do the same.

Developmental stage two: Jesus, the provocative teacher. The stage might be called "I do, you help". By creating cognitive dissonance, Jesus causes them to question their basic worldview. This stage shows up frequently when he has private discussions with the apostles when they come to him to ask further elucidation of a parable or statement. "Jesus intentionally troubled the disciples by challenging their cherished assumptions." It's a high point when Jesus asks the disciples "who do you say I am." Another key point was when he instructed the apostles to feed the crowd like an apprenticeship. Several benefits accrue from this process. First: the disciple gains a sense of value. Second: public identification deepens the ownership of the disciple. Third: apprenticeship heightens the learning curve.

Developmental stage three: Jesus, the supportive coach. This is reflected when Jesus sends the twelve and the seventy out on the short-term mission opportunity. This stage can be called "you do, I help." During this stage several things are needed, One: clear instructions; two: clear authority. Three: clear expectations. Several benefits accrue from this mission activity. First, they gained confidence. Two: they grew in competence. Third, the disciples also faced their shortcomings. It's essential in this that the disciples go out and test their skills. Even if they don't feel competent to do so.

Developmental stage four: Jesus, the ultimate delegator. This might be called "you do, I watch." The result of these four stages is that the ministry carried on long after Jesus had departed.<sup>163</sup>

By following the example of a real-life horse trainer, Humphreys identifies these steps in training horses. "The first step involves earning the trust of the horse."<sup>164</sup> This may be done by visiting him at his place of work and showing genuine concern in the work that he does.

"The second step is to let the horse think that 'getting under control' with the bridal and saddle is a good idea."<sup>165</sup> This step is particularly easy if it is made clear in the

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<sup>163</sup> Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 83ff.

<sup>164</sup> Humphreys, *Shepherding Horses*, 6.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

first stage that your desire is to help him to follow his call from God in the marketplace. Ogden concludes, "Finally, the trainer must prepare him for the distractions of life."<sup>166</sup>

### **Individual Wiring**

While not discussed at length, each author indicates that success in discipling comes from paying attention to the individual wiring of the disciples. Ogden puts it this way, "One way to discern a personal call of God is to be attentive to what gives you energy."<sup>167</sup> Humphreys puts the most emphasis on the idea of understanding the individual wiring of the disciple. "God only makes originals. Teach your leaders to look for models in God's word and not try to duplicate the work of God in others. Help them develop their God-given uniqueness. They must have freedom to use and experiment with the personality, talents, spiritual gifts, and circumstances that the sovereign God has given them."<sup>168</sup> In this section of the book, Humphreys provides several good recommendations, which include taking personality tests and studying what the scripture says about spiritual gifting as a way to understand how God has wired the individual. Finally, Humphreys suggests,

As a pastor, you must help your leaders take their eyes off of you and other visible marketplace Christians. Get them to understand themselves. What things do they do well? What goals are they passionate about? What types of ministry have they done that God has blessed and people have responded to? What do their closest friends see as their contribution to the body of Christ? As you coach these men and women, you can help them release these gifts to be used in the lives of others around them.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>167</sup> Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 102.

<sup>168</sup> Humphreys, *Lasting Investments*, 144.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid., 145.



### *Differences*

While not dramatic there are definable differences within this literature. As will be shown in the opportunities section below, these differences will prove significant in discipling the Christian business executive. These differences, or emphases, fall into three categories: how the authors understand mission, the significance of curriculum, and an emphasis on life planning.

#### **Understanding Mission**

As shown above, each author agrees with Pope's statement, "My use of the term has to do with taking on the mission of Jesus. Which was? To seek and to save the lost. How did he do it? By preaching and healing. We call it word and deed, explaining the gospel and meeting people's needs."<sup>170</sup> Nonetheless, while they agree that the essential mission is evangelistic in thrust, Humphreys stresses that the horses have a unique calling to the marketplace. He states, "The greatest potential ministry in the world today is the marketplace. Christ's greatest labor force is those men and women already in that environment."<sup>171</sup> This observation is true because,

Our pastors cannot go daily into the marketplace. Our nation is becoming more and more secular, lacking a church background and enough of a comfort level to even visit a local church. So, the greatest legacy pastors can leave is to train workplace leaders in their churches to minister in their own workplaces to ensure that every mission field represented by every church receives proper ministry.<sup>172</sup>

Humphreys criticizes the average church for having what might be called a church-centric view of mission.

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<sup>170</sup> Pope, *Insourcing*, 34.

<sup>171</sup> Humphreys, *Lasting Investments*, 9.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

Too often when the church has a "ministry Sunday" to recruit workers, the pastor lists only those areas within the church building that need volunteers. An outstanding high school teacher will feel called to the teaching ministry of the church youth, which is quite good. However, how many churches anointed and prayed for that high school teacher as he or she works in the difficult mission field of the local high school, potentially touching hundreds of souls for Christ every day?<sup>173</sup>

This oversight leads Humphreys to emphasize the pastor's role in helping believers situate in the marketplace and discover their unique calling outside of the four walls of the church. He asks, "What would happen if you were to choose a few workplace leaders from within your own church and meet with them regularly? The goal of such a small-group meeting would be to help those leaders figure out how to have an effective ministry in their own spheres of influence, while mentoring and encouraging them spiritually along the way."<sup>174</sup> In fact, Humphreys points out an important rule that the meeting to discuss this discipleship relationship should be "on their turf."<sup>175</sup> He even recommends, "While you are sending them out, why don't you join them? Visit them in their Jerusalem and in their Judea. Visit their offices, schools, and factories."<sup>176</sup> He believes that the outcome of such activity will be that "they will understand that the secular becomes spiritual when done for the eternal."<sup>177</sup> This insight runs the risk of being Christoplatonic; nonetheless it does infuse believers in the marketplace with a sense of mission to the place to which they are called.

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<sup>173</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., 24, emphasis added.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., 51.

Furthermore, Humphreys encourages senior pastors that they have much in common with the Christian business executive and thus much to offer. As he points out, "...I began to realize that you as a pastor, face many of the same difficulties, challenges, and times of loneliness that I face as an executive. I do not claim to understand completely the daily pressures that you encounter; however, I believe I have endured many similar pressures as a CEO and business owner."<sup>178</sup> In Chapter Six,<sup>179</sup> Humphreys suggests concrete strategies that the pastor could offer to the Christian executive. While it is clear that there is a Christoplatonic flavor to all the advice, i.e. it is only about evangelism, the concept of strategizing together with the businessperson about how to minister in the marketplace is good advice. Engaging in this kind of conversation or similar ones as described in the book<sup>180</sup> would be eye-opening to business executives who seldom, if ever, are asked to consider how a passage of scripture applies to their day-to-day workplace experience.

In contrast to the strong emphasis in Humphreys on the marketplace, Pope and Ogden mention the marketplace seldom, and when they do, they tend to see it more as an obstacle than an opportunity for mission. In discussing the obstacles to practical discipleship Pope states, "...there are practical obstacles as well, obstacles that show up as soon as a potential disciple leaves college: spouses, kids, jobs, schedules, traffic, homes, yards, vacations."<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., 101ff.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>181</sup> Pope, *Insourcing*, 115.

## The Importance of Curriculum

Pope is unique among our authors in emphasizing the importance of a repeated curriculum. In fact, he has an entire chapter dedicated to this topic, titled “Not if but what? The importance of curriculum.”<sup>182</sup> Pope insists that everyone has a curriculum, “Whether you use predigested material or you have developed a fairly involved plan of your own, you use a curriculum. Just meeting to pray? That’s your curriculum. Studying a book together short term? That’s your curriculum. Letting the Spirit lead your meetings? That’s your curriculum.”<sup>183</sup>

Pope claims that without a curriculum “Your discipleship...won’t be reproducible...won’t get better...won’t be intentional...won’t be able to manage the expectations of the group.”<sup>184</sup> Pope lays out his curriculum in his book *InSourcing*.<sup>185</sup> In the overview of the faith and work literature, one point that was made abundantly clear was that one could look into books of theology, sermon series, and Sunday school classes taught and never find reference to a theology of work. Similarly, Pope’s three-year curriculum does not address work. With the possible exception of one weekly segment titled, “What in the world are you doing? Fulfilling the purpose for which you were designed,”<sup>186</sup> a theology of work is never mentioned.

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<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 157ff.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid., 159.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid., 202ff.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid., 203.

### **An Emphasis on Life Planning**

In the six-week segment of Pope's curriculum, titled *In Pursuit of a Life Plan*,<sup>187</sup> the process of life planning is emphasized, and uniquely so. In this segment, two unique points are made, "God has uniquely created you. No one has been, or ever will be just like you," and second, "God made you for a purpose. There is a reason for your existence, a response for you to make during your brief stay on the earth."<sup>188</sup> The curriculum assumes that, as individuals gain clarity about their "wiring" and purpose, they will have an increasing desire to implement that calling.

This process requires the creation of a life mission which answers the question, "How do I plan to accomplish my life vision?" In this exercise, the disciple defines an action plan to put the life purpose and vision into practice. An interesting idea is presented:<sup>189</sup> to write a life schedule. Pope emphasizes that the implementation of a life purpose vision and mission will only happen if translated into specific action steps recorded in a calendar. However, Pope gives no reference to work as part of a life mission.<sup>190</sup>

Notwithstanding, Pope seems to realize an opportunity for the life planning material to be separated and developed outside of his discipleship curriculum. He states, "We also use retreats to give people the chance to engage in some of the more involved tasks in the discipleship process, such as designing and documenting their life plan. This

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<sup>187</sup> Pope, *The Journey*.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid., 8-9.

is an important exercise that doesn't fit into the time constraints of a weekly meeting, nor is every leader equipped to guide people through the process.”<sup>191</sup>

This concludes the literature review on discipling leaders. Finally, business literature related to the importance of leading from a clear purpose and its relationship to job satisfaction, retention and performance will be reviewed.

### **Clarity of Purpose and Job Satisfaction, Retention, and Performance**

Since the purpose of this study is to explore how Christian C-level executives experienced an increased desire for spiritual maturity as a result of having gained clarity about their kingdom purpose, it seemed appropriate to review the business literature related to the relationship between clarity of purpose and job satisfaction, retention, and performance.

Much popular business literature promises positive results for businesses as they gain clarity about their purpose. A similar result was experienced by the case study participants after gaining clarity about their kingdom purpose. Simon Sinek typifies the literature, saying, “The more organizations and people who learn to start with WHY, the more people there will be who wake up feeling fulfilled by the work they do.”<sup>192</sup>

The literature reviewed explores several of the popular business books, but it also delves below the popular literature to find research that might actually prove that clarity of purpose is related to job satisfaction, retention, and performance.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>191</sup> Pope, *Insourcing*, 165, emphasis added.

<sup>192</sup> Simon Sinek, *Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action* (New York: Portfolio, 2011), x.

<sup>193</sup> I am indebted to Lydia Knopf, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Management at the Crowell School of Business at Biola University for many helpful suggestions.

### *The Importance of Clarity of Purpose*

Much popular business literature encourages companies to seek clarity about their purpose and often promises that positive effects will follow when a company does so.

