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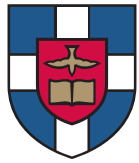

Vocation

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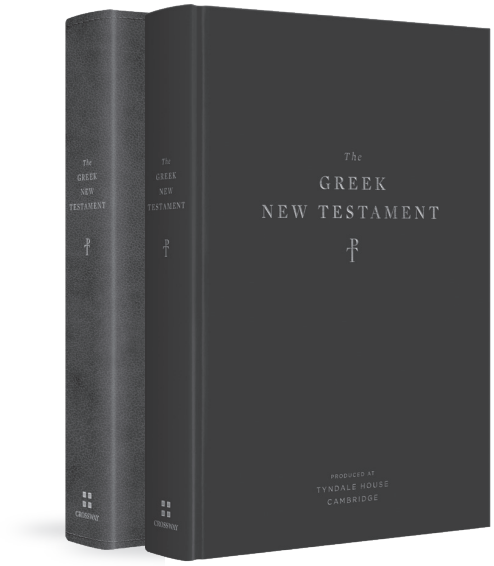

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Editorial: Thinking Theologically about Vocation and Work

Stephen J. Wellum

Stephen J. Wellum is Professor of Christian Theology at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and editor of *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology*. He received his PhD from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and he is the author of numerous essays and articles and the co-author with Peter Gentry of *Kingdom through Covenant* (Crossway, 2012) and *God's Kingdom through God's Covenants: A Concise Biblical Theology* (Crossway, 2015); the co-editor of *Progressive Covenantalism* (B&H, 2016); the author of *God the Son Incarnate: The Doctrine of the Person of Christ* (Crossway, 2016) and *Christ Alone—The Uniqueness of Jesus as Savior* (Zondervan, 2017); and the co-author of *Christ from Beginning to End: How the Full Story of Scripture Reveals the Full Glory of Christ* (Zondervan, 2018).

Christians are rightly interested in the doctrine of salvation and God's glorious work of grace in Christ Jesus. However, a crucial theological truth to remember is that the Bible's view of salvation is first grounded in the doctrine of creation. It is not a trivial point to observe that the Bible's storyline begins in creation and for good reasons. Apart from what is described in the opening chapters of Genesis, the rest of the Bible's story makes little sense, including God's plan of redemption. Specifically, creation establishes two foundational truths: first, who God is, and second, who we are as God's creatures and image-bearers. Let us look at these truths in turn and apply them to the theme of this issue of *SBJT*, namely a Christian view of vocation and work.

First and most significantly, creation identifies the God of Scripture

as our triune Creator-Covenant God. From Genesis 1:1 on, we learn that God is the uncreated, independent, self-sufficient, all-powerful Lord who created the universe and governs it by his word (Gen 1-2; Ps 50:12-14; 93:2; Acts 17:24-25). This truth gives rise to the governing category central to all Christian theology: the Creator-creature distinction. God alone is God; all else is creation that depends upon God for its existence. As a result, God deserves our worship, love, loyalty, and obedience. But it is also important to add that God's transcendent lordship does not entail a remote deity since Scripture simultaneously stresses God's immanence. God is also the Covenant Lord who is fully present in this world and involved with his creatures: he freely, sovereignly, and purposefully sustains and governs all things to their purposed end (Ps 139:1-10; Acts 17:28; Eph 1:11; 4:6). As Creator and Covenant Lord, God sovereignly rules over his creation perfectly and personally, and in his rule, God loves, commands, comforts, punishes, and rewards, all according to the personal, covenant relationships that he establishes with his creation, starting in creation and culminating in the inauguration of a new covenant. Indeed, as we progress through redemptive-history, God discloses himself not merely as uni-personal but as tri-personal, a being-in-relation, a unity of three persons: Father, Son, and Spirit.

Second, creation also identifies humans as creatures *and* image-bearers, which is a staggering truth to grasp. Why? Because in relationship to the triune God, Scripture declares that humans are unique, significant, and divinely purposed to know God and to rule creation under God's Lordship (Gen 1:26-28). Of no other creature is this role and task given, but only to humans as God's image-bearers (*imago dei*). Although there is dispute over the exact meaning of the *imago dei,* there is a clear understanding of the terms "image" (*selem*) and "likeness" (*demut*) in their historic background. In the ancient world, the concept of the "image of the god" conveys the idea of a physical representation of the "god," which underscores how Adam, and the entire human race, are viewed as vice-regents who are to rule and function in the place of God, as God's representatives, as God's servant priest-kings. However, unlike the ancient Near East, where this concept is applied only to the king, Scripture teaches that the entire human race, under the headship of Adam, was created to be "king" over all creation, thus emphasizing the dual relationship of Adam and the hu-

man race to God and to the created order. This is borne out in Genesis 1:26c, where it is best translated as a purpose clause: "... in order that they [human beings] may have dominion," i.e., function in a kingly and royal way. This does not entail that dominion is the definition of the image; instead it is a consequence of the image.

