Kern Family Foundation/Azusa Pacific University
“Why We Work” Research Project

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Introduction
1. Our purpose – The purpose of this research was to consider how Christian professionals in different spheres of influence – particularly in secular business careers, education, and vocational ministry – perceive their working life, the value added by their particular vocation, the challenges faced in light of their Christian faith, and what differences might exist in the ways such values, perceptions, and beliefs are understood and communicated between professions.
2. Research focus groups were assembled from attendees of the fall 2012 Theology, Work, and the Economy Retreat.
   a. One hundred sixteen participants were involved in the retreat. Research focus groups were selected from this participant pool. Retreat attendees included faculty from the schools of Religion and Philosophy, Theology, and Business. Deans included those from the schools of Theology, Education, and Liberal Arts. The chairperson of APU’s board, some members of APU’s Board of Trustees attended as well. In addition, theology and business faculty from eight other universities were included in the research groups, along with several community business leaders and local pastors.
   b. Prior to the research focus groups discussions, participants collectively viewed a documentary on the subject of Christian faith in the workplace, attended two panel discussions on the subjects of work life, and attended a keynote address by APU’s Dean for the School of Theology, Scott Daniel’s titled, “Prophets, Priests, and Kings.” Together these events formed a theological framework surrounding the issue of Christian faith in the workplace. The focus group materials and questionnaires were developed around these specific areas of work life. (see Appendix 1 for a list of questions.)
   c. The research groups were divided broadly by occupation into eight discussion tables with one pre-selected discussion leader in each group. Participants ranged in age from early 30’s to late 60’s. There were 50 participants: 32 males and 18 females. Participants were placed in one of eight focus groups. The intention was to group by vocation. Vocation distribution was 16 theologians, two pastors, 15 business practitioners, eight business faculty, and nine assigned to
“other” category. Participants were assigned to focus groups before the retreat began. However, some participants ended up in groups to which they were not originally assigned. The focus groups lasted approximately seventy-five minutes. The audio of each group session was digitally recorded and facilitators had notebooks available.

d. Unfortunately, the research group that was predominantly attended by pastors had a microphone malfunction on the recording device, thus their conversations were not captured. The facilitator of this group did provide detailed recollections but this data was not used in the research analysis. Not having transcription data for the pastoral group had a negative impact on our ability to evaluate how pastors responded to these questions. However, despite this setback, the responses of six pastors were collected from different groups with functioning recording devices.

e. One of the eight research groups did not have a sufficient number of participants and was folded into an existing group. Therefore, the transcription data for six groups was available for analysis.

f. The participants were asked to answer six questions and given ten minutes per question.

Kings, Priests, and Prophets: The Focus Group Evaluation Categories

1. Once the data was collected, it appeared that the three-role paradigm delivered by the keynote address from Dr. Daniels provided a framework from which to further analyze the group responses. Therefore, the research targeted whether or not such roles (pastor, priest, and king) actually exist in the sample groups, and if so, what differences or similarities might exist within the conversational data.

2. Building from Daniel’s original definitions, more detailed definitions of the three roles were constructed before the analysis of the data was engaged.

3. Key words were identified for each role. Then a computer analysis software program (NVivo) searched the transcription data and cross-referenced each group conversation.

4. The three roles and their characteristics are as follows:

Kings
The primary purposes of the righteous king are to first discern God’s order and plan in the midst of any circumstance and second, to use their authority and power to appropriate and establish God’s order for those under the ruler’s authority.

Roles of the King:

1. Recognize God’s Order

   a. “The righteous are the ones who recognize and experience the life-giving effect of the order. To do so, the righteous one is the one who discerns the true
ordering of life and conforms to it. He does not buck against it or destroy his life by trying to escape it or change it.” ¹

b. God’s ordering of nature by “decree” in Gen. 8.21-22, God’s “decreeing” the boundaries of the earth (Prov. 8.29; Jer. 5.22; Psa. 148.1-6) is the same idea and term used in Psalm 2, a Royal Psalm, to indicate God decrees the order of nations and the king is expected to establish what God decrees.

c. The righteous king is not free to take initiatives as he pleases, but has the freedom and boundaries God decrees. For example, David was not permitted to build God’s temple (2 Samuel 7).

2. Establish and Appropriate God’s Order
   a. The Proverbs have many passages that point to the king’s responsibility:
      i. “Take away the wicked from the presence of the king and his throne will be established in righteousness” (Prov. 25:5).
      ii. “When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice. But when the wicked rule, the people groan” (Prov. 29:2).
      iii. “By justice a king gives stability to the land, but one who exacts gifts ruins it” (Prov. 29:4).
      iv. “If a ruler listens to falsehood, all his officials will be wicked” (Prov. 29:12).
      v. “If a king judges the poor with equity, his throne will be established forever” (Prov. 29:14).
      vi. “By the blessing of the upright a city is exalted; but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked” (Prov. 11:10f.)
      vii. “By me kings reign and rulers decree what is just; by me princes rule and nobles govern the earth (Prov. 8:15f.)

3. Bring together God’s provision and the people’s needs
   a. Psalm 72, a Royal Psalm, is an excellent example: “May God give justice through the king (72:1–4). In the first stanza the prayer is for the king to be endowed with the justice and righteousness of God. The king’s function as the agent of Yahweh (1 Sam 10:1–2) is evident in the emphasis in v 2 on his extending God’s righteousness and justice to God’s people, especially the poor; both the attributes and the people belong to God, and the king is the instrument that brings them together.” ²
   b. Martin Luther, speaking of princes, make a similar comment: “He is a prince who prays and labors, always open both to God’s will from above and to the need of his subjects down where they live. What he does as a ruler issues from this double

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responsiveness to things above and things below.”\(^3\)

4. Be righteous
   a. God’s promised well-being is dependent on the king’s righteousness:
   “The promises of Yahweh for a healthy, dependable ordering of life, the given that the wise men assume and affirm, is a reality only if righteousness is practiced by the historical agent of that order, namely, the king. Thus the decree assumes the appearance of a properly functioning monarch as a necessary precondition of the royal decree from Yahweh.” \(^4\)

5. Bring flourishing to the city state or nation
   a. When the king is righteous, when the king appropriates God’s order and intentions, those people under the authority of the king flourish (2 Sam. 18.1-19; 43. Consider also Josiah, Hezekiah.)

Priests
Priests were the mediators between God and humans in Israel. They represented God to the people and the people to God.