Amy Edmondson, consultant and author of the popular book *Teaming*, says, “There are three critical dimensions when successfully framing implementation.”<sup>194</sup> These are one: the leader’s role, two: the team’s role and three: the project purpose. Maybe the most popular author in this category is Simon Sinek, popular business consultant, writer, and speaker on the successful Ted talk entitled, “Start with Why.” Sinek states, “The more organizations and people who learn to start with WHY, the more people there will be who wake up feeling fulfilled by the work they do.”<sup>195</sup> He defines why as, “By WHY I mean what is your purpose, cause or belief?”<sup>196</sup>

Mark Crowley, a leader for regional and national financial institutions with decades of experience, goes so far as to state, “How happy we are at work now sets the stage for how happy we are in our entire lives.”<sup>197</sup> Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner, award-winning authors of the best-selling *The Leadership Challenge* and developers of the acclaimed Leadership Practices Inventory, write, “Having your vision of the future isn’t enough, however. Others must be able to see themselves in that future. You can’t impose your vision on others; it has to be something that has meaning to them, not just to you.

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<sup>194</sup> Amy Edmondson, *Teaming: How Organizations Learn, Innovate, and Compete in a Knowledge Economy* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012).

<sup>195</sup> Sinek, *Start with Why*, x.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>197</sup> Mark Crowley, *Lead from the Heart: Transformational Leadership for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Bloomington, IL: Balboa Press, 2011), 4.

Leaders enlist others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations. They breathe life into visions. They communicate hopes and dreams so that others clearly understand and embrace them as their own.”<sup>198</sup> Furthermore they state, “Exemplary Christian leaders are able to release this human longing by communicating the meaning and significance of what people do – whether in church, the workplace or the community – so that they understand their own important role in creating it.”<sup>199</sup> In defining the five practices of exemplary leadership, they identify one as “Inspiring a shared vision,” which they further define as “finding a shared purpose.”<sup>200</sup> Patrick Lencioni, popular business consultant, author, and president of the Table Group devotes three chapters in his book *The Advantage* to the importance of gaining clarity of purpose.<sup>201</sup>

### *The Experience of Gaining Clarity of Purpose*

Most of the authors gave many characteristics of the experience that follows gaining clarity of purpose. Sinek suggests those who have gained clarity experience “renewed passion,”<sup>202</sup> “fulfillment,”<sup>203</sup> “purpose or belonging,”<sup>204</sup> and an understanding that they are “working for something bigger than themselves.”<sup>205</sup> Kouzes and Posner

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<sup>198</sup> James M. Kouzes and Barry Posner, eds., *Christian Reflections on The Leadership Challenge* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 18.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, viii.

<sup>201</sup> Patrick Lencioni, *The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else in Business*, 1st ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012).

<sup>202</sup> Sinek, *Start with Why*, ix.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid., x.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid., 85.



characterize the experience of finding clarity: “tremendous energy is generated” ... “commitment, enthusiasm and drive are intensified”...people are “more effective and satisfied”, they “experience less stress and tension.”<sup>206</sup> Finally, they find satisfaction in “the deep yearning to make a difference.”<sup>207</sup> Lencioni speaks of a “clear plan for success,” an ability to “articulate the top priority,” and an understanding of “how every member of the team contributes to achieving that priority.”<sup>208</sup>

Michelle L. French, Pepperdine Doctor of Education graduate, in her 2007 qualitative research “examined what it means to align personal meaning and organizational mission and the extent to which this meaning-mission fit has a relationship to happiness, job satisfaction, and perceived responsibility for employee emotional well-being.”<sup>209</sup> She characterized the experience of meaning-mission fit in the following manner: as a sense of “well-being,”<sup>210</sup> “creating something that leaves a lasting impact,”<sup>211</sup> being “fulfilled,”<sup>212</sup> gaining “self-acceptance,” and finding “your niche,”<sup>213</sup> “express(ing) one’s strengths and authentic self in service of a cause that one finds

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<sup>206</sup> Kouzes, and Posner, *Christian Reflections on The Leadership Challenge*, 12.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>208</sup> Lencioni, *The Advantage*, 71.

<sup>209</sup> Michelle French, “The Alignment Between Personal Meaning and Organizational Mission Among Music Executives: A Study of Happiness, Job Satisfaction, and Responsibility toward Employees” (Ph.D. Diss., Pepperdine University, 2007), xiii.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid., xiv.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid., 129.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid., 131.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., 133.

compelling,”<sup>214</sup> being on a “path that makes more sense,”<sup>215</sup> being involved in “a greater cause,”<sup>216</sup> feeling “happy and motivated,”<sup>217</sup> “rewarded... satisfied... contented... and relaxed.”<sup>218</sup>

### *Leaders Who Create Clarity*

The leaders who are able to create the desired clarity of purpose are variously described throughout the literature. Robert J Givens, a Regent University Doctoral student, wrote about “transformational leaders” saying these leaders “inspire followers to accomplish more,” and in fact, they inspire “more than the follower planned to accomplish” and “influence employee behavior” that has a “positive impact on the organization.”<sup>219</sup> Givens elaborates, “These leaders are reliable leaders who generate commitment from followers which results in a sense of shared purpose.

...Transformational leaders help subordinates discover who they are and what part they play in helping the organization achieve its mission.”<sup>220</sup>

Sharon L Drury, a participant in the Servant Leadership Research Roundtable at Regent University in August of 2004, emphasizes the importance of servant leadership.

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<sup>214</sup> Ibid., 135.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid., 136.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid., 143.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid., 146.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid., 147.

<sup>219</sup> Robert Givens, “Transformational Leadership: The Impact on Organizational and Personal Outcomes,” *Emerging Leadership Journeys* 1, no. 1 (2008): 4.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid., 9.

“Servant leadership was measured with an understanding of a way of leading that places the good of those led over the self-interest of the leader.”<sup>221</sup>

Ishara Maharaj and Anton F. Schlechter, of the University of Cape Town, note “Similarly, managers have a role to play in encouraging and assisting employees to craft their jobs so that they may experience higher levels of meaningfulness, as well as through their actions and behaviors create an organizational culture and climate where employees are intrinsically motivated, and their attempts to find meaning are supported, within and outside the organization.”<sup>222</sup>

Edmondson states, It is the team leader’s job to communicate a clear and compelling purpose,”<sup>223</sup> which according to Kouzes and Posner requires, “a leader who (is) clear about his own personal values (and) is then able to find others who share those values that he can lead. They also tell us, ‘The most powerful thing a leader can do to mobilize others is to set the example by aligning personal actions with shared values.’”<sup>224</sup> Such leaders, according to Sinek, “inspire”<sup>225</sup> followers.

“Leaders who contribute to clarity of purpose have learned to ask, ‘How do we contribute to a better world?’”<sup>226</sup> “They ask, “‘Why do we exist?’ using the following

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<sup>221</sup> Sharon L. Drury, “Servant Leadership and Organizational Commitment: Empirical Findings and Workplace Implications,” *School of Leadership Studies Regent University* (August, 2004): 1.

<sup>222</sup> Ishara Maharaj and Anton F. Schlechter, “Meaning in Life and Meaning of Work: Relationships with Organizational Citizenship Behaviour, Commitment and Job Satisfaction,” *Management Dynamics* 16, no. 3 (2007): 39.

<sup>223</sup> Edmondson, *Teaming*, 103.

<sup>224</sup> Kouzes, and Posner, *Christian Reflections on The Leadership Challenge*, 12.

<sup>225</sup> Sinek, *Start with Why*, x.

<sup>226</sup> Lencioni, *The Advantage*, 85.

categories: customer, industry, greater cause, community, employees, and wealth,” according to Lencioni.<sup>227</sup>

### *Relevant terms*

This third section of the literature review discusses the relationship between clarity of purpose in a company to the job satisfaction, retention, and performance of its employees. Unfortunately, many terms in this area of business literature are used interchangeably. Davide Ravasi and Johan van Rekom, researchers in organizational behavior, explain the difficulty, saying, “concepts of organizational identity often tend to overlap with what other scholars refer to as culture, image, vision, mission, dominant logic, corporate identity, corporate brand and reputation.”<sup>228</sup>

Before moving on to discuss the evidence of a positive correlation between clarity of purpose in a company and the job satisfaction, retention, and performance of its employees, it will be wise to review some of the technical terms found in the literature. Drury characterized her quantitative study as looking into the correlative relationship between servant leadership, job satisfaction and organizational identity.<sup>229</sup> Ravasi and Rekom use the terms “organizational behavior” – “organizational identity and identification.”<sup>230</sup> They clarify that “‘identification’ is a property of individuals. It can be defined as the extent to which members of an organization incorporate key organizational

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<sup>227</sup> Ibid., 85ff.

<sup>228</sup> Davide Ravasi, and Johan van Rekom, “Key Issues in Organizational Identity and Identification Theory,” *Corporate Reputation Review* 6, no. 2 (2003): 123.

<sup>229</sup> Drury, “Servant Leadership and Organizational Commitment,” 1.

<sup>230</sup> Ravasi, and van Rekom, “Key Issues in Organizational Identity and Identification Theory,” 118.

identities into their identity.”<sup>231</sup> Popoola similarly uses the terms “organizational identification and commitment and employee job satisfaction.”<sup>232</sup> Maharaj and Schlechter use the concept of “meaning research” as similar to the concept of purpose and distinguish between “meaning in life” and “meaning of work.”<sup>233</sup> Sinek uses the popular term “why” in a similar vein.<sup>234</sup> French refers to “mission-meaning fit.”<sup>235</sup> She further defines it, “The experience of meaning-mission fit is one in which an individual has positive emotions about work and the life, gratification through work and activities, authentic expression of signature personal strengths, and contribution to a cause greater than the self.”<sup>236</sup>

### *The Evidence*

While there may be subtle differences in terminology, it appears that the literature reviewed in this section touches on the relationship between clarity of purpose in a company to the job satisfaction, retention, and performance of its employees. It remains to discuss the evidence that such a positive correlation exists according to the research.

Givens writes, “Research has shown that transformational leadership impacts follower satisfaction and commitment to the organization.”<sup>237</sup> The Corporate Leadership

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<sup>231</sup> Ibid., 124.

<sup>232</sup> Joseph Popoola, “Organizational Identification and Commitment as Correlates of Job Satisfaction” (Ph.D. Diss., Howard University, 2005), vi.

<sup>233</sup> Maharaj and Schlechter, “Meaning in Life and Meaning of Work,” 24.

<sup>234</sup> Sinek, *Start with Why*.

<sup>235</sup> French, ““The Alignment Between Personal Meaning and Organizational Mission Among Music Executives,” 136.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid., 170.

<sup>237</sup> Givens, “Transformational Leadership,” 5.