A crucial text which supports this point is Psalm 8, which describes humans in royal terms. Significantly, this text is developed in Hebrews 2:5–18 where it is applied to Christ, who is not only the true "image of God" as the divine Son (see Col 1:15; cf. Heb 1:3) but also the one who is the "image of God" in that he assumes our humanity, identifies with us, and fulfills the role of Adam by winning for us our salvation as the obedient Son. In these ways, "image" and "likeness" are terms that signify our uniqueness, our dignity before God, and the representative role we play for the entire creation as God's servant priest-kings. This entails that God deals with creation on the basis of how he deals with human beings, and all of this implies a unique, covenantal relation as mediated through Adam as our representative head.

Why are these truths important, especially in thinking rightly about vocation and work? From a biblical view, it is impossible to think about what vocation is and the dignity and value of work apart from God and our creation. As God's image-bearers, in and through Adam, we were given the mandate to rule over the world by putting all things under our feet for God's glory, and to establish the pattern of God's kingdom in this world where everything that God has made stands in right relationship to him as God intended. It is due to our creation that all human beings have a vocation which is central to who we are as image-bearers before God and each other. Work, then, is not the consequence of human sin but the purpose of our creation. Work and vocation is intrinsic to who we are as God's image-bearers.

No doubt, our work is affected by sin (Gen 3; Rom 8:18-25). Ultimately due to Adam's disobedience as our covenant head, we do not fulfill the purpose of our existence (Rom 3:23; 6:23). Instead of putting everything under our feet, eventually the earth puts us six feet under! Adam's sin and our sin brings distortion to God's good creation that requires God to act in grace to redeem us. In Adam, unless God acts in grace and power, the original creation stands under divine judgment.

However, thankfully, God has chosen to act on our behalf, which he has done in God the Son who has assumed our humanity, lived our life as the last Adam, died our death, and thus reversed the effects of sin and death for us by his cross and resurrection. Yet, it is the doctrine of that is foundational to a Christian view of vocation and work. Redemption confirms this truth, and in Christ we are not only forgiven of our sin but also restored to the purpose of our creation, namely to put everything under our feet for God's glory (Heb 2:5-18).

Today, these truths are vital for the Church to understand, proclaim, and live out. Surrounded by alternative worldviews that offer no basis for human dignity, vocation, and work, Christians must recapture the biblical vision of who humans are as creatures and image-bearers. Our society is facing a serious identity crisis regarding who humans are which is ultimately due to our refusing to view ourselves in relationship to God our Creator and Lord. As a result, in a sad irony, humans who have sought to assert our rebellion against God and to insist on our independence from God have lost the very rationale for our existence. For these reasons and many more, we are focusing this issue of *SBJT* on a Christian view of vocation and work. Most of the papers, delivered in November, 2017 at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at our Commonweal Conference, offer historical reflections with the goal of retrieving the best from Christian theology for us today. It is my prayer that these articles on vocation and work will not only remind us of the great wisdom of the past for our present-day, but also lead us back to Scripture to discover anew our high calling as redeemed creatures and image-bearers in Christ Jesus. As the Church, may we begin to live out now what our triune God created us to be, as we await the return of our Lord and the fullness of the new creation, where we will enjoy God's presence forever and thus completely fulfill the purpose of our creation.

A New Testament Professor's Rediscovery of the Doctrine of Vocation

Robert L. Plummer

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Imagine the average layperson in your church—the owner of a bike shop, a truck driver, a doctor, a secretary, a lawyer, a school teacher. If you were to ask him or her, "How does your pastor expect you to apply your Christian faith to your work," What would they say?

I can imagine the average layperson answering the question posed above in two ways. First, he or she might respond, "My pastor wants me to work diligently and honestly so I can make a lot of money and tithe." And, yes, it's true that the biblical authors expect God's people to give generously to others in need and to the advance of the gospel. In 1 Timothy 6:17-19, for example, Paul writes,

> As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.[1]

> Similarly, in 2 Corinthians, chapters 8-9, Paul exhorts the believers in Corinth to sow generously in their giving on behalf of the needy believers in Jerusalem, with the expectation that they would reap generously—and thus be able to continue supporting God's purposes.

Second, when asked what their pastor expects from them in their work, the average layperson of an evangelical church would likely respond, "My pastor expects me to share the gospel with my co-workers." This biblical obligation, like giving, is also undeniable. In 1 Peter 3:15, the apostle writes to believers in Asia Minor:

> But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.

Similarly, in Ephesians 6:15, Paul exhorts believers to have their "feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace." In other words, they are to be ready to proclaim the gospel of peace as they walk throughout their daily lives.