Roles of the Priest:

1. Instructing and representing God to the people:
   a. Malachi 2.4-9 “Know, then, that I have sent this command to you, that my covenant with Levi may hold, says the LORD of hosts. My covenant with him was a covenant of life and well-being, which I gave him; this called for reverence, and he revered me and stood in awe of my name. True instruction was in his mouth, and no wrong was found on his lips. He walked with me in integrity and uprightness, and he turned many from iniquity. For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and people should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts. But you have turned aside from the way; you have caused many to stumble by your instruction; you have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says the LORD of hosts, and so I make you despised and abased before all the people, inasmuch as you have not kept my ways but have shown partiality in your instruction.”
   b. While consulting God’s will was more open-ended earlier in Israel’s history, it gradually became associated with teaching the Torah: “... the Levites teach the customary laws (mispatim) and give instructions or decisions (torot) of God to the people (v. 10a [Deut. 33.10a]), in fidelity to the divine Covenant with Israel. The giving of tora by priests does not appear in any texts earlier than the eighth century or early ninth century (Hos. 4:6; Mic. 3:11; cf. also 2 Kgs. 12:3), but from

\(^3\) Gustaf Wingren, *Luther on Vocation*. (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2004), 272-274.

that time on down to the Exile, it is closely associated with priests (Dt. 31:9, 26; Jer. 2:8; 18:18; Ezek. 7:26; Zeph. 3:4).”

2. Maintaining community boundaries and determining clean vs. unclean in the Old Testament
   a. Leviticus 11-15
   b. Jesus sends lepers to show themselves to priests (Lk. 5.12-14; 17.14-15).

3. Offering prayers and sacrifices for the people
   a. Thanksgiving offerings (Peace offerings – Lev. 3; 7.11-4)
   b. Worship offerings (Grain offerings – Lev. 2; 6:14-23)
   c. Sin offerings (Lev. 4; 5.1-13 etc.)
   d. Trespass offerings – unintentional sin (Lev. 5.14-19)
   e. NT - Jesus institution of the Last Supper (Mk. 14.22-24), and his final sacrifice (Jesus as lamb of God, particularly in John).

4. Healing, delivering, forgiving
   a. Sacrifices offered for this purpose.
   b. Numbers 6.22-27 – Aaronic Benediction
   d. Jesus forgives sins (Mk. 2.5-9)
   e. Jesus’ healing and deliverance stories.
   f. Luke 4:18, Jesus quoting Isaiah as his purpose statement. This priestly role becomes central in Jesus’ teachings, the primary proof of the Kingdom of God coming to earth. (Mk. 1.14-16)

5. Caring for the Temple and sanctuaries
   a. Caretaking role for places of worship and instruction.
   b. Jesus “cleanses” the temple (Mk. 11.15-17)

**Prophets**
The prophets speak for God with two primary purposes: positively, reveal the character and plans of the one true God so the people will be faithful; negatively, conduct a war against idolatry and every action that originates from purposes other than obeying the one true God. Everything the prophets do harkens back to the Ten Commandments and particularly the first Commandment, which is the basis of the others:

> Then God spoke all these words, saying, “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate me, but

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showing kindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.” (Ex. 20:1-6)

Roles of the Prophet:

1. Represent God in a conflict with the people.
   a. Grows out of a powerful personal experience of God (Exodus 3.1-10; Jer. 1.1-10; Isaiah 6).
   b. Once the prophets experience God, God sends them on a mission of conflict.
   c. The conflict results from ongoing disobedience to God. The person, people, or nation have hardened their hearts to God’s voice and need to be confronted.
   d. The purposes of the conflict are discipline leading to change or judgment leading to annihilation.

2. Reveal everyday evils the people are perpetrating and demand change.
   a. The prophets are not like the Greek philosophers, who disdain daily life:
      “The gods attend to great matters; they neglect small ones.”  
      “. . . the prophet’s field of concern is not the mysteries of heaven, but the affairs of the market place; not the spiritual realities of the Beyond, but the life of the people; not the glories of eternity, but the blights of society. He addresses himself to those who trample upon the needy and destroy the poor of the land; who increase the price of grain, use dishonest scales, and sell the refuse of the corn (Amos 8:4-6). What the prophet’s ear perceives is the word of God, but what the word contains is God’s concern for the world.”
      “As the God of Israel is concerned with the here and now, the attention of the prophet is directed upon the social and political issues of the day. The mystic is absorbed in contemplation of the infinite; the prophet’s eye scans the definite and finite, the insolence and hypocrisy of man, the little cruelties, the silly idolatries. This is why it is not enough for a prophet to be inspired by God; he also must be informed about the world. The world and its fate are very dear to him. There is no hostility to civilization, only to its abuses.”
   b. Prophets speak of the concrete, the specific.
      i. “Hear this, you who trample the needy, to do away with the humble of the land, saying, ‘When will the new moon be over, So that we may sell grain, And the Sabbath, that we may open the wheat market, To make the bushel smaller and the shekel bigger, And to cheat with dishonest scales, So as to buy the helpless for money And the needy for a pair of

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7 Ibid, 364.
8 Ibid.
“sandals, And that we may sell the refuse of the wheat?”’ (Amos 8:4-6)

“To us a single act of injustice – cheating in business, exploitation of the poor – is slight; to the prophets, a disaster. To us injustice is injurious to the welfare of the people; to the prophets a deathblow to existence; to us, an episode; to them, a catastrophe, a threat to the world.”

3. Prophets link every day, concrete, specific evils with disobedience to God:
   a. Walter Brueggemann recognizes the inseparable character of the worship of the Holy God and the neighborliness of social justice, writing as follows:
      i. “The linkage between the holiness of Yahweh and the concreteness of neighborliness is wondrously voiced in Deut. 10:17-19. ‘For the Lord your God is god of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribe, who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them with food and clothing. You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.’
      ii. It is precisely the God who commands lords, gods, and pharaohs who loves immigrants and displaced persons and who provides them food and clothing. This ethic arises from the memory and the possibility of an alternative to Pharaoh.”
   c. The prophets tell the people God has rejected their worship because of their evil daily actions – a major theme in the prophets (Isa. 1.13, 29.13-14; Jer. 6.19-20; Hos. 6.6; Amos 5.22).
   d. James 1.28 continues this theme, speaking of true religion.

4. Warn of the Discipline or Judgment to Come:
   a. Discipline with ultimate purpose of salvation (Hos. 14.4-7)
   b. Judgment to express wrath (Joel 3.12; Mal. 3.5). Jesus and prophetic judgment (Matt. 23;37; Rev.)

5. Present God’s message of hope for the future:
   a. God will soften the hard hearts of the people (Ezek. 11.17-20; Ezek. 36)
   b. When the people return to God, God will bring salvation and flourishing (Isa. 54, 65).