Council research publication titled, “Driving Performance and Retention Through Employee Engagement,” informs that, “Among the top 25 drivers of employee engagement identified by the council, the most important driver is a connection between an employee’s job and organizational strategy,”<sup>238</sup> while twelfth on the list was “right people in the right roles at the right time.”<sup>239</sup> The result of this engagement is “a strong emotional commitment to one’s job and organization has the greatest impact on discretionary effort.”<sup>240</sup>

Research by Maharaj and Schlechter is important because it clarifies that “More importantly for the future development of meaning research, a distinction has not really been made between meaning of work (i.e. the role and importance of work in an individual’s life) and the level of meaning experienced in life (i.e. meaning experienced through work, but derived from other sources than work).”<sup>241</sup> They state, “The results highlight the importance to the organization, of meaning, as derived from both work and other sources, as a significant driver of success.”<sup>242</sup> More importantly they found “These authors further believe that sources of meaning that are not related to work cannot have any impact on the work context.”<sup>243</sup> Therefore, they conclude, “The present study seems

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<sup>238</sup> Corporate Leadership Council and Corporate Executive Council, *Driving Performance and Retention Through Employee Engagement* (Washington, DC: Corporate Leadership Council, 2004), 4.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>241</sup> Maharaj, and Schlechter, “Meaning in Life and Meaning of Work,” 24.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid., 29.

to support the findings... (of others) ...which suggest that the ultimate state of meaning is reached when a person finds meaning in both life and work.”<sup>244</sup>

Lencioni speaks of a “clear plan for success,” an ability to “articulate the top priority” and an understanding of “how every member of the team contributes to achieving that priority.”<sup>245</sup> Similarly, Maharaj and Schlechter state, “It is believed that when employee’s...roles in the organization are made explicit, they will be committed and satisfied...”<sup>246</sup> “If a person’s personal sense of purpose is congruent with his or her occupation, work becomes an expression of meaning.”<sup>247</sup>

French found in her research that “there is a relationship between meaning-mission fit and happiness, job satisfaction, and perceived responsibility for employee emotional well-being.”<sup>248</sup> In fact she found “that organizational identification and commitment are antecedents of job satisfaction.”<sup>249</sup>

Popoola’s research reveals, “The result of the Pearson product-moment correlation showed a positive significant relationship between organizational identification and commitment and employee job satisfaction.”<sup>250</sup>

In this chapter, three areas of literature were reviewed. The first was an overview of the extensive faith and work literature in order to understand the theological context of

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<sup>244</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>245</sup> Lencioni, *The Advantage*, 71.

<sup>246</sup> Maharaj, and Schlechter, “Meaning in Life and Meaning of Work,” 25.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>248</sup> French, “The Alignment Between Personal Meaning and Organizational Mission among Music Executives,” xiv.

<sup>249</sup> Popoola, “Organizational Identification and Commitment as Correlates of Job Satisfaction,” vi.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid.

the research. Secondly, leading books on discipling Christian leaders were reviewed in hopes of understanding a baseline for discipling leaders. Finally, business literature related to the importance of leading from a clear purpose and its relationship to job satisfaction, retention, and performance were pursued because there appears to be a relationship between a believer's clarity regarding kingdom purpose and desire to grow in their faith.



## **Chapter Three**

### **Methodology**

The purpose of this study is to explore how Christian C-level executives experienced an increased desire for spiritual maturity as a result of having gained clarity about their kingdom purpose. The shared experience of six Christian C-level business executives who participated in a vocation based discipleship group set the context for this study.

One participant initiated the group because he wanted to participate in a discipleship group, following the methodology typical for his church, but in which the curriculum segment focused upon finding their purpose in God's kingdom in place of the typical curriculum. During the course of one morning's discussion, the leader shared his life purpose as found in his life plan. As the participants gained clarity about their kingdom purpose, they suggested diverting the group's activity towards developing their own life plans. It appeared that the emphasis upon finding their purpose in God's kingdom met the life planning process, and significant spiritual fervor resulted. The study explores how the individuals involved in this group interpreted their shared experience.

### **Design of the Study**

This study was designed using applied qualitative research. Sharan B. Merriam defines the goal of applied qualitative research as "undertaken to improve the quality of a particular discipline."<sup>251</sup> Further, she suggests, "Qualitative researchers build toward

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<sup>251</sup> Sharan Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 3.

theory from observations and intuitive understandings gleaned from being in the field.”<sup>252</sup>

The researcher’s intuition suggested that there had been something unique about experiencing the life planning exercise in the context of curriculum that explored the individuals’ place in God’s kingdom that increased spiritual fervor among these Christian business executives. Thus it was hoped that qualitative research would enable an understanding of and potential extrapolation from this experience to that of other groups.

The study focuses on a shared experience; therefore, the qualitative research was of necessity a qualitative case study. Merriam explains, “Case study has proven particularly useful for studying educational innovations, evaluating programs, and informing policy.”<sup>253</sup>

The researcher was also a participant in this case study; therefore, it is important to hear Merriam’s warning, “Qualitative case studies are limited, too by the sensitivity and integrity of the investigator. The researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis. This has its advantages. But training in observation and interviewing, though necessary, is not readily available to aspiring case study researchers. The investigator is left to rely on his or her own instincts and abilities throughout most of this research effort.”<sup>254</sup> Several methodological precautions have been taken to mitigate this risk.

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<sup>252</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid., 52.

### **Participant Sample Selection**

Since this study is a case study, participant selection was simple. Six men participated in a discipleship group for nine months, and these became the participants in the study. The concept of researching the experience of these men, however, was the ultimate key to selection. Members of the church's pastoral staff, seeing evidence of spiritual growth in their interaction with the participants, reported that significant spiritual growth had occurred. These reports led to the researcher's desire to interview the individuals with the intent of "understanding how ...they...interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences."<sup>255</sup>

The researcher gathered evidence of this spiritual impact from three sources: First, the researcher's own observation that something special had occurred as these men told of their increased desire for spiritual maturity. Second, independent reports from pastors and members provided evidence. Third, the participants' observations, via self-report to the researcher, that they have studied and can articulate kingdom purpose as it relates to their own life and have had a concurrent significant increase in their desire for spiritual maturity. Reports came back of significant spiritual movement, including increased fervor for scripture study, prayer and faith sharing as well as an acute sense of God's relevance to the arena in which they spent more time than any other, their workplace. This was independently reported for each of the five members.

### **Data Collection**

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between clarity about kingdom purpose and the desire for spiritual maturity. The researcher explored the

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<sup>255</sup> Ibid., 5.

before, during, and after of the nine-month shared experience through individual interviews with the participants. Interviewing was chosen as the most effective means of gaining information, and the interviews were conducted as closely as possible to the suggestions made in Sharan B. Merriam's chapter, "Conducting Effective Interviews."<sup>256</sup> Specific attempts were made to eliminate questions seeking to determine why. Categories of questions that were avoided include: hypothetical or devil's advocate questions, yes/no, multiple focus, and especially leading questions. Furthermore, as suggested, the interview guide followed a semi-structured interview protocol while allowing adjustments as the interview process developed.

All interviews were conducted in the same office and were recorded using an iPad. A semi-structured interview protocol was followed which protected the researcher from leading any of the interviewees. To avoid bias within the interview protocol, three individuals reviewed the questions prior to the interviews, ensuring the questions did not lead participants in a particular direction. The interview protocol follows.

Pre-interview participant selection:

1. You participated in a discipleship group which was designed to add significant discussion about your vocation to a process that you had participated in previously. This was done through a process of discovering your kingdom purpose and life planning.
2. In what ways do you now have a clearer understanding of your kingdom purpose?
3. Can you confirm that a significant change has occurred in the desire for and willingness to expend significant effort to develop spiritual maturity in a group of men who went through an exercise finding their purpose in God's kingdom and planning their life.

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<sup>256</sup> Ibid., 87ff.

Research Question One: How do Christian C-level executives describe their motivation to pursue spiritual maturity prior to gaining clarity about their kingdom purpose?

1. How did you think about pursuing spiritual maturity prior to being able to articulate your kingdom purpose?
2. In what ways did you pursue spiritual maturity prior to being able to articulate your kingdom purpose?
3. Tell me about your experience in discipleship before this particular group?
4. How many groups had you participated in prior to this group?
5. What were your devotional practices prior to participation in this group?
6. Had you ever developed a “life plan” in previous discipleship group experiences?
7. On a scale of 1-10 how likely were you to recommend this process of life planning to others? (Net promoter score)
8. Could you have told me your life mission, vision and core values in this type of interview prior to participation in this group?
9. How engaged with your life plan were you prior to participation in this group? (the below as potential probing questions)
  - a. How satisfied were you with your spiritual state prior to participating in this group?
  - b. What was your understanding of your work role prior to participation in this group?
  - c. How satisfied were you in your work role prior to participation in this group?
  - d. How effective for the kingdom would you say you were at work prior to participation in this group?
  - e. How effective for the kingdom would you say you were at church prior to participation in this group?
  - f. Were you more or less inclined to treat your work as an idol before participation in this group?

- g. How did you perceive God's understanding of your work role prior to participation in this group?
- h. What church ministries (giving or receiving) did you participate in prior to being in this group?

Research Question Two: How do Christian C-level executives relate the experience of gaining clarity about their kingdom purpose to their increased motivation to pursue spiritual maturity? What kinds of changes have you experienced since gaining clarity about your kingdom purpose?

- a. What is different in your perception of this discipleship group?
- b. How have your devotional practices changed since participation in this group?
- c. How engaged with your life plan are you now, after participation in this group?
- d. How satisfied are you now with your spiritual state following participating in this group?
- e. What is your understanding of your work role following participation in this group?
- f. How satisfied are you in your work role following participation in this group?
- g. How effective for the kingdom would you say are now at work after participation in this group?
- h. How effective for the kingdom would you say are now at church after participation in this group?
- i. How do you now perceive God's understanding of your work role after participation in this group?
- j. What church ministries (giving or receiving) do you participate in after being in this group?
- k. How has clarity about your kingdom purpose changed your effectiveness in other roles you are called to?
- l. How has your relationship to your church changed now that you have developed clarity about your kingdom purpose?

- m. Are you more or less likely to seek equipping from your church leadership after participation in this group?

Research Question Three: To what do Christian C-level executives attribute their increased desire for and willingness to expend significant effort to develop spiritual maturity?

- a. What aspects of the process of discovering your kingdom purpose and life planning were most impactful in causing this change?
- b. What brought about the increased desire to pursue spiritual maturity?
- c. What specific theological concepts were impactful?
- d. What specific exercises were impactful?
- e. How did this exercise change your perception of any/all of the roles you are called upon to fulfill in life?

Research Question Four: How do Christian C-level executives expect this increased motivation to impact their future motivation to pursue spiritual maturity?

- 1. How do you see this exercise of discovering your kingdom purpose and life planning impacting your spiritual growth in the future?
- 2. How do you hope to continue to grow spiritually in the future?
- 3. On a scale of 1-10 how likely are you to recommend this process of discovering your kingdom purpose and life planning to others? (Net promoter score)
- 4. Are you likely to help others in this process in the future? If so, in what ways?
- 5. Have you already brought along another to go through this process?

### **Data Analysis**

The data was analyzed using the constant comparative method as described in Sharan B. Merriam's book *Qualitative Research*.<sup>257</sup> The interviews were transcribed and supplied in raw fashion. The transcriptionist typed what she heard and sent an unedited

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<sup>257</sup> Ibid., 30ff.

file. The file was then corrected for grammatical issues, typos, and misunderstandings by listening to the audio while editing the transcript. Additionally, the researcher took extensive written notes during the interviews and compared them with the completed transcripts. The researcher, thus, experienced the data in a variety of formats prior to creating a proposed list of themes to include in this report.

Two additional rounds followed. Each interview transcript was read and coded, and potential themes were marked in order to identify which appeared in most of the interviews to refine the thematic categories. Through this process, some themes were removed that, while interesting, were not essential to the purpose of the research. Finally, the transcript of the five interviews was imported into the NVivo software that allowed annotation of sections in order to pull all relevant quotes to the chosen themes into one node.