So, yes, so-called "ordinary" believers or laypersons are to give generously to the church and to share the gospel with their unsaved co-workers. But, is that all? Unfortunately, for most evangelical Christians, that *is* all. There is widespread ignorance among both clergy and laypersons as to the rich heritage of biblical reflection on work that we find in Christian history—especially since the Protestant Reformation. In the last five years, much to the credit of Ken Magnuson and the Commonweal Project, I have gradually come to a deeper understanding of these issues. It's my hope and prayer that through continued initiatives like the one we are participating in this conference that the doctrine of vocation will not only be rediscovered by professors and pastors—but be disseminated and understood among students and laypeople.

Only recently did I become aware of *The Flower of Godly Prayers* written by Thomas Becon (1511-1567). The volume is 644 pages long and one portion of it is filled with beautiful prayers for the practitioners of different professions—a prayer for lawyers, a prayer for merchants, a prayer for landlords. Listen to these words taken from the prayer for landlords.

> The earth is thine, O Lord, and all that is contained therein, notwithstanding though hast given the possession thereof unto the children of men, to pass over the time of their short pilgrimage, in this vale of misery. We heartily pray thee to send thy holy Spirit into the hearts of them that possess the grounds, pastures, and dwelling-places of the earth, that they, remembering themselves to be the tenants, may not rack and stretch out the rents of their houses and lands, nor yet take unreasonable fines and incomes after the manner of covetous worldlings; but so let them out to other, that the inhabitants thereof may both be able truly to pay the rents, and also honestly to live, to nourish their family, and to relieve the poor. Give them grace also to consider that they are but strangers and pilgrims in this world, having here no dwelling-place, but seeking one to come; that they, remembering the short continuance of their life, may be content with [what] is sufficient, and not join house to house, nor couple land to land, to the impoverishment of other, but so behave themselves in letting out their tenements, lands, and pastures, that after this life they may be received into everlasting dwelling-places, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.[2]

Can you imagine a landlord in your church having that passion and vision for his profession—a maturity that overflows in neighbor-loving, Scripture saturated prayer. Indeed, it's hard not to conclude that in our day we face a situation similar to Luther—where only a small percentage of people are viewed as being professionally "called" by God, while others are seen a supporting that work and perhaps, at best, providing a second rate attempt to duplicate the evangelistic calling of full-time ministers.

Five years ago, a traumatic personal experience brought home to me the disservice we have done to laypersons in giving them no categories or instruction for understanding their vocational callings. *Vocational* callings ... In this audience, I realize there is no need to pause and define vocation, but in recognition that these papers will be published for a broader audience, please allow me a few words.

When I grew up in Tennessee in the 1970s and 1980s, the word "vocation" conjured up images of schools training young persons to service HVACs or repair diesel engines. Vocational schools, as far as I knew, trained manual, blue-collar laborers—people who will not go to college.

The word "vocational" comes from the Latin *voco* or *vocare*, meaning to call. Prior to the Protestant Reformation, only priests, monks or other professional

ecclesiastical offices were considered divinely called to their offices. With Luther, however, there arose a proper recognition of the priesthood of all believers, which entailed not only a universal calling to salvation among God's people, but calling to all legitimate (non-sinful) roles and stations in life.

So, you're wondering about the personal traumatic experience that began my journey deeper into the doctrine of vocation. Yes, it was nearly five years ago that my father was nearly killed when a sixteen year old girl, apparently distracted by her smartphone, ran into the side of his Toyota Corolla. With bleeding on the brain, he had emergency surgery. He spent literally forty days in the hospital, much of it in the ICU. There were several points where he was close to death.

After his recovery, my father told me that he wanted to tell me something. It seemed that he was wanting to have a serious talk, and I did not know what to expect. Oddly enough, at the time, I remembered a story I had read in the paper about when the patriarch of a family was dying, he called his family around and confessed to them that when he was in Japan as a soldier at the end of World War II, he looted a Japanese palace, taking a royal Japanese sword with him that he had hid to that day. The guilt of the theft had bothered his conscience and he sought relief in his dying confession.

Once when visiting my family, the time came for this serious talk with my father. He sat in his recliner to my right, and I was on sofa next to me. He did not confess to me the theft of a samurai sword. Instead, he narrated his humble upbringing in rural Tennessee, the difficulties of having an invalid father (struck at an early age by rheumatoid arthritis), the inadequacies of his public education, and his unlikely path to college. He spoke of the challenges of succeeding in college when he had not been sufficiently prepared by his prior education, and then his admission to one of the most prestigious veterinary medicine programs in his day, at Auburn University. This journey continued with a brief stint in a dead-end rural veterinary practice in Russellville, Kentucky, followed by an unusual opportunity in Nashville, Tennessee. Finally, with the untimely death of an owner of the practice, he was able to buy into both the practice and the property.

Similar to one's experience in reading the book of Esther, I found that my father was hinting at the Lord's gracious guidance throughout his life while only rarely making such explicit affirmation. This was a sacred story of divine calling. My father had been divinely called and gifted to be a

veterinarian—and through his ministry of veterinary medicine he had loved and served thousands of his human neighbors, not to mention fulfilling the Proverb 12:10, "A righteous man cares for the needs of his animal" (NIV84).