**Analysis**

1. Once these roles were clearly defined, an analysis software program (NVivo) was used to mine the data for key words and characteristics.

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9 Ibid, 4.
2. Conversations from the six groups were transcribed. Unfortunately, the recording equipment malfunctioned for the group who were primarily pastors. Once we had the transcriptions, we imported them into NVivo.

3. Participant transcription data was then coded by whether the statement belonged to the category of kings, priests, or prophets.

4. Slide: bar graph of respondent professions – the number of responses by profession or occupation:
5. Visual Results – bar graph of nodes. “You can see from this bar graph the number of statements that we placed in each of the three categories.”
   a. Comment: It’s interesting to note that even though the majority of our respondents were business people and theologians, there were almost 400 priestly statements. This was an initial indicator that the three categories of kings, priests, and prophets were not going to coincide solely or primarily with the profession of the respondents.

6. Matrix of Occupation and Label: Shows how audience how many kingly, prophetic, and priestly statements were made by each professional group of respondents – See “Revised Matrix of Occupation and Label – Results Preview” below.

![Revised Matrix of Occupation and Label - Results Preview](image)

Significance of Matrix of Occupation and Label findings:
   a. Note that with all professions except pastors there is a graduated increase in statements – the fewest statements are prophet, followed by priestly statement, with the most statements being classified as kingly. This suggests, from our brief description of these categories that all of the focus group participants were primarily concerned with flourishing of people and organizations within our existing capitalist systems.

   b. The data indicated that theologians as well as business people made more kingly than prophetic statements. We might have expected theologians to be more prophetic. When we discussed this we decided that there was a self-selecting process whereby the theologians who joined us had a more positive view of the existing system than some who may have been more critical when engaging in such a discussion. This is an important finding because it underscores the importance of shaping these kinds of events to draw in theologians and others with a wider range of beliefs to participate in these discussions.

   c. While theologians had more kingly than prophetic statements, with priestly statements in the middle, we also noticed that the differences in the absolute number of statements in each category was much larger for business people than for the others. Theologians were almost equal in their priestly and kingly statements, while business people and non-profit leaders were heavily weighted toward kingly statements.
d. Also interesting, our data showed that pastors had basically an equal number of prophetic, priestly, and kingly statements. In fact, pastors were more prophetic than priestly. From reading about the role of priests in the OT, something struck us about this: priests were concerned with the community’s health much more than we are in our individualistic culture. When there are community issues such as unemployment or insufficient income within the community we might expect that pastors, in their teaching offices, would make prophetic statements regarding these situations that lead to a lack of flourishing.

7. Word frequency by category (See Word-Tree diagram in Appendix 2):
   a. Kings – “Business, economy, value, work” were all terms that showed up regularly. These terms relate clearly to the concerns of business leaders. Terms that indicate ethics/morals included “God, just, need, good, right, Christian, and well.” Terms that related specifically to what businesspeople do included “create, economic, make, money, need, want, work, time.”
   b. Priests – Words that showed up most frequently included God, just, people, value, and work.” Terms that indicated ethics/morals included “value, God, just, others, people, students, world, community.” Terms unique to the priestly function overlapped with the terms above, including “world, community, people, others, see, students, God.”
   c. Prophets – the word frequency for prophets showed significant overlap with that of kings, suggesting that they had many of the same interests, perhaps coming from different perspectives. Terms that showed up most frequently included “Value, economy, God, good, just and people.” Terms that indicate ethics/morals concerns include “value, good, just (both good and just were more frequent in the category as can be told by the size of the word), Christian, church, faith, God, know, people, and work.” Terms that we might expect prophets to use include “economy, church, good, people, life, system, and world.”
      i. Comments on word frequency analysis: From the analysis of the transcription data word trees were developed around the differing ways in which key concepts were defined and described by participants. These three key words are: (Appendix 2) Virtue, Honesty, and Scripture.
      ii. There was a significant overlap in the words most frequently used. If you look at the questions that we asked, both value and economy were used in the questions. This might account for their frequent use in the responses.
      iii. It was interesting to note that “community” was not a high frequency word for kings, but it was for both prophetic and priestly statements. Again, however, this word was a key word in our coding.
      iv. It was also interesting that some words were conspicuously absent from the high frequency lists – words such as “Bible” and “Scripture,” “virtues” or “ethics”, “honesty” or other such words.

**Theological Role Analysis in Transcriptions**
1. Below are sections of transcription data from which demonstrate the theological categories of Kings, Priests and Prophets:
   a. *Kingly Roles*
      i. Recognize/Discern God’s Order: (from the transcription data)
         1. “I use the Genesis story a lot. When God created order in the chaos, God did not just create order in the chaos to make it look good, because it involved creation. And each time that God created anything and let it be light and there was light and He said it was good. It’s that value has been given, not that light was created out of darkness. It’s not that God created, did his various things; it’s how ultimately God valued them. To say it is good, it is beyond the creation itself but that is its value because creation becomes good, and being able to instill that distinctive way to seeing work, that distinctive way to approaching work because I am a Christian, that separates me from a secular person working. That for me, if you are able to do that and say I’m doing this, and that ultimately it’s not in the money you make, but participating in this whole creation or design of making the world a better place either through how I value things. If I am able to instill that, I have done my job.”
         2. “There’s value in producing and creating, there’s value in not just having a handout. There’s value in, I don’t want to say earning, but in earning is part of it. . . .So instilling those kingdom values of work of generosity, of love, of mercy, of forgiveness, and how that works in the fact that it comes out in work. . . .Because now we start to erode our own values in terms of producing and creating and earning and being a part of giving and not just getting and how that becomes confused.”
         3. “Part of the challenge in your discussion about values, about maybe even the context of this whole discussion which is theology, work, and economics, is this definition of what value is. The other is the dimension of what value is. As a society we can easily identify or maybe quickly understand or quickly assess things that are mentioned. So even when we talk about how does theology and economics... And that’s where the divide is because economics is focusing quite often on things measured. Value, yes. People feel all warm and fuzzy about it. It’s nice to do, but how do you measure it? And if it’s measurable then you can put it in models with graphs and numbers and explain it. And even those who are not economists want to see something measurable. We want to see numbers. Tell us, how can we compare and contrast. So we’re having a discussion of the definition of value, that’s the piece that remains challenging to do. How do you measure it? Now for the person who’s homeless and they’re very unhappy, they don’t have a way.”
         4. “So we’re given a lot of scripture and a lot of direction on how to impact the economy because money is an important factor in our life. And it has always been, and it’s not going away. So we’ve been given very clear directions on that. And I’m not sure the church has always done a really great job in passing that part of Christian truth, of biblical teaching on to other
generations and one of the clearest ones that we deal with is debt in our children and how to use a credit card. Should they even have a credit card? How much do you pay for school? When does it cease to be an investment? How do you raise that up? Do we help them with school? Do we expect them to invest in their own education?"