### **Researcher Position**

Several steps were taken to identify and avoid potential sources of bias, assumptions, worldview, or theoretical orientation that might have impacted the validity of the research. First and foremost, all of the participants involved in the case study phenomena were interviewed thus eliminating the possibility that individuals were chosen with expected outcomes in mind. In addition, each participant confirmed the occurrence of the significant spiritual change in their lives. Furthermore, discussion with individuals to whom the participant had independently reported such an experience also confirmed their claim to their spiritual growth. Finally, the preliminary results were shared with and confirmed by the individuals in what Merriam calls “member checks.”<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> Ibid., 217.



The interviews were conducted in the spring of 2014, soon after the group disbanded for its summer recess.

By its nature, in qualitative research, the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection. In this case study, the researcher was also the leader of the group that appeared to have experienced significant spiritual growth. As such, it was important that the researcher take precautions to avoid bending the data in any way to reflect more positively on the researcher's leadership than was warranted by the data itself. It is believed that the process defined above regarding participant selection, research question development and review by others, and confirmation of findings with the participants guarded from bias and error.

### **Study Limitations**

A study like this, by its very nature is limited in regard to universal application. The group was limited to males at the upper levels of corporate life. Furthermore, the participants were mature and well-equipped church leaders who had previously experienced their church's discipleship curriculum. Thus the interview analysis is not necessarily universally applicable beyond this demographic. It is the responsibility of the reader to understand that recommendations made below will not necessarily apply to females, workers in lower echelon positions, or less spiritually mature individuals.

This chapter has effectively described the process by which data was collected. The following chapter will report on the findings from the research.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Data Report and Analysis**

The purpose of this study is to explore how Christian C-level executives experience increased motivation to pursue spiritual maturity after gaining clarity about their kingdom purpose. Participants have been selected who have studied and can articulate kingdom purpose as it relates to their own life and have had a concurrent significant increase in their desire for and willingness to expend significant effort to develop spiritual maturity. Early indications are that these individuals feel that they are, and will continue to be, far more effective for the kingdom in their marketplace environment, having experienced the discovery of their kingdom purpose.

Because the intent of the study was to understand a particular shared experience, the qualitative research was a qualitative case study. Merriam says, “Case study has proven particularly useful for studying educational innovations, evaluating programs, and informing policy.”<sup>259</sup> This study will analyze the data under the following headings:

- Formation of the Group
- Changes Experienced by the Participants
- Their Understanding of Kingdom Purpose
- Their Understanding of God’s View of Their Work
- Their Understanding of Their View of Work
- Their Understanding of Spirituality

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<sup>259</sup> Merriam, *Qualitative Research*, 51.

- Their Engagement with Their Life Plan
- Salient Characteristics of the Particular Shared Experience
- The Study of Theology of Work
- The Exercise of Life Planning
- The Development of a Dashboard
- Exploring Kingdom Purpose as it Related to All Roles
- The Soil of the Particular Shared Experience
- The Anticipated Future Implications of the Changes

### **Formation of the Group**

This study will attempt to understand an experience shared by six individuals who participated in a discipleship group at their church. The group met over the ministry year 2013-2014 in an attempt to gain clarity in their individual kingdom purpose. There were no prerequisites for joining the group, other than interest in the topic. Several shared characteristics did contribute to the success of forming this group. Each participant was a C-level executive. Mike was a lawyer who owned his own practice. Dave was an executive with a large banking software company who had line responsibility for a new product development. Bob was the CEO of a construction company. Sam was a divisional head of a banking services company, and Karl was COO of a software development company.

Each of the participants had participated in multiple discipleship groups, following their church's preferred program, in the past both as leaders and participants, ranging from three to six previous group experiences.

Even though the group ranged in age from 36 to 55 years-old, Mike stated, “I think it was the level of maturity of the people involved; (laughing) I have to say that our group was old. I have been in older groups, people of older age, but this group had men in it that had lived at least 15-20 years as a Christian.” Each participant self-identified as “very active” in church.

Nonetheless, each participant admitted to having had a works-based view of spiritual maturity. Karl’s statement regarding his view of spiritual maturity was typical, “Certainly, it was about how much time did I spend reading the Bible. It was sort of like the activity matrix: how much did I do, am I spending quiet time, am I going to worship regularly, am I plugged into a Sunday school class. It was more about generic checking the boxes off... very religious, very dry and robotic obedience kind of stuff.”

Furthermore, the participants admitted to having what Dave called a “holy discontent.” Bob said, “I was pleased that I was making progress, like losing weight. You lose weight, and you plateau, then, you lose more, and you plateau. I think the plateau still had an upward slope, but it was a little flatter. I think I was increasing that slope a little bit, being intentional and more proactive, instead of going through the motions and being reactive.” Each sensed that there was more to spiritual maturity even though they could not define it.

Each of the participants had had several previous experiences of developing a life plan, though they each admitted that they seldom or never referred to it after the original exercise. Mike stated, “There was dust on it.” Another participant commented, “I would go back to look at it, just for the goals.”

Another key factor in forming the group was that each member wanted to understand how the gospel applied to the entirety of their lives. Karl was typical when he stated, “We were all curious about how we could better understand our professional roles and look at that as our ministry. I felt like when we started to have some of these nuts cracked for us, the revelation of work is a purpose and can help you fulfill your purpose, we started to bond around that, to figure that out together.”. Finally, as indicated in Karl’s statement, these men had had little prior experience of knowing each other well.

### **Changes Experienced by the Participants**

All participants identified significant change in one of five areas: their understanding of kingdom purpose, their understanding of God’s view of their work, their understanding of their view of their work, their understanding of spirituality, and finally their engagement with their life plan.

#### *Their Understanding of Kingdom Purpose*

As previously quoted Pope,<sup>260</sup> in discussing the mission component (of the TEAMS process), indicated, "In my opinion this is the most challenging of the five emphases. In a certain respect, it is ‘the lead domino’ of spiritual formation." Understanding kingdom purpose as a robust definition of an individual’s mission was the topic discussed most often and most passionately. Mission was no longer restricted to nights and weekends. For the first time these men came to realize that mission was what they were called to do forty to fifty hours per week. When they did so it radically changed their sense of calling. As Bob explained, “I had never thought God has a purpose for my life.” Bob continued, “[Kingdom purpose brought] all these chapters

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<sup>260</sup> Pope, *Insourcing*, 34.

together into one book, your marriage, your work, your parenting. They're all different chapters, but it's all one book, and it's all got to work together...Everything stems from that. My life has a destination; there's a direction; there's a purpose."

Several of the participants spoke of a sense of peace coming from the fact that they now understood that all of their life mattered to God. Dave said,

I would say that there is a level of peace that comes from having all those pieces that were kind of doing their own things but never really having a story that tied them all together becoming clearer and clearer as time goes on. How does my work and my family and my church and my spiritual gifts and that three-inch binder of all the things that I'm good at, how do all those things tie together? As those things are coming together, there is a level of peace because you're not being pulled in a ton of different directions... there's confidence because, I have a better understanding of who I am and what I'm supposed to be doing and what I'm not supposed to be doing and the freedom from guilt from saying no to things that I'm just not wired to be good at, and the clarity that comes from all those, is really helpful.

Realizing that all of life mattered to God gave a sense of importance to parts of their life that had, until recently, seemed unimportant. Dave continued,

I would say I'm more consistent now, because I have a better narrative to tie it back to. It's not just, I need to have devotions because I need to have devotions. It's I need to have this time of worship because this is God's calling for me, and I've done the homework, to go from a 30,000-foot view of my calling down to a what do I do today, to pursue that, and it gives context and in some cases even meaning to personal time of worship that I honestly just didn't have before. I just did it because I'm good at keeping rules.... I think it's redefining things. I'm not saying that my spiritual disciplines are better. , I would say that, I'm looking at a different set of metrics to define what my spiritual state looks like. It's no longer about, Did you go to church this Sunday? Did you tithe this Sunday? Did you look at porn this week.... It was all about what I did, as opposed to a theology or a holistic framework for why I do what I'm doing, and so now, for the first time in my life, I'm actually thinking about things like, [for instance] getting up and going to the gym, and there's a spiritual dimension to that. I've always felt guilty, I thought maybe that was my vanity, and so no, this is creating, it's helping me to see the spiritual dimension to all of the practical things that I've been doing.

The theme of integration flowed throughout the interviews. Kingdom purpose ties all aspects of these individuals lives into a coherent whole with the result that they have a sense of integrity as they live their lives under God's calling. Karl expounded further,

It's not so much why should I, or how should I behave myself at work. That wasn't really the question, but the so-what was the question. I'll be 50 next year, and so everyday seems like the day before and the next day, and so what difference does it make, right? I'm doing stuff, it's the right stuff, I didn't really see how it's fitting into the big picture.... It feels much more intentional and purposeful., It is functional, but it's more spiritual. And so, I can't quite put my finger on it, but it definitely is different..... the feeling of understanding how [kingdom purpose] connects to how I spend 50 or 60 hours a week--it now [doesn't] feel like two different segments of my life.... big picture vision, if I know what that long-term thing is... it helps me get momentum.

The sense of integrity seems to come from the fact that these men now realize that they are gifted, called and positioned to execute a, unique to them, kingdom purpose.

Mike explained the dynamic from his perspective,

The exercise that we did in our group to match up our calling with our skill set and our passions made me think, "Wait a minute. I'm spending 8 hours a day at a work place that is not an act of worship, an end in and of itself." I think there'd be some benefit here to finding out how I am designed. What makes me tick? And when I was doing a life plan one of the things that that jazzed me, was defending people. God especially designed me to help, represent people legally. So, if he's designed me that way, and it jazzes me, I need to get that into my purpose statement. And I did. My mission statement has always been, , "I want to be more like God, more like him." Well, now my mission statement [reads], "By God's grace I want to become more like him by loving, comforting, and defending those around me." And that whole idea of defending that was not part of my mission statement before.... There is a joy that comes from working out your life statement, when you know God's pleased with you, when he's seeing the Mike that he designed, doing and functioning the way he ought to. So, when I'm loving, comforting and defending people with my work, there's a joy that comes from that, a peace, a "well done good and faithful servant." ... And that's just one motivator. Another motivator is that I'm absolutely an important thread in the fabric that he's weaving.