Think about the dozens, hundreds, or even thousands of other men and women who sit around us in our churches on Sunday morning. They too have sacred stories to tell of God's calling to their work, but they too lack the encouragement or categories to see their own journeys clearly enough to speak about them to others.

In the five years following this pivotal conversation, I have come to rediscover several key theological and biblical insights about work, which I will list and comment on now.

1) When humans work, we reflect the image of God.

To understand work, we must go back to the very beginning… to creation. In Genesis 1:27-28, we read:

> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

This text is called the Cultural or Creational Mandate, and it should rightly take its place alongside the Great Commission and Great Commandment for believers as they seek to understand the Lord's will for them in this earthly life. In Genesis chapter 1, we see that God creates humans in his image. What does this mean? Much has been written on this topic, and scholars disagree about the particulars, but if we look carefully at the passage, we can agree, I think, that the image of God in humans must include vice-regency over the world. Indeed, immediately following the declaration that humans are created in God's image, God commissions them to rule and subdue the earth. So, whether rulership and subduing are inherent in the divine image, or simply an implication of it, the relationship between image and vice-regency is undeniable.

This passage teaches us that to experience full humanity in God's image,

we must take the animals, plants, and minerals of this world and exercise creative dominion over them. Humans working creatively reflects their creator who took the dust of the earth and formed man out of it. As one pastor has noted, God "got his hands dirty" in creation. The Triune God of the Bible is not depicted as some distant deity, but as a "blue collar" deity, rolling up his sleeves and getting down in the dust. Indeed, it is striking when the second person of the triune God became incarnate, he also was a worker—following the construction trade of his adopted earthly father (Mark 6:3).

One implication of both the way God created the world and the way we are called to reflect his creative work is that *all* forms of legitimate (non-sinful) work have dignity. All work done well reflects the Creator who formed us and has called us to create and subdue—to bring the creative potential out of this amazing world he gave to us.

While Islam predicts the afterlife will be a time of leisure for those who truly pleased Allah, Christianity has a different vision. In Isaiah 60, in the picture of the new heavens and new earth, there is mining, farming, building, shipping, and trade. We realize these are likely symbolic images in some sense, but they point to a continuity in the old and new creation (much like we find in the resurrection body). How exactly, for eternity, will redeemed humans reflect the image of God in creative production, discovery, and rulership? We can have anticipation, but we can't be certain. As Paul says in 1 Corinthians 2:9, "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him" (NIV84).

Between work in paradise and work in the new creation, however, we find a broken world that frustrates our best creative efforts. This frustration, of course, is due to the Fall, where God cursed the ground and said that the home would be marked by pain and strife (Gen 3:16-19). Both the economic realm of the home and the marketplace are broken and in the end, our creative skills die with us and we and leave our work to be forgotten or destroyed by others (Eccl 2:17-19).

If humans must work to accurately reflect the image of God, that fact has implications for the flourishing society and culture we hope to help shape as Christians. For example, recent studies on recidivism show that prisoners who work while in prison—which is usually monotonous labor-intensive tasks like doing laundry—adjust significantly better to life outside prison. Regardless of how menial the task, there is something truly humanizing

and purposeful about doing labor that serves others. If we want to create a more flourishing society, let's take insights from studies such as these to make prisons less of a revolving door and to help persons with disabilities find more purpose in their daily lives.

Inviting Christians to subdue the earth for the glory of God and love of neighbor finds a memorable example in the life of George Washington Carver. Born a slave in 1864, Carver became a scientist who also had a devout Christian faith. One common story about Carver says he once prayed, "Creator, show me the mysteries of the universe," to which God replied, "Little man, that's too big for you, but I will show you the mysteries of the peanut—which is more your size!" Although this story is perhaps legendary, it is true that Carver discovered more than 300 uses for the peanut—including oil, plastics, paint, etc. Carver's discoveries were a boon to Southern agriculture, helping countless families prosper. What would it look like today for countless Christians in thousands of different industries to pray, "Creator, show me the mystery of _____" and then apply their God-given creativity to further discovery and invention for the benefit of their neighbors?

2) God's providence and sovereignty extend to our employment and other roles in life, such as being a husband, wife, father, mother, citizen, student, etc.

This is perhaps one of the two main points that Luther intends to make when he talks about a doctrine of vocation. His main verse to support this assertion is 1 Corinthians 7:20. The text comes in the midst of Paul answering the Corinthians questions about marriage. Apparently, the ancient Corinthians had such an over-realized eschatology that they though the normal social structures and roles of this life were already falling away. No, says Paul, if you are married, becoming a Christian means not only that you stay faithfully married to your spouse (as far as it depends on you), but you also now have concern for your spouse's salvation. In the midst of this discussion of marriage, Paul also mentions slavery and being circumcised or uncircumcised. These are social statuses or descriptions of that remain unchanged when one becomes a believer. The language of Paul here is striking. Of the slave or the married or the uncircumcised man, the apostle says, "Each one—in the calling in which he was called, in this, he must remain" (1 Cor 7:20, my

translation). The words translated "calling" or "called" here are normally words applied to believers in their effectual calling of God to salvation. Note also the divine passive verb, "was called." If we explicitly add the implied divine agency clause, it would read: "…the calling to which he was called *by God*."