5. “If I was honest, I would say that I don’t see how I imagine myself living out the Christian faith. And this is unfortunate. This is not something I’m not celebrating. This is something I’m lamenting. I think the way that I act is no different in terms of the value system than any other person, regardless if their faith is Christian. I buy cars, I buy homes, I buy groceries, I pay the electrical bill, I purchase shoes, I purchase clothes. And I think we try to pretend that, try to make minimal efforts to do it in a way that’s, to do it with companies that may have a better track record of treating their employees or means of production. But it strikes me that I don’t know that I’d be any different than the person next door who’s agnostic or has no religious affiliation, the way that they interact with the economy. And that troubles me, which is one of the reasons I’m very interested in this conversation.”

6. “The systems are sort of necessary, but not enough. You need the rule of law, you need access to capital, you need an educated workforce, you know roads, transportation systems, fair taxes, all that kind of stuff. But on some level it gets back to that first set of questions. [The person I referenced earlier] He was a senior leader in Boeing, and they talked about making great airplanes and moving people around. It was the right kind of message, it was inspiring. People saw the value in that. And they started... They went through a long period where they talked about the value, shareholder value, and everything was messaged around that, oriented around that. And I think it’s inspiring to shareholders, maybe, but not to anyone else. And I think a lot of companies fell into that, in the way they directed and oriented themselves internally, and I think there’s a broad shift taking place where people are talking more broadly in secular settings around the purpose of business. But I think that language and that emphasis for decades really hurt business and led to a lot of loss... [new speaker interjecting] to help you out, if you don’t know Friedman, he’s the one who said that profit is the sole purpose of business as long as it stays within the rule of law and social norms. He won a Nobel Prize for it in the early seventies... Is that the end? Is that the just and viable end, making profit? You’re pointing out, in Boeing . . .

7. [Continuing this conversation with a new speaker] . . . It’s like, well yeah, you’re going to be out of business if you try to do too much of that. You’re taking your eye off the ball. So, to me it seems like there’s two different things. There’s like the right rationing part and value extraction, the money you make. And then there’s how you’re going to distribute it, what you’re going to do with it. So maybe some it you’re doing some of this, but if you become non-competitive, it’s like, shoot the goose that lays the golden eggs... Yeah, you’re right. And part of it’s critical, but is it the ultimate? And maybe it
should be right alongside delivering real products that have real value that people will benefit from.”

ii. Establish and Appropriate God’s Order:

1. “Daniel lived in the city of Jerusalem and when Nebuchadnezzar came up and dragged everyone away, Daniel was dragged away with them. It was the end of the world as he knew it. He lived in the city of Babylon for the rest of his life. And so all of us are deeply embedded in these worldly systems and at some point they come to an end. So our faith has to inform our decisions to what is happening economically and socially and environmentally and everything else.”

2. “I think for me the type of environment of what I try to instill is distinctiveness of how my students view work. What is it that is distinctive to them as Christians if work in of itself is not distinctive to anyone. But the value that I have or the lens through which I see work, the lens though which I value work, the lens through which I value work because I am a Christian, right? And to what you said, and I use the Genesis story a lot, when God created order in the chaos, God did not just create order in the chaos to make it look good, because it involved creation. And each time that God created anything and let it be light and there was light and He said it was good. It’s that value has been given not that light was created, Out of darkness. It’s not that God created, did his various things, is how ultimately God valued them; to say it is good, it is beyond the creation itself but that is its value because creation becomes good. And being able to instill that distinctive way to seeing work, that distinctive way to approaching work because I am a Christian, that separates me from a secular person working. That for me, if you are able to do that and say I’m doing this, and that ultimately it’s not in the money you make, but participating in this whole creation or design of making the world a better place either through how I value things. If I am able to instill that, I have done my job. Then I can value what I do with my students begin using the frame lenses to approach work or approach life or approach everything, that distinctive Christian lens if I can do that, then I’ve created value.”

3. “I think just being careful and discerning in how we spend our money and knowing where products come from. In terms of interaction with the economy. I think personally, it’s not being so unconscious that God will provide, but being more stewards.”

4. “There are some issues in how the financial systems are working and the auditors weren’t pulling it off and we did research demonstrated that. Once Enron and WorldCom collapsed, we had perfect cases in point to change the system. Without that research we did up front, you wouldn’t have known. We couldn’t get any impetus to make that change until we had the poster children for the problem, but once it happened they said, ‘Oh, if we implement this it’ll be better.’ So, those for me are very tangible ‘how’s’ that take a lot of thinking and a lot of knowledge development in this complex world we live in,
‘cause nobody’s growing their own food anymore. It came from somewhere and that system has to, whatever that system is, has got to work.”

5. “I think an understanding of the strengths and appropriate the limits of institutions. There is a role for government. Business people need to recognize that and wake up to that. I’m around business people all the time that recoil at the word “government.” There’s a role. And that’s a fact of life. It’s part of the creation mandate. Now, oftentimes because of abuses and all of these institutions, we swing to extremes, right? We over regulate or we… I think we had a better understanding of the strengths of family, the limits of family, the strengths of business, the limits of business, the strengths of educational institutions, the limits… It would function better. We have to get over the business versus government. We have to find a civil way to have that and a productive way to have that conversation.”

iii. Bring together God’s provision and the people’s needs:

1. “Are you valuing the people that you’re cleaning enough for you to do your best job, are you valuing enough, what are you doing? So that it’s not only about what you get but in your job whether it’s in a Christian institution or a trash truck or you’re cleaning up an office building after hours or you’re in a grocery store and you’re checking, are you valuing the people you’re serving? Are you expressing value to them, because I think if you do then the economy and I believe this is born out in bosses and people who have businesses, who value the people that are working for them. Do you value this person who going to buy this car as much as I’m valuing you for putting these pieces of the car together? And not just for money, but money is part of it. It’s not just my paycheck, but am I valuing the people I’m working for?”


iv. Be righteous - God’s promised well-being is dependent on the king’s righteousness.

1. “I have an undergraduate, graduate, and PhD in accounting and have professional experience. And so I want to—with students who are going to go into the profession—I want to talk to them about what really matters—about being trustworthy, neither corrupt nor negligent.”