Before this shared experience, these men were frequently buffeted by fear and anxiety. But now they express a sense of confidence knowing that God has ordained things according to the kingdom purpose to which they are called. They can now interpret experiences that used to create stress or anxiety in light of their God given calling. Sam explains how,

When we go to this group that we have now, I can go in, dealing with all different fears or dealing with all kinds of stress, and I can come out of that Tuesday morning and go ok, “we’re back to, what my calling is, right?” Have I made that calling actionable yet? Maybe not, but it brings me back to a center or it brings me back to a focus to say, “Ok, the stuff you think is going on is not as important as what we’re talking about here,” Now I come out of there and I’m saying, “Well boy, I understand my calling now. I’m gonna see the positive side of all this, like “what is this whole huge journey gonna be like?” The marketplace could be a huge journey and great enjoyment of, God’s pleasures.... I’ve always had that sense of kingdom purpose. I just never had anything to root it in or a foundational system, to be able to come back to. Part of my calling has to do with fear. My spiritual times would go up and down depending on how my work is going. Now, I’ve taken that up and down motion out, and there’s more of a contentment peace and quiet. My vision [statement] talks about a little bit about this. There will be this quiet understanding, this quiet demeanor in a pretty chaotic situation, and through Christ, that peace will help people understand that if they’re dealing with anxiety or if they’re dealing with that kind of stressful world, there’s something different in the marketplace for me. ... Now I have this calling, and I have at least a paragraph I come back to on a pretty regular basis now. I have a tool there, a mental tool. I can self-identify when fear is going to drive me or I’m going to make a decision on something. If there is a God of the universe and he does call me to this, it’s not even just marketplace as much as, “My calling is do not fear; trust the Lord through prayer with your family finances and career without boundaries so that you can use your gift of creativity and vibration to impact the kingdom for Christ.” ... Before I may have looked at things as, “What if this happens?” And there I am having negative thoughts. But now I come back to, “I have this calling, and it’s starting to transform my thought process. I have this anchor, so that even if I drift way out, it will just stop. And if something bad happens, I’ll just reel that anchor back in. God will continue to show me over the next five, ten, fifteen years what that [calling] is.”... It’s definitely better. There’s a peace that makes me nervous. I think God will walk me through this as I spend more time with it. I start to feel this peace, and I start to think, “I shouldn’t have this peace! I should be doing something, I shouldn’t ... it shouldn’t feel easy.” But I feel the natural flow of it.”... I’m getting this peace, but it’s not to just stay there. It’s to take risks and take chances and to do things and not worry about



what the outcome is.... Because now I feel fully engaged. Before it felt like just something I did....It's brought simplicity to the complexity.

Gaining clarity about their kingdom purpose was, by far, the most, life changing part of their experience.

### *Their Understanding of God's View of Their Work*

Gaining clarity about kingdom purpose affected every area of the lives of these men and especially changed perception of their understanding of God's view of their work. Bob admitted that he never thought much about God's view of his work until now, "I never thought that God might care. I knew, to not cheat or steal." Bob went on to state, "Spirituality has invaded a big piece of...life that it wasn't in before." Once he understood God's call, he said, "My perception is now I understand God cares about what I do. I had never thought about that."

Dave also lacked a clear sense of God's purpose for his work. He said that he

perceived that God had something for me to do, and that it was my responsibility to figure out what that was and to do it. Once I found that, or was in the process of finding that, I was responsible to be faithful, to work hard, to tithe or give from the salary that I got paid for that thing. But in terms of really participating with God in the shalom, the restoration -- that was a completely foreign concept. I would not have had any framework for that so it was a pretty tactical, functional, understanding. There wasn't a strategic umbrella that all this stuff fit under. .

Now seeing for the first time that God cares that his work is done he added,

I have a much better understanding of why my job matters to God, why God cares about financial services technology. If you would have asked me that 18 months ago, I would have said, "God doesn't care about financial services technology." And, yet, through our conversations, through some of the books I've read, through some of my own personal reflections, [I've learned that] in the places of the world where this doesn't exist, it's painful, it's ugly, it's corrupt. There's all sorts of bad things that come when this doesn't happen. The opposite of flourishing. So, does God care that this happens? He does, and I'd never really thought about that. I'd kind of thought about it as a necessary evil. It's a job, a corporate job, but even as a necessary evil, God redeems it because I'm able to provide for my wife and children and tithe and give some money to support a kid in Africa. The thought

that he actually cares about financial services technology, that's a completely new thought for me in the last 18 months.

As did each of the other men, Karl communicated that he thought God's primary interest in his work was a venue for evangelism. He explained, "I don't know that I understood what I thought. It wasn't clear. I perceived that God wanted me to be in [the role of evangelist], exclusively." After he discovered clarity about his kingdom purpose and became convinced that God cared about the work itself, he began to perceive his work as "more spiritual" than when he perceived it exclusively as venue for "saving souls." In fact, to him "it feels much more intentional and purposeful. The fact that I'm in the role that I'm in is a spiritual thing. I can say yes to these things, and I can also say no to these other things because it doesn't fit inside the box that I've drawn and I can feel ok with that." Mike concurred that he was more effective in evangelism after gaining clarity about kingdom purpose, "I'm much more free to share God now as well because work is a ministry now. I'm much more free to share him. I'm much more free to give him credit."

Mike expressed an opinion, shared by the group, that he had accepted erroneous thinking,

Relatively early on, I as an attorney, a divorce attorney, found myself looking at work, my divorce work, as a necessary evil. It was necessary because people can't stay together. People need a divorce attorney, and I'm facilitating something that God hates, therefore God must be displeased. [Then] I was shown that that was erroneous thinking. So, it was a two-step process. One, it was exposing that erroneous thinking by the probing questions that were asked, and two, [I saw the] erroneous thinking on my part and how I viewed my job, how I glorified God with my job. Yes, divorce was odious to God, but just as murder is odious to a doctor, a doctor has to come in, [to] help heal patients.

Seeing a different perspective on God's view of their work fundamentally changed their view of their own work. Mike said, "by focusing on what is required of me and focusing on the fact now I have a certain joy or appreciation that God is in my work and my work is my ministry for God, of course that's impactful, of course it's going to lead me to take much more of an interest in what my life plan is."

*Their Understanding of Their View of Their Work*

Dave spoke for the group when he characterized his prior understanding of his work as an "ethical view." He was supposed to "'be good' while he was there, share the gospel, and earn money to support church work."

All the participants thus had a spiritually disconnected view of their work. This was variously stated as a necessary evil: Bob said, "I thought of spiritual maturity and spiritual development, very disassociated from my...calling. They were very independent thoughts." Dave added, "It was, almost the Greek dualism, there was my spiritual calling and then there was my work and my job, and they may overlap or touch in a couple places, but they don't really have a significant amount to do with each other...[It was mostly] I've got a message that you need to hear." Karl agreed, "My understanding was that it was a means to an end, it was something we were called to do, that it was, I was called to support my family and myself, it was wrong not to work, and that to be honest with you, um, it was just a necessary evil."

Mike explained,

There was a level of satisfaction in giving my clients a check or seeing them happy after, getting them out of an abusive marriage, um, there were moments of satisfaction, but, the yuck factor was high...I don't think I, not at all, I don't know, I would say this, probably my wife and I to be blunt and honest, my undergrad was in education, so I thought I was going to teach, and then we realized, well, we got married in college and we were like, I don't know, if you

want to stay home I'm not sure I'm gonna be able to be a teacher.... It'd be slim, but even there I didn't have a good perspective on work, cause you know, if my calling was to be there, what is money have to do with, the calling part of it?

Sam had a similar experience,

I didn't have a good perspective on that, so I thought well boy, I better go in the business world cause I gotta make money, and then we said "you know what, they need people in the marketplace for Christ" and then you just drifted, now you look back and you're like, oh, ok. That was 97 when I graduated from college, so really three years before I came to that conclusion, so those first three years, and I can remember my first year in the workplace and thinking, like this is it? And I was traveling all the time and my wife and I, well this is not what we want, and just started realizing well, this is, this is what it's going to be.

In contrast with their previous views, now these same men are describing the benefits of having their faith integrated into their work life. Bob explained how "spirituality has invaded a big piece of ... life that it wasn't in before... It is much more of you know, how can I serve, how do I serve God, my company? And the people that I work for and with? As opposed to, I'm the COO, and I need to approve this or watch this or guard this or do this, I mean, which is very functional, its more about, how do I relate to those around me in the role that I've been called to."

Karl now sees his co-workers differently,

It's easy for me to look at my non-Christian bosses and say well they're not Christians, I don't need to respect or value them, but what I've learned in the last couple years is that it's not at all the case, and I know, I've known that they are the authority that God has placed over me, but when I look at my role as being my ministry, that means that those guys are the receivers of that ministry, and it has totally changed the way that I talk to them and about them and think about them and think about what I can do to make them more successful, even in spite of their lost nature... Mike agrees I feel better about what I do, and more grateful, that I am doing God's will, that I am pleasing God with what I'm doing as an attorney.

Mike's prayer life has changed. He described how "my petitionary prayer with others has changed. I now pray over my clients, pray more than I used to, and I'm asking

my wife to pray over clients. I'm praying. I'm getting other people, not just my wife, but close friends to pray over court dates, hearings, depositions, um, there's much more of, with me having more awareness that God is involved in my work." For Mike, the change goes beyond prayer. He senses God's involvement in his life more than he had previously. He explained,

God is definitely involved in my work, God is very much concerned with what I do, it is my ministry, it is a ministry of mine. God's helped me to be good at it, he designed me that way. It is not a means, but it's also an end in and of itself... That's been huge for me, the idea, it's almost the same, its different sides to the same coin. Saying it's an act of worship and saying it's an end in and of itself means almost the same thing. In and of itself, my work has intrinsic value... I wouldn't say that my devotion, my quiet times have changed too much other than the, like I said the focus on the praying for my clients, um but I will say, that my studies have occurred, occasionally at my work place, that instead of quiet time in the morning before I went to work, I mean now, there was a dichotomy in that spiritual work will take care of things at home rather than doing that stuff at that nasty place called work... but now I feel much more comfortable praying throughout the day... I'm a minister. That I'm carrying out and doing what God's designed me to do, that he's pleased with my work... I bring a smile to his face when I defend people well and rid them of fear.

Sam also experienced a different view of work. I now try to do my work "on earth as it is in heaven. So, the emails that I write, and this is even this week, the emails that I write that I go, this is stupid, do I really write emails all day long about stupid stuff like this? But if you go, wait a minute I'm trying to mine hidden value and treasure, this is part of the journey of that, and that I'm probably gonna write email in heaven. To people, that I'm gonna do this, and communication is important and communicating well is important in heaven."

### *Their Understanding of Spirituality*

As the participants grappled with how God views their jobs, their sense of spirituality moved from a church-centric perspective to an integrated perspective. These

men moved from a Christo-Platonic, sacred/secular distinction to a fully orbed view of spirituality. Their satisfaction level and sense of participation in God's kingdom as full participants skyrocketed.

Before the group, Bob described his view of spirituality, "I think I was fairly typical of a lot of people who call themselves Christians, I went through the service on Sunday and you know, God was what I did, and therefore I was a Christian, cause I went to church on Sunday. I wasn't robbing anybody, I wasn't stealing anything from anybody, I did not understand, necessarily the spirit of the law, I kind of just knew certain things were wrong...I think it's because, a lot of us mentally separate life from work...we have a tendency to do that as opposed to looking, looking at the whole book, you know, it's like picking out a chapter and saying ok, I'm just gonna look at this chapter...I would say that I thought of spiritual maturity and spiritual development, very disassociated from my...calling. They were very independent thoughts."

Dave recounted how he viewed spirituality

kind of independently from my purpose, a lot of them were more around spiritual disciplines, church involvement, use of spiritual gifts, um, which you know looking back, there was some overlap there, so most of my gifts were around leadership, and I found myself consistently being asked to take leadership responsibilities in ministry capacities, so it shouldn't have been a shock, but I never really had an overarching narrative for how those things fit together it was just, oh I guess I'm good at leading stuff, so I keep getting pulled into leading stuff at church and leading stuff at work, but there was never really a story to tie them all together...I was doing all of the right things from the church standpoint, I think my church would think I was highly effective in what they wanted me to be doing, but I don't think that my church was asking the right things of me...It was all about what I did, as opposed to a theology or a holistic framework for why I do what I'm doing, and so now, for the first time in my life, I'm actually thinking about things like, getting up and going to the gym, there's a spiritual dimension to that, that's never been, I've always felt guilty, I thought maybe that was my vanity, and so no, this is creating, its helping me to see the spiritual dimension to all of the practical things that I've been doing.