Isn't that shocking language? Why are you in a particular job or status in society? Because the supreme ruler of the universe has divinely appointed you to this role!

Elsewhere, Luther points out that such an understanding of vocation is nothing other than an implication of Bible's teaching on the sovereignty of God. If not even a sparrow falls to the ground apart from God's will and all the hairs of our heads are numbered (Luke 12:6-7), how likely is it that the various roles in our lives are outside his sovereign care?

Similarly, we might point out that in his speech on Mars Hill, Paul says:

> And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us (Acts 17:26-27).

So, if God sovereignly has determined the living places and relationships of pagans, how likely is it that his sovereignty does not similarly extend to the living places and employment of his covenant people?

Of course, we should not understand God's sovereignty over our roles as fatalism. To the slave who has been called by God *as a slave*, Paul also says, "If you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity" (1 Cor 7:21). The point is that some roles we should never be changed (e.g., one's role as a spouse), but other roles (e.g., employment) can be changed. Still, as long as one has a particular role—specific work in one's hands to do—one should understand that work as a divine calling and do it for the glory of God and love of neighbor.

In Colossians 3:17, Paul writes, "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. A bit later, speaking directly to slaves, he says, "Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ" (Col 3:23-24). All of our actions are to be done with a consciousness

that we belong to the Lord and serve him. We worship him by doing our work well, loving our neighbors with integrity, in a manner befitting those who bear the name of Jesus.

In recently talking with a group of missionaries about this doctrine of vocation, I asked them to list their roles. They said things like, "Missionary, business owner, mother, father, child, language student." I told them to think of these roles as placed along a horizontal axis." Then, I asked them to imagine "the Great Commandment" (Matt 22:37-29, love God, love neighbor) as a vertical axis intersecting every one of those roles. That's a picture of doctrine of vocation. How in my various roles in life am I to love God and love neighbor?

Another visual image I gave them was a picture of the resurrected Christ with his palms up, arms stretched out towards them. In Jesus hand he held a list, and on that list there were their various roles: language student, mother, business owner, missionary. Each day, Jesus was specifically commissioning each one of them to fulfill these roles in faith and love. How would laundry and cooking look different if one embraced these tasks as part of the roles given by our great Savior? How would the struggle of learning language look different if I really believed, "God has appointed me in this particular time and place to learn French." And, as I work diligently as a student, I am loving my teacher, I am loving my fellow students, I am loving the people who sacrificed to send me here, and I am loving the future French speakers who will hear the gospel in their native tongue.

A failure to recognize one's roles as ordained and pleasing to God means that some people better suited to one role will wrongly grasp for another. I recently had a conversation with a highly skilled cyber-security expert. He was thinking of quitting his academic post to go be a missionary in the most remote corners of the world, but he was concerned that his and his wife's health would not be able to endure the harsh conditions. Quite frankly, he did not seem to have a missionary calling or gift, but was more concerned that to really and fully love God, he needed to surrender all by going on the mission field.

I asked him if he would be willing to use his gifts to help missionary agencies keep the identities of their missionaries secret. And, I talked to him about how to be a winsome witness to the students under his tutelage at a secular university.

I do not know the mind of God, but it seems that this man was uniquely gifted and effective in his vocation of keeping data safe and teaching others to keep data safe. What he needed was to see how that gift was loving others—and to think more deliberately about using that gift for the benefit of the Kingdom—as well as how to overflow with love and redemptive words in his non-Christian secular environment.

3) Rather than direct miraculous intervention, God usually cares for his creation through human agents.

From my untutored reading of Luther on the doctrine of vocation, this point seems like the other major the Reformer is making. Gene Veith has skillfully summarized this dimension of vocation accordingly:

> God healed me.
> I wasn't feeling well, so I went to the doctor. The nurse ran some tests; the lab technicians identified the problem; the doctor wrote me a prescription; I had it filled by the pharmacist; In no time, I was a lot better. It was God who healed me, and He did it through the medical vocations.
> God gave me my daily bread.
> He did it through the farmer who grew the grain, the truck driver who hauled it, the bakers at the factory, the stockers at the grocery store and the lady at the checkout counter. It was God who fed me—just as I prayed in the Lord's Prayer—and He did it through the vocations of ordinary people just doing their jobs.
> God talked to me.
> The pastor read God's Word. In the sermon, he drew out of the Bible God's Law, which cut me to the quick. Then he proclaimed the Gospel of how Christ has done everything for my salvation. When I confessed my sins, God, through His Word as delivered by the pastor, told me I was forgiven.
> ……
> God teaches through teachers; He protects us through the vocations of police officers, firefighters, soldiers and government officials; He brings beauty through artists; he proclaims His Word and administers His Sacraments through pastors. God could have created each new batch of children from the dust, as He did Adam, said Luther. But instead, He chose to create new life by means of mothers and fathers. It is still God who creates and cares for little babies, but he does