2. “In another life, I’m president of the Public Interest Section, that’s the anarchists, the socialists, the communists, and me, of the American Accounting Association. I look at my faith and say, ‘You know, I don’t know how you do it as an atheist, but me, I believe in a just God. And so even though it may not be just now, because my viewpoint is we live in a fallen world and so there isn’t the equities we’d hope for, I still believe I need to do the right thing because eventually there’s justice.’ For me, that totally impacts how a person like Daniel is able to say, or his friends who say, you know, ‘God could save us if He wants to. We’re not going to bow down. We’re going to do the right thing.’ Or Daniel goes along with what you might consider pretty evil
kingdoms, safeguarding their assets, keeps rising, number two in the kingdom. I find his life so fascinating because two of those kingdoms, they end up changing from ‘worship only me’ to ‘worship only Daniel’s God.’ And the guy’s an accountant. He is. I mean, he guards assets. And so I would totally use that God sovereign over kingdoms and men. So he’s going to do the right thing, whether he dies for it or not. So to me, that is fundamental, and fundamental for every one of my students who I’m training. You get out there and you’re going to face decisions that are going to cost your career. And if you believe you can take some sort of utilitarian view of the world and you think you know what the end’s going to be and you have to take this bad means to get there, you simply don’t know who God is because God controls the outcomes. He’s the one who controls ends, therefore the means must matter, I think. To me this is just huge, and things we need to think through as we’re encouraging our students out in the system. . . . I think, why would my faith make the world better because I’m going to do the trustworthy thing even though it’s costly and even though every Gospel agrees we should be truth-tellers well. Just where do you get the moral to behave that way in the face of... You lose it. Very hard to do unless you believe that God is the one who’s in control.”

v. Bring flourishing through efficiency, productivity, and investment.

1. “When I think about how my work interacts or contributes to the economy, I’m reminded about Christ’s parable about the talents. Part of what comes out is, he starts to basically assess and comment on the outcome of the group who doubled the work, their talents, is this whole idea of productive work, being productive. So the ones that were not productive I think it uses the word... So I think in my work, as long as I’m delivering my work productively and being productive in my work whether that’s working to earn and then be able to of course put that back into the economy or working with my clients my students so they become productive. So in that way my work and hopefully their work will positively contribute to the economy.”

2. “If I may take a much broader look at it from an economic perspective, the economy as a whole is healthy from an economic perspective when it has the levels of output that reflect the wellbeing of everybody within the economy. And so the people who have the capacity to buy what they need to sustain their wellbeing. Do the people who give jobs have the resources to put in the investment? Does the government have the resources to do the required government spending? Do we have, are there other parts to it? So if everyone is working productively and their wellbeing is at the level it should be then in the long run, the economy is healthy. So from an individual perspective, my perspective, or if each person within the economy is working to their fullest capacity, whatever that is, then the economy will do well.”

3. “I think, for me, thinking about forms of capital really helps in this value creation conversation. I think business has a unique opportunity to create economic capital, but at the same time it draws down on other forms of capital - spiritual capital, intellectual capital – all those things are required as
inputs in order for business to create economic capital which I think it does uniquely. . . . So when I think about business, I’m going to narrow this a little bit, I think of goods and services that contribute to human flourishing and I cast that net pretty broad. Cars can contribute to human flourishing. So can social enterprises that are very intentionally designed to meet some social need. I think we have, part of our task is, part of the way I see my task, is to help people imagine the possibilities for value creation and the creation of meaningful goods and services and jobs that really do honor people and tap into their unique skills and gifts and interests. Human flourishing, I think, broadly defined, is a key framework I use when I think about or evaluate value or benefit.”

vi. Equity - Fairness:

1. “So going back to Wesley’s give all you can, its giving to family, its giving to...I consider paying my taxes helping other people. So if I can counsel others to go to a source that’s government-based to solve their problems, I think that’s part of this aspect of sharing.”

2. “I personally don’t think I should always be driven by the lowest cost proposition. And I’m driven often by lowest cost. I don’t think efficiency is always the highest value. As a Christian, I think there are values that would challenge that on occasion. I don’t think there’s anything wrong with efficiency, I think it’s good. Low cost is good. But it’s not the only value. There are probably times when I ought to critique my own habits and maybe make choices that are different than low-cost choices. . . . But even low cost is costing something. It may not be costing you at that moment at the register, but somebody is paying for the fact that they can offer certain goods at a cost that other businesses can’t. And who knows where that’s coming from? Jobs overseas. Lack of pay. Somebody’s paying for it somewhere. Potentially. Not always true, but very likely.”

b. Priestly Roles

i. Instructing the people – representing God to the people.

1. “So one of the values is to challenge them as to whether they are desirous of the right things and the things that will bring about that sort of flourishing. Then I also think wisdom is a value that I try to deliver. I work pretty hard at that because I don’t think society speaks of wisdom very often.”

2. “I think we have, part of our task is, part of the way I see my task, is to help people imagine the possibilities for value creation and the creation of meaningful goods and services and jobs that really do honor people and tap into their unique skills and gifts and interests.”

3. “I have some roles in non-profits where I’m on boards. I go to these meetings. I’m trying to help these non-profits impact the Kingdom of God. These are Christian ministries. Trying to think about, trying to think about a development process for the organization. So most of what I’m doing now is not making tangible products, but I’m in the development business. That’s how I think about what value I create.”
4. “As a church historian, one of the values I teach for...I hope that my teaching creates this...the value of humility and circumspection about our own perspectives and our own traditions, while at the same time also being built up in those traditions. I’m not out to de-convert people. But I’m out to complicate their sense of the absolute rightness of their own particular traditions. These are the weird people who are out there who are not in my tradition.”

5. “If we can shape people’s desires and point them in an exciting and healthy direction, then other stuff might fade in comparison. I’m not being naïve or whatever. When you get excited about something, other stuff falls by the wayside. So, an educated, virtuous, consumer citizen is good for the economy.”

6. “Capitalism would work if everybody was perfect, but no one is, and that’s the point of the church. That’s where the church should be speaking into the culture. Communism, everybody works for everybody’s good sounds wonderful doesn’t it? But not everybody’s heart is where it should be. That’s just systems that we use, whether it’s a bad system or a good system, we’re still talking about people. We’re talking about imperfect people who carry that sin that entered in at the point and that’s where the church should be speaking into the economy and into the work force. As that changes, as people’s heart change, as people begin see different values, then whatever system you’re under will be better. Now, we may prefer one over the other because it lends itself to the human condition, but we’re talking about things that have no, they’re not alive, they’re systems.”