Karl used time to describe his transformation, “my spiritual walk was before and after work and on the weekends, before this group, then a big chunk of my life was not looking for God.” Mike used similar terminology, saying, Satan “won a third of my time, 8 hours a day, he didn’t have to worry about it anymore... I think my spiritual time came in and out, where I would spend a lot of time with the Lord, but a lot of times I was spending my time with the Lord out of fear, like something’s happening in the workplace, I could lose my job, so I’m going to go to Christ, or I’m dealing with anxiety.” Sam described a similar dynamic where he used God to alleviate difficulty instead of integrating him into all of life, “I’ve drifted for 15 years and I’ll just be honest, I’m now in a career where I’m like, I don’t know how I drifted out to here, and boy is this like where I’m really supposed to be?”

After learning about God’s kingdom, the participants’ sense of purpose is palpable. Dave exemplifies their changed perspective, saying, “for the first time in my life, I’m actually thinking about things like, getting up and going to the gym; there’s a spiritual dimension to that, that’s never been. I’ve always felt guilty, I thought maybe that was my vanity, and so no, this is creating, it’s helping me to see the spiritual dimension to all of the practical things that I’ve been doing.” Dave continued,

I think it’s kind of a lot of what we’ve been saying already, it ties my weekly calendar, which is what drives my life for the most part, if you’re not on my calendar you don’t really exist, it ties my calendar, to the creation fall redemption meta narrative through my Kingdom purpose and that makes my spiritual life so much more integrated into my real life, because otherwise my spiritual life becomes the 30 minutes I spend in the morning having personal devotions, the couple hours I spend on Sunday and maybe an hour or two here or there, when I’m having devotions or meeting with somebody from church. That’s my spiritual life, or at least it was my spiritual life. Now my spiritual life is the whole thing.

Mike agreed and applied the principles to money, “It’s not just getting a paycheck, it’s not just a means. It’s, uh, God’s behind every bush now, any turn I take, any step I make, I’m looking at it in depositions, hearings.” He described the emotional help understanding God’s kingdom brings, “There’s more of a joy in how I work when I understand that God is alongside me. It’s not just me, him holding his nose, while he looks down and blessing my work, like I thought he used to be.”

### *Their Engagement with Their Life Plan*

Each of these men had previously developed life plans, although these were never fully integrated into their lives. Mike stated “There was dust on it.” Another participant described his interaction with his life plan before attending the group, “Zero, well, maybe one.... I would go back, there were, it was interesting to look at it, to look at, just for the goals, it was not so much the uh, purpose statement or mission statement, but I’d go back and take a look at the goals.” Bob said, “well, I mean, it didn’t get it.” Dave, the only committed life planning junkie, admitted “I would say, in my experience, I had a life plan, but it was a 30,000-foot view, it wasn’t rigorous but it existed, and I had a weekly checklist of the things that I wanted to do, right? Whether that’s having devotions or going to the gym, those things just have never been connected.” Karl said his previous life plan “was not very valuable... I mean, I went through the process, and there were certainly artifacts that came out of that.”

Each of these men now interact with their life plans on a daily or weekly rhythm. In discussing this change, Bob said, “I was going through the motions, and I was fine. I was making a good living, but, after we went through this thing I (realized) I had this thing all backwards. I need to reinvent, I need to back this train up. That’s what’s



happening right now.” Having understood God’s kingdom calling on his life, he now wants to carefully plan his next step. He continued, “I need to be reviewing it on a more daily basis...it did create in me ...a sense that there are certain things I need to be doing on a regular basis.”

Dave explained how life planning relates to kingdom purpose, “I think because it has context and meaning. I’m good at analysis which is taking something and breaking it down. They teach you that in engineering school. What I had lacked was synthesis, which is taking something and tying it back up to a higher context and purpose. This life plan does both; it was the synthesis to a higher calling and then the analysis down to what are you going to do this week to begin moving the ball towards that goal.”.

### **Salient Characteristics of the Particular Shared Experience**

The interviews also revealed five salient aspects of the men’s discipleship group that ignited their commitment to develop spiritual maturity: study of the theology of work – particularly kingdom purpose, the exercise of life planning, the development of a dashboard, the integration of kingdom purpose into every role in life, and the soil in which the particular shared experience germinated.

#### *The Study of the Theology of Work*

Each of the men mentioned specific theological concepts as significant. Bob recounted his learning process, “My perception is now I understand God cares about what I do, and the other question that you brought up ‘what would happen if somebody didn’t do your job?’” He was specifically referring to the spiritual impact of specific work not being performed. For example, what would happen to the world if no one collected the garbage? Disease and widespread death would negatively impact the spread of the

gospel. Mike confirmed this perspective when he said, “God is infinitely interested in me and what I do eight hours a day at work, and he’s designed me for that; he’s equipped me to do what I do. He’s very intertwined in my work, where as before, I thought he just wanted me to get a paycheck.”

Another significant concept was the fact that God the Father and Jesus are workers. Bob stated he was impressed by “how involved Jesus was in work and that God created, God worked, he works; Jesus, he worked, in a sense Jesus not only worked with his hands in carpentry; he was a salesman!” The concept of the kingdom purpose of causing human flourishing was significant to Dave. He explained,

About a year or so ago, one of our pastors gave a sermon on Shalom, that was one of the first times I had ever really heard the concept of shalom, and something...really resonated in me. Then to read *Why Business Matters to God* put more legs on that, and I’m really starting to feel that (work) is truly critical to what God has created me for. I think our group began to take that overarching concept, which I had bought into before the group even started, and started making it more practical and giving it more of a spiritual, more of a scriptural foundation. Looking at passage after passage after passage, which I had read all of those dozens of times, but had never really seen it before. The sermon pastor did on shalom, the *Why Business Matters to God*, that book, laid the foundation, or laid the context, and then go back to those passages and to see them really with the light on for the first time -- it was like, oh my gosh this has been everywhere I have just never seen it. So then comes the practical application, which is the life plan. If God cares about shalom, and you can see that through books and sermons, but you can also see it in scripture, what does that mean for me. Well, here’s a life plan, you’ve probably had pieces of this scattered around, but let’s start over and tie all those pieces together and achieve a pretty good sense of clarity about how God’s story, the creation/fall/redemption narrative, ties to my unique purpose. Why did God put Dave here? What am I going to do tomorrow that ties to those two higher order things?

Dave continued, “Just spending a week on the fact that productivity matters to God, totally new thought for me. Honestly a little contradictory, to what I had been taught most of my life.”

Because of this study, these men read the Bible with a different set of eyes. Karl said, “Jesus put most or all of his parables in the context of somebody’s job, the workplace. Those people worked, 40 or 50 or maybe 80 hours a week. Spiritual life isn’t just walking wistfully through the wheat field. It was about harvesting and working and growing the wheat and turning the wheat into bread and things that people did.” Several of the men related to Karl’s statement, “We’re intentionally designed with capabilities and a purpose that expands beyond our physical life, What I do on a day to day basis is practice or sharpening for what I could be doing for eternity.”

Mike identified the workshop questions (see Appendix “B”) as significant in the groups processing the content. “I thought that those, those 7 or 8 questions, really brought a focus back to God’s involvement in work. I had no idea that scripture had so much to say on work, that he liked work.... It’s not cursed, the ground is cursed, and work is tough, but that doesn’t mean that he doesn’t take it and bless it and use it.”

Additionally, Mike was taken aback by the concept that work would continue in heaven, “I decided I was going to prove him wrong, and now I think that that’s a very, very valid concept.” Sam agreed, “We were built to work in Genesis, and that’s what we’ll probably do in heaven.” He explained, “Because the narrative in the marketplace is, one day, if I just had this amount of money, I would retire. Opposed to, the concept that we were built, pre-fall, to work, so work is good.”.

### *The Exercise of Life Planning*

Each of these men had developed a life plan in previous groups. However, life plans alone did not create a desire for and willingness to expend significant effort to develop spiritual maturity. Once the desire had been ignited, life planning became an

invaluable tool. This group never intended to pursue the process of life planning, but once the men had discovered that God had work for them to do, they did what was natural. They moved toward developing a business plan. Dave enthusiastically observed, “We all got together around the common theme that we believed God may care about what we do at work. Then the whole planning thing took a life of its own, because since this really matters, then I need to plan it.”

Dave made it clear that he believed that any of these exercises, in and of themselves, would not be effective. In his mind, it was the combination of life plan and kingdom purpose that created an environment in which the desire for and willingness to expend significant effort to develop spiritual maturity could be nurtured. Bill agreed, “We’ve all done life planning before; we’ve all read books about theology of work, but we haven’t actually said God wants me to do this.” Dave described how, “I had a life plan, but it was a 30,000-foot view; it wasn’t rigorous, but it existed, and I had a weekly checklist of the things that I wanted to do. Whether that’s having devotions or going to the gym, those things just have never been connected.”

Karl emphasized the importance of the dashboard, saying, “I think that bringing together the life plan and the dashboard is really important.” Dave described his success, “As a result of all the things that I believe and what I want to accomplish and what my goals are, my family is going to go to church this Sunday, and we’re going to have a family fun activity every week. That is implementing my life purpose.”

### *The Development of a Dashboard*

Defining a life purpose made the concept of a life purpose dashboard immediately relevant. Bob phrased it this way, “Sometimes we think it’s not right to have a checklist

for God. God doesn't need one, but I do. I converted mine down to the five most important things, and, I started using a dashboard tool, which gives me daily accountability I need to be looking at key performance indicators and where I scored the least."

These men had previously understood accountability as producing results that someone else imposed on them. After gaining clarity they now think about accountability as being responsible to God for producing results in their unique kingdom calling. As Dave said, "I would say I'm more consistent now, because I have a better narrative to tie it back to. I need to have this time of worship because this is God's calling for me. I've done the homework, to go from a 30,000 foot-view of my calling down to a what do I do today, and [kingdom purpose] gives context and in some cases even meaning to personal time of worship that I didn't have before. I just did it because I'm good at keeping rules." Dave understood that "if I skipped it, I'm cheating myself." Karl had a similar perspective. "I have six things I look at every day, that align with [my kingdom purpose], and so part of my devotion is to pray about those things, how am I today to be a servant? And to be a servant to those I work with, to be submissive and respectful to those I work for and to be honest and passionate and truthful. It helps me have some structure and get my mind set going into the day." The dashboard is only relevant if it helps the individual accomplish his kingdom purpose. To quote Karl again, "It's the connection to big picture purpose, down to one-on-one time with the kids."

### *Integrated Kingdom Purpose*

The desire for integration of kingdom purpose into all their life roles drove these men to seek consistency in applying kingdom purpose to each role. Believing that God

has called them to be the same man in every role prompts them to say with Bob, “We have several different hats we have to wear, and we also have an overall hat of being God’s servant, being a disciple, being a Christian, and what that really means. We then have all these sub hats we have to wear, and we can legitimately strike a balance and not feel like we have to do everything.”