> so through the vocation of parenthood. When parents bring their children to Baptism, provide for their needs, discipline them, bring them up in His Word, and raise them to adulthood, God is at work every step of the way.[3]

For Luther, Psalm 127 is a key support of this dimension of vocation. The Psalm reads:

> Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain. It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives to his beloved sleep. Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward. (Ps 127:1-3)

Take children, for example. Where do they come from? We observe that children are the result of intimate sexual relations between a man and a woman. Yet, any specific act of procreation is ultimately attributable to God, who made the sexes and stands behind human activity. "Children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward" (Ps 127:3).

We also read of God's loving superintendence of his creation through natural means in Psalm 145:

> The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing. (Ps 145:15-16)

God does not feed his creation by providing species-specific manna every morning, but through countless intermediate agents and their activities.

Gustaf Wingren, in his book, *Luther on Vocation*, quotes Luther on this dimension of vocation. Luther says:

> Instead of coming in uncovered majesty when he gives a gift to man, God places a mask before his face. He clothes himself in the form of an ordinary man who performs his work on earth. Human beings are to work, "everyone according to his vocation and office"; through this they serve as masks for God, behind which he can conceal himself when he would scatter his gifts. God would be able to create children without making use of human beings, but it pleases him to conceal himself in marriage, in which he lets men and women thing that they bring the

children into the world, "but it is he who does so, hidden behind these masks"[4]

For the missionary conference where I recently taught, I used the FedEx logo as a visual marker of the "masks of God" dimension of a theology of vocation. If you carefully examine a FedEx logo, you will notice that between the final E and x, there is an arrow pointed to the right. The image has this beautiful "hidden" image within it that captures the essence of FedEx—purposeful movement. Likewise, there is a hiddenness to God throughout creation, but once one sees it, it's hard to miss, either in experience or Scripture. Like the ubiquitous FedEx symbol (and the hidden arrow you will henceforth forever see), so the invisible and sustaining work of God stands behind creation.

There is much more that could be said about a theology of vocation, but what are some practical implications of these truths?

1) There is great dignity to all legitimate (non-sinful) work because all work reflects the creative work of God. So, we should show genuine appreciation and honor to all workers.
2) Rather than implying that non-ministerial callings are less important, we should celebrate them. We should instruct church members in how to do all things in the name of the Lord Jesus. Church members should not think that they need to be situated in the interior of a church building to serve God. Rather, we should help them see how they can glorify God and love their neighbor through their daily work.
3) We should be humble about our own callings and roles. Such roles are ultimately distributed by God, so if we have any pleasing abilities or statuses, those are nothing other than divine gifts. Or, as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 4:7, "What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?"

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1 English Bible translations from the English Standard Version (ESV) unless otherwise noted.
2 P. 24-25, https://archive.org/stream/prayersotherpiec00becouoft#page/24/mode/2up, accessed October 26, 2017.
3 From The Lutheran Witness, accessed online.
4 Gustaf Wingren, Luther on Vocation (trans. Carl C. Rasmussen; Eugene, OR; Wipf & Stock, reprint, 2004), 138.

"The Labors of our Occupation": Can Augustine Offer *Any* Insight on Vocation?

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Around the year 401, a curious incident transpired near Roman Carthage. A cluster of nomadic long-haired monks had recently wandered into the area, causing a stir among locals. These monks took the gospel quite seriously; that is, they lived very literally one part of a gospel, "Consider the birds of the air, for they neither sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns … Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they labor not" (Matt 6:26-29). They were apparently not only shunning all physical labor on behalf of meditative prayer, but they were also (at least according to Augustine's depiction of the situation) imposing such unemployment upon others, namely local barbers. In response, Augustine penned a unique pamphlet. It takes the form of a retort, but as it unfolds, a commentary on the dignity and duty of work emerges—manual labor, in itself significant, as well as "the labors of our occupation" (*labores occupationem nostrarum*) and "labor according to our rank and duty" (*pro nostro gradu et officio laborantibus*, *De Op. Mon.* 29).[1]

This theme and brief excerpts seem to gesture towards an intriguing and typically unacknowledged avenue in Augustinian thought. They are not alone. Numerous letters written to bishops, civil officials, and friends, myriad homiletic exhortations, and unexpected comments in doctrinal works converge to reveal complexity, connection, and nuance in Augustine's articulations regarding what we would today designate as "vocation" and work. Yet many chronological surveys in larger tomes on vocation only briefly mention Augustine, if at all; at times, Augustine is starkly depicted as a fountainhead for the supposedly stunted Medieval popular opinion about vocation. As Paul Marshall wrote,