7. “…being a cheerleader along the way. …one of the ways I do that is to do story-telling and try to have people understand the humanity of living.”

ii. Maintaining community boundaries:

1. “Well I don’t work with students directly. I do indirectly through faculty, so I’m on the dark side, I work as administration. The faculty here will attest to that. For me it’s maintaining the value of the institution for our accreditors. I do most of the writing that would be reviewed by external people to reflect the values that we have. And that’s really where most of my work is. So the discussions or debates internally on why we do what we do is based upon well here’s the standard from the accrediting body that we have to meet. How do we meet that, how do we improve the academic program, how do we meet the students’ needs. Which I used to do in teaching courses more but now I do more on the administration side of it. But the fact that someone has to write the reports and I can’t talk anyone else into doing it yet, that’s my value to the institution and work.”

2. “In the way that I am a pastor to our candidates for ministry in giving them guidance and shepherding them through the cumbersome candidacy process in the United Methodist church, I believe I am creating value through that deportation of guidance and coming alongside them.”
iii. Offering prayers and sacrifices for the people.
   1. “In the western mindset we think of work as what we’re doing. But the Hebrew mindset was actually there was no separation between work, ministry, and life. It was all just one act, one form of worship through Yahweh.”
   2. “I think that prayer is not well understood. I think reasons for praying and the enjoyment of prayer comes from a deepening relationship with God. To apply it as a cure-all without establishing a relationship with a good foundation can be damaging as prayers are understood to have power, but then they become confused when the result doesn’t come about. And so being able to live and pray in the name and power and in the authority of God takes a little training. We don’t do it well. So that’s part of what I help people understand. Many people are deformed in their understanding of what prayer is. And that can cause some problems. So part of what I do is help them establish a deepening relationship with God and from that the conversation becomes more real to us.”

iv. Healing, delivering, forgiving.
   1. “… and hopefully we are creating a community where the value of the human being and the value of looking out for others is growing and expanding. … [second speaker in conversation with first] it ultimately goes back to our relationship with God. But pragmatically who do we encounter, it gets much more, exactly what you said, hoping that the people we come into contact with will use, like your daughter being in youth ministry, we’re hoping those direct relationships have the value that is coming from that individual into these broader Kingdom purposes.”
   2. “… as I’m thinking about that, I also think the little inner philosopher in me that says, “What’s good?” James comes to mind when he says, “What good is a man who claims to have faith and has no deeds?” I think about what I’m doing and do my deeds actually feed anyone, do they have some… And one of the things that attracted me to accounting was, I’d been a music major and a Bible major before that but what attracted me to accounting is it ends up being useful.”
   3. “… and the helping professions, of which I think ministry and theology or church… is one. Senior care, children care… Making it so that what we’re going for isn’t goods and products, but what we’re going for is more of a quality of life.”
   4. “So being an executive director for a nonprofit that focuses on reaching out to disenfranchised populations within local communities across California. My work creates value for needy people, we focus particularly on children and families.”
   5. “Faith is the reality of God’s Kingdom. That’s how I define faith. I have been living and will continue to grow in my knowledge and understanding of blessing in any circumstances. Blessed are the hungry. Blessed are those who mourn. Blessed are the poor in spirit. Not because of
the circumstance but because of God. His Kingdom is one of blessing. You go outside and will get wet not matter what. But the nature of His Kingdom is a blessing.”

6. “I’m leading divorce group at church second time. I see... I want to have more spiritual growth because people are struggling right after divorce or a separation. I want see themselves as God sees them. More like hurting, working people come to church and safe environment again...”

v. Caring for the Temple and sanctuaries – community structures.

1. “I’ll try to be as succinct as I can. I see my current purpose, biggest purpose, is to love God and to love people. Underneath that with my PhD in Accounting, I want to equip the church to be financially responsible so they can do the work that God’s called them to do. I don’t think that money should get any of the credit for it, but in that process, I believe that that’s really what I’m doing.”

c. Prophetic Roles

i. Represent God in relational conflicts while also allowing a powerful personal experience of God’s person and character.

1. From page 13: “If I was honest, I would say that I don’t see how I imagine myself living out the Christian faith. And this is unfortunate. This is not something I’m not celebrating. This is something I’m lamenting. I think the way that I act is no different in terms of the value system than any other person, regardless if their faith is Christian. I buy cars, I buy homes, I buy groceries, I pay the electrical bill, I purchase shoes, I purchase clothes. And I think we try to pretend that, try to make minimal efforts to do it in a way that’s, to do it with companies that may have a better track record of treating their employees or means of production. But it strikes me that I don’t know that I’d be any different than the person next door who’s agnostic or has no religious affiliation, the way that they interact with the economy. And that troubles me, which is one of the reasons I’m very interested in this conversation.”

ii. a. God sends them on a mission of conflict/clarification.

1. Stewardship - “I think Jesus had a lot to say about money. And a lot to say about how he would expect those who have been given money to use money. So there should not be a disconnect in our faith and the economy, because we’ve been given very clear direction on investing on sharing. . . . . You know those are a lot of issues that I don’t think the church has done a really good job in the past and that’s why the church itself, churches that are in huge debt to build buildings and the philosophy they’re using because there seems to be leadership in the church that doesn’t understand the biblical concept of economy and that’s where I think conflict comes in the business world and in the church. That just simply doesn’t make sense to build a three billion dollar building when you don’t have people to pay for that. And why are you building a three billion dollar building and expect the members to pay it and not be in debt, and still tithe? So I think our faith should inform because we have been given clear guidelines.”
2. “I appreciated the comment attributed to John Wesley, that holiness is good for business. And another principle of John Wesley was holiness, there is no such thing other than social holiness. And as consumers that our actions do have social consequences. And that as a church, we do have the power to influence social policy in the marketplace. And that people of faith continue the prophetic tradition of speaking truth to economic interests, multinationals, when the consequences of doing business doesn’t make the grade of holiness in terms of the degradation of people’s living conditions and other negative fallout from the way business does business.”

iii. Reveal everyday evils the people are perpetrating and demand change – persistent evils that are part of the system they live in.

1. “. . . if I look at how Jesus dealt with the women caught in the act of adultery, the woman at the well, and because I work, not solely with women, but women in general, when Jesus dealt with them in all those instances, he spoke value into them. He spoke value to the dregs of society. And somehow they walked away knowing they had value even in what they were doing, in spite of what they were doing, they had value. And how he addressed that. So in my context in speaking value into women who have been abused, it changes how they view their husband beating the tar out of them, or it changes how a student behaves in the classroom. It changes when we deal with the homeless – we have a lot of homeless that come to our church. Are we speaking value into them? Because society has placed a price tag and a value on, if you have this job you have more value because you’re contributing more. And how then do we speak value because we’re not necessarily going to change that so how do we address that where they’re at? . . .”

iv. Personal interaction about organizational and social systems:

1. Conversation among four group members a, b, c, and d:
   a. “Cause this economic system operates on its own set of values which maybe not be in tandem, which are not in tandem, which are not directly related to kingdom values.
   b. And I would argue that blind acceptance of many of the values of Western culture are to the detriment to the overall society.
   c. But you know communism would work if everyone was perfect. Socialism would work if everyone was perfect. Capitalism would work if everybody was perfect, but no one is, and that’s the point of the church. That’s where the church should be speaking into the culture. . . .
   d. Yeah, but systems are not all moral. You have to fight against them and the church’s prophetic system. Not that I’m saying necessarily about our context, but you can’t say it’s just a system.”