Accepting one’s kingdom purpose then calls everyone to be the same person in all roles. As Dave states, “I would say that’s still in flux. When I look at like my role as a new father, it’s just not completely landed yet, on how I want to parent. In the same way, [kingdom purpose is] changing the way I want to interact with my wife, in the calling that God has for me and the purpose that he created me for.”

Dave continues, “It’s also made me more faithful in the things that I do have clarity about, a lot of my own personal disciplines...God made me my son’s dad, on purpose, and he created me as I am because there’s some of that that he wants to use to influence both...my wife and...my son. I had always kind of thought of this as being personal, maybe at church, and certainly professional, but not really so much on kind of the relationships with friends, children, and spouse.”

Sam concluded, “But it’s not to be different in each role; it’s to be the same person in that calling. It’s the same person in all roles and it’s not compartmentalizing, being this person in that role and this person in that role.

### *The Soil of the Particular Shared Experience*

The study required some environmental or context prerequisites. Dave said, “We’re all businessmen, here to talk about faith and work. I find I have a lot more in

common with these guys than I do with other groups that I've been a part of. This one's nice because there's a common interest and passion and calling."

Another aspect of this experience was the amount of time devoted to planning. As Dave stated, it was not "we're going to do a weekend planning retreat...it doesn't change a life, it doesn't have enough surface area in your life to wrestle with it every week." Sam identified another important aspect of the soil: a common purpose. He explained, "We all came in with that premise that we would figure out what does business and the gospel have to do with one another."

Each of the men had a sincere desire to determine if in fact God cared about the work that they did. They wanted to find a purpose for what they found themselves spending most of their time doing and how such a purpose connected to their churches' mission. Sam stated, "We're not going to talk about how to go out and evangelize, and tell people in the work place, but instead, how does my work really equate to the gospel? That was the biggest hook for me. And it was something new.... none of us had figured it out."

### **Their Anticipated Future Implications of the Changes**

The men now expect a future of spiritual growth. The trajectory of their lives now has a context for future decision making. Bob (currently pursuing his next corporate role) expressed, "It's changing the way I look for the next thing in that I'm pursuing it on a different level, not on how much money I can make but where can I be most effective, and then let the money worry about itself., I'm much more intentional of where my gifts can be most utilized and where can I be most effective and then let God work the rest of it out."

Each also expressed a willingness to say no to activities that did not fit. Dave expressed, “I have a better understanding of my calling, less guilt about saying no to other things. For example, I don’t feel bad about not being on a worship and arts team. I have some musical gifts, but that’s not my calling. ...I can spend more of my time on helping a staff member at church charged with leading cultural transformation and helping to craft what the leadership institute is supposed to look like.” He elaborated, “The kingdom will get, the church will get, more out of me spending three hours figuring out what the leadership institute is than the church gets from me in a three-hour choir rehearsal. It’s still three hours. But I’m going to have a much greater kingdom impact there than I would with the choir.”.

Their changed perspective on what spiritual maturity looks like will affect their spiritual pursuits in the future. Dave said, “I want to continue to change my paradigm of what spiritual maturity really looks like and have spiritual maturity be defined more by living out a life that is faithful to my purpose and calling than a somewhat arbitrary checklist of moral dos and don’ts.”

As Karl describes it, these men now have a foundation to build on. Rather than lurch from thing to thing, they will build from the foundation of kingdom purpose daily, weekly, and monthly. Karl expressed, “I have my own notes and I go back and I tweak and I fold and I manipulate and I test it against what I’m doing. It’ll change some, but it’s not going to change dramatically. This foundation gives me a basis to build on where as in the past it was this week that and next week this, and next month it might be something totally different. It feels a little more like there’s a framework on which to build.”



Each participant now has an anchor to constantly call him back to God's purposes. Sam characterized it as follows: "Before I may have [dwelt on] had negative thoughts, but now I have this calling and it's starting to transform my thought process. Even if I drift way out, it will just stop. And if something bad happens, I'll reel that anchor back in. I even have more of an expectation of a reason behind this, and he'll continue to show me over the next five, ten or fifteen years what that is."

## Chapter Five

### Discussion and Recommendations

The purpose of this study is to explore how Christian C-level executives experience an increased motivation to pursue spiritual maturity after gaining clarity about their kingdom purpose.

### Discussion of Findings

The literature review quoted Kent Humphreys' excellent book *Shepherding Horses*:

After reading this far, you may be asking yourself why it is important...to understand or work with such a small group within your church. There are at least two reasons. First, they simply cannot be trained using methods that work for most, so methods must be used that work for them. Secondly, these individuals have key positions of influence and leadership in the community, in their marketplaces, and in their churches. Your mission is to train them to use that influence for Godly purposes, to reach the people in such places for the Lord. The horses need to realize that their positions are actually places of ministry, not just platforms for their own gain, and you are the one to guide them.<sup>261</sup>

While I essentially agree with Humphreys when he says, "they simply cannot be trained using methods that work for most."<sup>262</sup> I also believe he overstates his point. I

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<sup>261</sup> Humphreys, *Shepherding Horses*, 2.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid.

would rather think that discipling this group of believers can supplement proven methods for Christian C-Level executives.

Chapter Four showed that these five men benefited greatly from their previous experience in discipleship. In fact, without this previous experience in discipleship, they would not have been able to achieve this new “plateau of spiritual maturity,” as Bob called it. This group of individuals was more mature than their peers who did not have the previous experience of their church’s discipleship curriculum based upon the TEAMS approach to discipleship. They were above average in performing the activities proscribed, as they understood it, by their church. But as Dave said, “I was doing all of the right things from the church standpoint. I think my church would think I was highly effective in what they wanted me to be doing, but I don’t think that my church was asking the right things of me.”

In other words, these men discovered that their kingdom purpose, while applying to their role as church member or leader, greatly transcended the church-centric and thus limited perspective that they had imbibed from their church leaders. These men moved from a self-described “works” and “duty” that were essentially “church-centric” perspective of kingdom purpose, which left them without any faith-based use of their gifts in their workplaces. The men landed at a clear understanding of kingdom purpose expressed using a life plan, including life mission, vision, and core values, applied to all roles to which they were called, especially their marketplace vocation. This movement had a powerful affect in their personal lives, creating a sense of peace and contentment greater than any they had previously experienced. In addition, it significantly increased their kingdom impact.

According to Doug Sherman, “Christianity has become insignificant as a force of influence on American life.”<sup>263</sup> He continues to call the church a “triviality...inappropriate and irrelevant to the marketplace.”<sup>264</sup> Welchel calls the church “ineffective.”<sup>265</sup> A church that is insignificant, trivial and ineffective is not likely to command the attention of its culture. Discovering the proper mix between content, context, and methodologies to create disciples with a robust understanding of how God has called, gifted, and positioned them for kingdom impact in the work that they do may well determine the outcome of our culture. Unfortunately, many pastors are not equipped by their education – both basic and continuing – to lead this revolution. I have maintained that this revolution will not gain traction beyond the faith and work ghetto until Christians are supplied with a steady diet of a robust theology of work as kingdom purpose weekly from the pulpits of churches.

As shown in the literature review, many pastors, unwittingly, supply a steady diet of Christo-Platonic based theology that results in well-disciplined church members who are attuned to the traditional church ministries (evangelism, support, education, and community service) but incapable of understanding how to be disciples of Christ in their marketplace roles.

Randy Pope concludes, “Let me rephrase the questions posed above more alarmingly: what if the pastoral/attractational model of church produced an army of Christians who are consumeristic, shallow, and bland? And what if the influential model

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<sup>263</sup> Sherman, *Your Work Matters to God*, 263.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>265</sup> Welchel, *How Then Should We Work?* 108.

of church cranked out wild-eyed activists who do loving acts without the love that springs from spiritual maturity? What if the church marched on, resolutely doing many of the right things, but without being the right people?”<sup>266</sup>

While it is important to point out that Pope understood the process of Life-on-Life Missional Discipleship as the antidote to bland Christianity; nonetheless, the C-Level executives interviewed still seemed to function without a faith-based component in their work role. Unless and until churches prepare their pastoral staff to truly “prepare God’s people for works of service,”<sup>267</sup> beyond the church-centric activities of evangelism, ministry funding, and service to the less fortunate, I am afraid that Pope’s sad description will become more and more a reality.

The study’s conclusions are to be applied exclusively in a limited manner to discipling C-Level Christian executives. In other words, to quote Humphreys again, “Methods must be used that work for them.”<sup>268</sup>

The literature review showed that excellent results in growing spiritual maturity have been gained following the best practices discussed, particularly the TEAMS processes. These best practices can be supplemented in the lives of C-Level Christian executives, allowing them to achieve a new plateau of spiritual maturity and kingdom impact. Certainly, all shepherds who truly pray “your kingdom come, your will be done

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<sup>266</sup> Pope, *Insourcing*, 25.

<sup>267</sup> Ephesians 4:12.

<sup>268</sup> Humphreys, *Shepherding Horses*, 14.

on earth as it is in heaven”<sup>269</sup> will desire to become equipped to help this segment of the flock so all the members can perform their works of service.

### **Recommendations for Practice**

Kent Humphries refers to “methods...that work for them,”<sup>270</sup> that is, executives, and the following explores suggestions on how pastors can incorporate these methods into their discipleship processes. The literature review showed that authors like Pope, Ogden, and Humphreys have refined, over years of practicing discipleship, best practices that produce high levels of spiritual maturity. Adding an additional summit to scale is in no way intended as a criticism of these best practices. Rather, churches should supplement these best practices by adding methods that are designed to increase the breadth and depth of spiritual maturity among Christian executives.

The qualitative research findings showed that there are ways to build on that foundation. I must recognize two things about the findings. First the foundation is essential. I do not believe that Christian executives can gain the results from these additional best practices unless and until a proper foundation has been built. In other words, scaling the kingdom purpose summit should not be attempted until, as Pope puts it, churches develop individuals who have been discipled.. As Pope says, "Here is how we define the finish line: mature, equipped disciples who invest in the maturing, and equipping of other disciples.”<sup>271</sup> Second, churches need to recognize that the supplemental best practices I recommend are designed to enhance the experience of C-

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<sup>269</sup> Matthew 6:10.

<sup>270</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>271</sup> Pope, *Insourcing*, 136.

Level Christian executives and cannot be applied as a generalized solution. All recommendations will need to be adapted to individual groups in various stations and seasons of life.

With these concerns in view, I recommend adding supplemental exercises to discover kingdom purpose. Once members have mastered such concepts, these individuals can more easily participate in a robust, slow, and deliberate exercise of life planning, applying their kingdom purpose to all roles that they are called to fulfill, supplemented using a dashboard to hold themselves accountable to the kingdom purpose God has created them to fulfill.

Such supplemental additions might take the shape of adding a vocation-based, kingdom purpose-oriented curriculum, to a TEAMS based discipleship program, for example, offered by facilitators especially trained to lead vocation-focused discipleship groups and capable of taking advantage of the five salient aspects discovered by the five participants: the study of the theology of work, the exercise of life planning, the development of a dashboard, the application of kingdom purpose to all roles the individuals are called, and the elements of the soil in which this particular experience germinated.

While limited in scope to a few individuals, this experience points to the potential to revolutionize churches and by extension the culture. This revolution will not gain traction beyond the faith and work ghetto until there is a steady diet of a robust theology of work as kingdom purpose weekly from the pulpits of churches. I do not believe an occasional sermon series focused on the workplace will suffice.