> He employed the distinction of an "active life" and a "contemplative life"… The vita activa took in almost every kind of work, including that of studying, preaching, and teaching, while the vita contemplativa was reflection and meditation on God and his truth. While both of these kinds of life were good, the contemplative life was of a higher order …"the one life is loved, the other endured." … A distinction like this formed the basic medieval pattern.[2]

Clearly, deeper investigation is warranted. This paper suggests that such an exploration complicates prevailing assumptions about Augustine's views and can contribute to ongoing conversations about vocation. With "vocation" indeed it seems proper to begin, briefly surveying the term from the present into the past. As Augustine's own use of *vocatio* is addressed, it becomes necessary to view the related topic of work and its contexts. From there, a more robust examination into his presentation of profession, both ecclesiastical and secular, unfolds, and, with that, the landscape of "vocation" can be seen to emerge through a distinctly Augustinian lens.

Vocation: A (Very) General Background

While cursory overviews of the historical trajectory of the concept of vocation exist, there are not many comprehensive historical treatments of the terminologies and definitions pertaining to vocation.[3] What follows in this section purports no such magnitude but is rather a limited attempt at a general trajectory of fundamental vocabularies and concepts. While broad, it may assist in locating an exploration on Augustinian insights within a

wider schema; it also can serve to highlight the difficulties inherent in this very inquiry.

Even today, definition for the English term "vocation" embodies inconsistent variation. It can be used generally to reference a basic identity or specifically in a gesture to an individuals' formal training or occupation. It conventionally bears the latter connotation of occupational functions to which one is particularly suited, but it can also refer to the relationships and consequent tasks with which one engages in a station of life. To further complicate matters, other broadly-defined words such as profession, job, work, and labor variously emerge in many discussions about vocation.[4] Even among Christians, definitions for vocation can be inconsistent, elusive, and more recently grandly inclusive;[5] a summary of Christian writings on the topic within the past three decades alone would be a considerable undertaking (though one perhaps helpful).

A far more limited landscape, then, is advantageous to survey prior to a focused venture into Augustine's perspectives. If we are to speak of Augustine's insights regarding the rather obscure notion of "vocation," we must begin *somewhere*. Do early Christian traditions inherited by Augustine engage any notion of vocation? Certainly, the New Testament does speak of "calling." Greek terms typically translated as "call" or "calling" find their basis in the verb καλέω (*kaleō*) and the noun κλῆσις (*klēsis*), but these terms (used over 150 times in their various forms) are remarkably varied in connotation. They are used in naming, summoning, as invitations to dinner parties, as part of the general and irrevocable call to be a follower of Christ,[6] and, on one occasion, a broad social identity.[7] The term is not, however, used in the delineation of particular tasks in ministry nor of the employment of spiritual gifts.[8] In both the Old Latin and the Vulgate, the Latin forms of *vocatio* (a call) and *vocāre* (to call) are used to translate these Greek forms; they are similarly general in meaning and flexible in use.[9] So it remains, through the centuries that unfurl in the Latin west.

A benchmark transformation occurred in the 16th century, when a novel envisioning of *vocatio* as "one's specific occupation or profession" is often said to have arisen. While this is certainly not the focus of this present study, it is important to note Max Weber's thesis, controversial though it may be. To Weber, values enshrined in religious systems either stymie or stimulate economic development. In sum, he saw Protestant reformers as revolutionary

to the economy, for in their writings, work in itself was given a spiritual significance.[10] Weber explained, "An unbroken unity integrating in systematic fashion an ethic of vocation in the world with assurance of religious salvation was the unique creation" of Protestantism, for "only in the Protestant ethic of vocation does the world, despite all its creaturely imperfections, possess unique and religious significance as the object through which one fulfills his duties."[11] All labor now could be on equal footing as an embodiment of callings, broad professions with different manifestations, given by God. This new theological interpretation of vocation, Weber proposed, surged from Luther to Calvin to the Puritans, each sharing in the beginnings of the modern economic systems of capitalism.[12] Despite many critical questions posed to the argument's nuances, Weber's thesis nonetheless observed "an important and indisputable turning point in the history of theological reflection on vocation," as scholars still admit.[13]

Can we discern other earlier voices in this "history of theological reflection on vocation," or is the 16th century truly the instigation of something altogether different? There could be several beneficial venues for investigation here,[14] but an enquiry into the potential contribution of Augustine is particularly alluring. This is not merely because he was dauntingly prolific (as Isidore of Seville long ago remarked, surely if something is worth seeking wisdom about, Augustine already wrote about it[15]) but because he writes substantially about what it is to be human. While today's automated world would be unrecognizable to him, the tendency to fragmentation in our lives, loves, and labors would be tragically familiar. Augustine does indeed employ the term vocatio, and his writings over the decades speak with considerable nuance and on varied occasions about work and, in fact, profession—that of others and his own.