2. “I think that’s perhaps the mechanism that I try to use in helping my students see value in some of those… what we just discussed earlier...
Helping them to not be satisfied with the status quo, helping them to see the oppressive systems in which they live and that they inadvertently add to and perpetuate, and then wanting to do something about it.”

v.  
d. Problems with over-simplification or overgeneralizations in topics:

1. “My question that I had asked earlier to the panel about their definition of greed... and you came up with it and it was talking about greed and... was it excess? Then we started to have further conversation at our table that maybe having more preaching on greed may help it. But I’m not convinced that (and I was telling this to Tim) that one person’s Holy Spirit is the same as the Spirit that is talking to this other person, saying, It’s okay to do this kind of spending, but it’s not for this other person... It kind of, to me, boils down to, are we feeling that we can talk into each other’s life and say, You’re spending too much, and is that off-limits? Coming back to your comment, we, my husband and I, it’s cliché but, we made the decision not to shop at Wal-Mart and not to shop at Forever 21 unless they change their business practices, and to shop at Costco and whose business practices are a little bit more... And then I had a conversation with an African American friend of mine. I’m Asian American, he’s African American. He says, “Oh we shop at Wal-Mart all the time.” And I said, “How can you do that? Your own communities are suffering because of their business practices.” “Well, I can only afford so much.” But I knew that he could afford a lot more. And so I challenged him. I just said, “Look, you’re kind of cutting at the livelihood of your own communities.” So we had kind of a heated argument about that. And then later, a week later, he came back to me and he says, “You know what, Vivi, you’ve convicted me a little bit, or the Holy Spirit has convicted me, to stop spending.” Now, do I have the same conversation with my parents? I don’t, because I know for sure that they...retired pastors, don’t have a pension, so...”

2. “You guys are gonna think I’m weird about this but...It’s also a great way to come back is to give people... I choose most of the time, not always but most of the time, to go into the bank and speak to a teller instead of an ATM. I chose at 24 Hour Fitness to opt out of the thumbprint I.D. which requires no one looking at you... just swipe my I.D. card... that requires a human being. And that’s because of my Christian convictions about the fact that I can’t even share the Gospel with an ATM machine but I can share the Gospel with my teller. In very quick transactions that we human beings have with each other, I am able to talk to them about my marriage, that I teach theology...what is that? I can tell them. The more technology takes over our lives, the less of this human interaction that we have. And people’s jobs are being taken because I know 24 Hour Fitness...one of the reasons they went to the thumbprint I.D. is they knew...fewer people to hire at the front desk... I wonder if the banks sometimes need fewer tellers because most people use ATM machines. And the check-out line at the grocery store. So it saves time and it’s more efficient, but to my life as a Christian and a husband...”
vi. Link everyday, concrete, specific evils with disobedience to God – holiness of God and concreteness of neighborliness.

1. “And at the same time coming to the balance of that, I think of Wesley’s thing, we can become too excessive, we can become so production oriented and that’s where the problem of big company is. And the idea that is it, I think Bank of America is laying off 11,000 workers here in the course of the end of the year for their bottom line for their stockholders. As opposed to approaching it, here’s 11,000 people who they could be supporting, helping, enabling to live in society. So it’s this productivity that gets focused on, here’s the stockholders rather than here’s the people that I’m serving. . . . So their value system was completely different from the multinational. They were trying to ensure the interest of the shareholders versus this of the company that value community above the shareholder.”

2. The economy serving our neighbors - “From the ecclesial perspective, we also have to understand, who’s playground are you going to play in? One of the largest growing denominations that have a completely different economy is the Amish. Now the Amish are within the economy but somewhat isolated, but they are growing, and part of that is because they understand the economy as not just an individual aspect, but they know their neighbors. Our congregations don’t know their neighbors.”

3. “. . . They went through the Japanese occupation, the Korean War, and the neighbor didn’t have, so everyone shared what they did have, historically, and it has formed a beautifully rare community where its not about me, but its about the community. But as long as we have an individualist orientation it’s about taking care of me.”

4. “There is a preservation component of our calling. It’s not always about creation. It’s sometimes about restoring that which is broken and making better that which can be improved. And I think we have to find ways to affirm the value creation in all of those expressions.”

5. “. . . Things like what do we value, what is good, what does it mean to be human, all these kinds of questions. So it’s a very difficult thing, especially in this day and age where there is so much deconstruction over who is right or wrong. Then obviously, with whether it be Copernicus or Darwin or the uncertainty principle, or just the sort of the things our students are learning in the liberal arts at a liberal arts university, I think they’re overwhelmed by the fact that we’re not really sure as people where we are in space anymore, where we are in time, and where God is in all of that conversation. And do we really have any intrinsic value? So it doesn’t surprise me that our students turn to a kind of nihilistic materialism, whether they call themselves sociologically Christians or not that ultimately it is about consumption. . . . Get as much as you can, for as long as you can, borrow as much as you can. That becomes sort of the model for human flourishing. And obviously that is in contradiction with the Christian story. So it’s that tension that I live in and I fully embody. But if you look at my monthly budget and you
were to say what do I value, twenty-two percent of my monthly budget goes into my mortgage. So I value my home.”

vii. Warn of the Discipline or Judgment to Come:

1. Discipline: Business cycles impacted by sin, not caused by sin: “Well, you know, looking at... We’ve gone through cycles. When you think about the economy goes through cycles of recession and inflation and all that. And when you think about all the contributors to when you’re going into that, all the practices that people have done that have either manipulated or taken advantage of the system and then that fall apart, either from greed or other aspect, and then you fix that. Then their ship gets kind of righted and then you go along until somebody finds another way. So what would contribute to the long-term health of the economy would be for the sin nature maybe not to be run amok. We’re to have more of an appreciation and better stewardship, maybe, of the things that God has given us and not allow our own natures to come in and do something, bring it down.”