One stumbling block that must be overcome was discussed in the literature review. Churches must expand their definition of mission. The definition of mission as given by the literature review's authors, while effective in the lives of many and sufficient to achieve the necessary foundation, is not adequate. Increasing the kingdom effectiveness of C-level Christian executives' church leadership requires expanding their understanding and communication of kingdom purpose.

Pastors often unwittingly communicate a Christo-Platonic theology in which the *vita-contemplativa* is held up as more spiritual than the *vita-activa*. Many pastors are blinded by their church-centric responsibilities and do not see how they are miscommunicating. The discussion of the discipleship and the three authors' differing views of mission illustrated the tension.

As a real-world example, of the theme mentioned above in the literature review, that there are certain mistakes to be avoided when discipling C-level Christian executives I recount the following story. I recently hosted a well-known Christian author and pastor to address a Convene Group on the topic of "Finding God's Will in Business." His frequent use of the term "full time Christian work" to refer to his ministry and the ministries of his children created a space between the ministry roles of pastoral staff and the (implied) inferior role of non-full time Christians. The net result was that the auditors assumed a second-class status.

Thus, my next recommendation is that the church must find a way to sensitize its pastors to the negative impact of such language. As the literature review explored,

As one would expect, many of the authors give examples of specific mistakes that should be avoided. These mistakes cover a large field but tend to be about the faulty assumptions that are prevalent within our theological communication. These include the idea that work is merely a place where we earn money to



support the really important activity at church or where we can rescue our co-workers from an evil world. It finds its expression in the language we use (full-time Christian work), the hymns we sing (Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace.), the metanarratives that float through our minds, which cause us to see every spiritual reference in scripture as meaning something fundamentally non-physical which ultimately creates a view of eternity as a place where disembodied souls float about in a different dimension, rather than a New Heaven and New Earth which are fundamentally physical.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

Further research might take the shape of adding a vocation-based, kingdom purpose-oriented curriculum to a TEAMS-based discipleship program. For example, facilitators could be especially trained to lead vocation-focused discipleship groups and capable of taking advantage of the five salient aspects discovered by the five participants. The five key aspects were the study of the theology of work – particularly kingdom purpose, the exercise of life planning, the development of a dashboard, applying kingdom purpose to all roles the individuals are called to play, and the soil in which this particular experience germinated. Perhaps including pastors as participants in these groups might achieve the end described in the previous section.

While all five participants experienced increased spiritual maturity, it remains to be seen if this program is sustainable and scalable. Thus, I would like to see continued research to determine whether these results are transferable to more diverse C-level executive groups, as well as non-C-Level employee groups and groups formed around vocational arenas.

I have begun supplementing the “Kingdom Purpose Workshop” to include some of the themes discovered in the literature review. I have taught this material many times and have heard impressive testimony from audiences about the impact of the material on

their spiritual development. Twice I have presented the workshop with more focused emphasis on the kingdom purpose. The intended purpose to which the image bearer is pointed is found in the final chapters of Revelation where God himself is living in the midst of his church as they live, work, and play in the physical new heaven and new earth tending the original garden at its center.

Every image bearer has a unique kingdom calling which they are gifted, called, and positioned to fulfill. I identified six categories of kingdom calling. While an individual's calling may contain aspects of some or all of these, one will be the dominant calling. These are:

- *overcoming the curse.*
- *causing God's world to flourish.*
- *extracting potential from creation.*
- *making Jesus attractive.*
- *living "on earth as it is in heaven" in light of and shaping the things to come in eternity.*
- *culture making.*<sup>272</sup>

While it is too early to tell, I sense that the Kingdom Purpose Workshop with the supplemental material will be more effective. It would be beneficial to attempt some qualitative research on participants prior to and after the addition of the supplemental material to determine its efficacy .

A class is slated to be developed and presented as part of Metro Atlanta Seminary's M.Div. Marketplace track, with an emphasis on the material found in the

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<sup>272</sup> Lutz, "Discovering Your Kingdom Purpose."

Kingdom Purpose Workshop. Qualitative research may be engaged with any M.Div. pastoral emphasis students who select this class.

The previous section outlined a stumbling block that must be overcome to increase the kingdom effectiveness of C-Level Christian executives: the need for church leadership to expand its understanding and communication of kingdom purpose. Overcoming this hurdle will determine whether the church can unleash a torrent of kingdom effectiveness among its C-Level Christian executives in their workplaces, and will be far more difficult than developing a sustainable and scalable program. This revolution will not gain traction beyond the faith and work ghetto until Christians are supplied with a steady diet of a robust theology of work as kingdom purpose weekly from the pulpits of their churches. I hope my dissertation work will prompt this qualitative research exercise by piloting ways to overcome this hurdle. To this end, I will propose two areas for additional research.

Before discussing the specifics of this additional research, I want to return to a statement by Kent Humphreys. He says, "What would happen if you were to choose a few workplace leaders from within your own church and meet with them regularly? The goal of such a small group meeting would be to help those leaders figure out how to have an effective ministry in their own spheres of influence, while mentoring and encouraging them spiritually along the way."<sup>273</sup> Humphreys points out an important rule that the meeting to discuss this discipleship relationship should be "on their turf."<sup>274</sup> He even

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<sup>273</sup> Humphreys, *Lasting Investments*, 24.

<sup>274</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

recommends, "While you are sending them out, why don't you join them? Visit them in their Jerusalem and in their Judea. Visit their offices, schools, and factories."<sup>275</sup>

The latter statements are significant. I believe that to overcome the shortfall in the church's current methods of educating pastors, we must take this advice into consideration. I hope to research methods to help pastoral leaders to visit C-level executives on their turf, to regularly visit them in their Jerusalem and in their Judea, to visit their offices, schools, and factories.

A research proposal has in fact been submitted to the Kern Foundation under the auspices of a large partner church with the Kern Foundations Faith, Work and Economics Initiative. It proposes a pilot program which is called Gospel at Work Day. There was a modest pilot in ministry year 2013-2014 which led us to believe an expanded program would bear fruit. The concept is simple: Pastoral guests are matched to marketplace believers who host them in the workplace for a day. The guest shadows marketplace believers to understand their kingdom calling. Host and guest are then asked to begin a kingdom calling project together.

My final recommendation for additional research remains to be explored. I have had preliminary discussions with the head of the field education department at a seminary. We began the discussion with the question of whether a practical theology class focused on developing a proper theology of work would be effective. We both agreed that a simple class would be unlikely to be effective. Students in an academic setting are unlikely to appreciate the fundamental importance of practical theology focused content until they are in ministry practice.

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<sup>275</sup> Ibid., 56.

Taking into consideration Kent Humphreys encouragement to get pastors involved on the turf of C-Level Christian executives has led me to consider a pilot program whereby one C-level Christian executive would be assigned to each of a pilot group of seminary students. The students would meet the executive in the workplace on a regular basis to encourage the student to develop their theological positions in conversations with believers who are struggling to implement theirs in the real world. Qualitative research could determine the effectiveness of this approach.

### **Conclusion**

Each of the men who participated in the vocation-based discipleship group had a sense that we were on holy ground. Dave expressed the feeling best,

In terms of the strategic impact that this could have, not only on our church but in our community and in the world, this is a conversation that the world has been desperate for, and we've been, as a church, big C Church, pretty silent on this topic for a long time. We've lost a significant amount of credibility because we just have no movement. We can be a part of it, or we can run from it, but, what does our faith mean about where we spend half of our waking hours?

The volume of almost hyperbolic adjectives used to describe the new-found kingdom purpose of these men attested to the growth they experienced. Other words included: theme, platform, foundation, rooting, tool, transformation, anchor, purpose, fully engaged, simplicity, participating with God, framework, strategic umbrella, rudder, boundaries, pleasing to God, an end in itself, whole book, a story, holistic, better narrative, context and meaning, redefining, integrated, connected, higher context and purpose, totally bought in, structure, one book, same person in all roles, paradigm shifting, connected, tied together, flag on a hill, and finally big picture. These descriptions are similar to those identified in the Clarity of Purpose and Job Satisfaction, Retention, and Performance literature review. These men believe they will significantly

increase their kingdom effectiveness because they now know what their high leverage activities are. They will no longer drift from thing to thing but rather will select their activities for highest kingdom impact.

Men and women in the marketplace long to hear the marketplace wisdom evident in Jesus' parables which show clearly that he was a man who spent a significant amount of time in their shoes. They want to be encouraged by the fact that the greatest evangelist in the world spent roughly half of his time operating a business as an intentional strategy to increase evangelistic effectiveness. They love to read Hebrews 11 and see that the 12 heroes of the faith mentioned all happen to be marketplace believers. They are empowered when they learn that the 12 men who turned the world upside down were not pastors, prophets, or church planters, but the marketplace team Jesus developed over the eighteen years he ran his Father's business. In short, they learn the kingdom purpose to which God has called them.

Rather than continuing to believe that they have outsourced the ministry to their pastors, members who have discovered their kingdom calling walk away with an awareness that the ministry is in fact theirs and that the pastor's role is to "prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up."<sup>276</sup> Every pastor's dream: a congregation begging to be discipled in order to take charge of the ministry. Any pastor who wants to bring their flock to increased spiritual maturity and kingdom effectiveness will want to take note. Getting this right could have significant impact on the future of our culture. May the Lord grant that it be so.

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<sup>276</sup> Ephesians 4:12.

## **Appendix A**

1. What would be the impact if your company's product or service was completely removed from the world?
- 2. Principle 1 – Our work is dignified and given eternal value by God's call**
  1. How do your company's products or services contribute to God's desire to hold all things together?
  2. In what way does your company "extract" treasures planted by God in creation?
- 3. Principle 2 – Work is where God's calling meets our design**
  1. How do your company's products or services contribute to overcoming the results of the curse?
  2. How do your company's products or services subdue the earth for the benefit of mankind?
  3. How do your company's products or services benefit the community especially the less fortunate?
  4. How do your company's products or services allow you and your employees to live confidently that others might see the effect of God in your lives?
  5. What are you or your company passionate about?
  6. What are your spiritual gifts?
  7. What unique skills do you or your company have?
  8. What has God uniquely positioned, gifted and called your company to?
  9. Complete this sentence: God has uniquely positioned, gifted and called (name of Company or individual) to....
  10. This is your Kingdom purpose?
- 4. Principle 3 – God's calling is seamless through Church Work and Play**
  1. What should change to make your workplace more faithful to its Kingdom purpose?

2. What should change to make your workplace more faithful to its responsibilities to its employees?
3. What should change to make your workplace more faithful to its responsibilities to its community?

**5. Principle 4 - Productivity is important since our work has unique eternal value**

1. Name three things you could implement that would make you or your company more productive for the kingdom.

**6. Principle 5 – Faithful work brings blessing which is given to serve God’s calling not our pleasure**

1. What can you do to optimize your company’s profits?
2. How much is enough?
  1. Income/Profit?
  2. Assets?
  3. Toys?
  4. What resources has God provided that are being consumed that could be redirected to Kingdom purposes?

**7. Principle 6 – Since our work is where we live out God’s calling it’s important that we not compromise**

1. Is your current work environment cause, beauty, accomplishment or calling based?
2. How can you change that?
  3. How can the 3 faith disciplines help you or your staff regain balance?



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