2. Judgment: Present God’s message of hope for the future: “I’ve been thinking about it a lot and was encouraged this morning by Darrell Cosden’s statements about the new creation and we often think about the discontinuity between this world and the next. And I’m glad there is a lot of discontinuity. There won’t be any more tears or mourning. The Bible talks a lot about those. But there will also be these threads of continuity. The glimpses we get of the new creation are the ships of Tarshish coming in with their goods or kings rightly rule. Whatever it is, you see these glimpses of the new creation. To me that’s motivating actually. So even the most mundane, physical, dirty, grimy job, doesn’t just have temporal value but is eternal, is laden with potential, eternal value. And people can take that in different ways and rightly object with that theology, but I am struck, when you look at the images in scripture of the new heavens and the new earth, they’re earthy. They’re earthy images. They’re material images. To me that’s encouraging, actually. It infuses a lot of hope in even the most mundane moments and the kind of grind-it-out seasons that I have in my work. And there are a lot of those, even in good work.”

3. “There is a reason why we have faith in this season. There is a reason why we are here. I really appreciate the challenge this creates, the question that it opens. It reminds us that at some point we will see the collapse of economic systems. At some point in history. At some point we will see everything we know unravel. That is the conclusion of our faith, right? That when Christ returns and all things come to fulfillment and fruition, all the things that make up the world we lived in becomes completely overpowered and overshadowed by the reality of a new kingdom. So on a coffee shop theology level, what does that mean for us? Daniel lived in the city of Jerusalem and when Nebuchadnezzar came up and dragged everyone away, Daniel was dragged away with them. It was the end of the world as he knew it. He lived in the city of Babylon for the rest of his life. And so all of us are deeply
embedded in these worldly systems and at some point they come to an end. 
So our faith has to inform our decisions to what is happening economically and socially and environmentally and everything else.”

**Summary and Evaluation of the Value and Limitations of Using the Kings, Priests, Prophets Categories:**

1. The role of kings were defined as follows:
   a. Recognize God’s order.
   b. Establish and Appropriate God’s order.
   c. Bring together God’s provision and the people’s needs.
   d. Be righteous – God’s flourishing is dependent on the king’s righteousness.
   e. Bring flourishing to their sphere of influence.
2. The role of priests were defined as follows:
   a. Instructing, teaching the people.
   b. Maintaining community boundaries.
   c. Offer sacraments, prayers and sacrifices for the people.
   d. Healing, delivering, forgiving.
   e. Caring for the Temple and sanctuaries.
3. The role of prophets were defined as follows:
   a. Represent God in conflict with the people.
   b. Reveal everyday evil practices of the people and demand change.
   c. Link evil practices with disobedience to God.
   d. Warn of discipline and/or judgment to come.
   e. Present God’s message of hope for the future.
4. Generally, what was of immediate interest in the coding data was that the roles of prophet, priest, and king did not overlap with the professions of theologian, pastor, and businessperson. Business people often displayed significant pastoral or prophetic tendencies in their thinking and language.
5. In some cases, with a better understanding of the scope and mechanics of an economy, some accountants and economists were more powerfully prophetic than the academics. This brings to mind Amos the farmer and other prophets who had familiarity with daily life, work, and the economy and spoke from experience more than theory.
6. In all three categories there is the expressed need for discernment and wisdom. For kings, discerning God’s value among kingdom values; for priests, discerning transformation that’s necessary and guides teaching; for prophets, discerning evil and obedience/disobedience to God.
7. There are concepts or themes that fit into all three categories. For example, stewardship and vocation are overlapping themes.
8. Further consideration of the prophets, priests, kings category might provide us with more insightful findings about the depth and breadth of experiences surrounding the issues of stewardship and vocation within work and economic issues.

9. Regardless of whether the groups were discussing religious ordination requirements, WASC requirements, or Sarbanes-Oxley legislation, each role demonstrated the necessity of navigating community boundaries. Discussing work, business, the economy, and theology necessitates taking into account community boundaries. The nature and essence of these boundaries need to be critically examined while they are actively being applied in the communities themselves.

10. These categories bring tension, which also holds the possibility of bringing balance.
   a. As an example – the king’s discussion of stewardship and parable of the talents to emphasize the importance of productivity is tempered by the prophetic complaint of a large global bank laying off 11,000 workers because of primary focus on shareholder equity.
   b. The strength lies in allowing these tensions to be discussed in a healthy environment.
   c. The tendency is to assume the prophetic role will over-generalize. When this occurs, accurately reflecting God’s concerns and priorities becomes problematic. Those in the kingly role, whether wielding individual or institutional powers can become defensive of their actions and ignore the prophetic warnings. Both the kings and prophets can, if not careful, ignore the effect their decisions have on the people. This is where the priest must contribute. The priestly role is also crucial when shared sacrifice is a must for the common good. The priest then acts not as a tool of either the prophet or king, but is instead an instrument of peace.

11. With regards to the kingly roles, discussions of discerning God’s order reflect the ambiguity of working within any secular economic systems. Secular economies are often in conflict, and sometimes opposition, to biblical values. The discussion of creating shareholder value, or profit as the sole or primary purpose of business activity demonstrates this conflict. Christian businesspeople obviously struggled to come to terms with this conflict, its strengths, its weaknesses, and the means through which, as disciples of Christ, they could best navigate within the existing system or work for change.

12. Priestly instruction is broader than we might initially realize. From our focus groups the researchers chose to include in the priestly function the training of imaginations, both individual and group imaginations, to be able to see/create/further kingdom of God opportunities in what initially may appear to be purely secular situations. This is part of what might be understood as the equipping of the saints for the work of their ministry.
13. There is a tension apparent with the proposition that holiness/righteousness should be good for business, yet there appears to be some circumstances when the profit motive resists or encumbers righteous action. Navigating these murky waters can be difficult, and there is a tendency to move to a black and white stance – either righteousness and business go together or righteousness is always opposed to business. A strength of this discussion is that each role informs the other, avoiding overgeneralizations and power silos. Kings can hone their prophetic voice in these discussions. When conversation becomes over-generalized, or over-simplified, the prophetic voice loses its influence and focus. Kings understand and manage their systems well and therefore can help in discerning which aspects of corporate behaviors, which uses of technology as examples, need change in order to pursue the greater good and bring about overall flourishing as a result.

Questions for further research:

1. How would the public consider these roles and categories?
2. Are they self-referential?
3. What are the primary strengths for applying these categories in public/educational/religious settings?
4. What limitations exist in applying these categories?
Appendix 1

Focus Group Questions:
1. For whom does my work create value? Who or what benefits from your work? Let’s list these things.
2. What value does my work create?
3. How does my work create value for others?
4. What are my motivations for creating value?
5. How does your Christian faith influence the way that you interact with the economy?
6. What do you think contributes to the long-term growth of the economy?