Augustine's Use of "Vocatio"

When forms of *vocatio* appear in Augustine's works, appropriate translation renders it as "calling." This calling is distinctly the general call of God, the preparation of grace that is the *initium fidei*, the beginning of faith. A comment about the apostles exemplifies this: "but they were chosen from the world by that calling by which God carried out what he predestined" (*Sanct.* 34).[16] Confessions 11.1 simply states, "You have called us" (*vocasti nos*).

On Faith and Works (true to the title's name) associates faithful obedience with this calling: "For who that desires dwelling with God, in whom all are considered predestined, who 'according to the purpose are called,' would not strive to live in this way, as consistent with such a dwelling?" (22.41.)[17] Augustine does not use *vocatio* any more specifically. Perhaps a more appropriate path to pursue begins instead with Augustine's view of work—manual labor, indeed, but also different kinds of work and work with different ends and means. If work is presented with more nuance, perhaps a different set of vocabularies in consideration of profession and even God's role in the matter can be discerned.

On Labor and Work: Augustine and his Latin

Common classical Latin vocabularies distinguishing forms of labor provide assistance in setting the scene.[18] Firstly, the diverse vocabulary that appears in discussions regarding work reveals directions and contours rather than straightforward concepts. Forms of *ponos* and *labor* typically connote work with great effort, often manual in nature. The noun *industria* involves considerable effort as well; it often refers to work performed in the service of or for another person. The verb *operae* and its related noun *opus*, however, are generally used to reference attentive effort or exertion ultimately done by one's own agency; its works or services are viewed as inherently worthwhile, whether for oneself or for others. Forms of *officium* speak more to a service or duty that involves obligations but ultimately is voluntary in its undertaking; this word is commonly used for employment in professional positions and as such is variously translated as work, duty, office, or profession.[19]

Two far more ambivalent words have been given much attention in studies on Augustine and his legacy: *otium* and *negotium*. The terms seem straightforwardly opposite: *otium* as leisure and *negotium* as the lack of leisure, that is, as labor. However, such definitions are so over-simplified that accuracy of meaning must be called into question. Usage of these words throughout both classical and late antiquity is extraordinarily complicated and contextual. Neither is inherently good but serve as abstract ideas related to their setting. In Cicero's tome *On Duty* (*De Officiis*), *otium* can take place in the midst of or serve as the completion of *negotium* and has two equally potential outcomes, laziness or motivation, potentially ruining or inspiring greatness;[20] *negotium*

can mean actions in a general sense, troublesome labor, or benevolent work on behalf of others.[21] In the *Vulgate*, *otium* can be spoken of in relation to the Sabbath or to laziness, and *negotiu*m is morally neutral, occupied well or abusively.[22] A popular Roman poem further plays with meaning: "The one who knows not how to use *otium* has more *negotium* than when there is *negotium* in *negotium*."[23]

Just as the worlds of classical and late antiquity did not easily categorize *otium* and *negotium*, work itself was not necessarily perceived as shameful. Positive and explicit reference to productive work is manifestly present in both epigraphic and iconographic sources of the imperial age and late antiquity; Roman entrepreneurs, artisans, and freedmen of various occupations commonly commemorated their labor in image and inscription.[24] Specific occupations were distinguished from other occupations typically by the labors involved, and, in the words of Verboven and Laes, "the principle that workers acquire a social identity and status from the profession they exercise is clearly visible in our sources."[25] This ought not be taken to imply immediate prosperity among all who labored, however. There was only a "mixed incentive structure for labor" at best, and while markets did play a small role in the Roman world, "the market" was not as dominant as it would become over a millennia later.[26] In Augustine's churches within the small town of Hippo, then, it is unsurprising to note that he not unfrequently challenges his congregants with exhortation and illustration related to various mercantile endeavors (as we shall see) yet also references them as economically modest rather than wealthy.[27]

If work and profession are somehow linked in the cultural mores of Augustine's era, consideration of the ways that he writes about work proves to be a crucial stepping-stone towards vocation. A grand vision of work does emerge in Augustine's sermons, commentaries, various theological tomes, and letters, simple though it is not. Augustine has often been surmised to have presented rest and work in tension or as opposites. In such interpretations, work is presented as part of the civic life, the *via activa*, with a negative connotation of *negotium*, and *otium* is found within the contemplative life, the *vita contemplativa* of monastics—this was, for example, among Arendt's central analyses of Augustine.[28] This opposition is often in turn presented as leading to a purported spiritual elevation of certain professions during the Medieval era.

Contrarily, reality is far more complicated for Augustine, and the terms are, again, more complex. There is no dualism between spirituality and activity, peace and work. This may ultimately find its cause in several factors. In Augustine's perception of the human (in brief), vices are not necessarily in the outside world of action or in the life of the body itself; rather, they are *within* us as tendencies of the heart. Peace is not necessarily obtainable in or through present leisure; rather, it is an eschatologically-oriented *requiescere* (to be in repose),[29] a state of the heart's "flourishing in hope" (*spe beatus*).[30] In addition, Augustine used the *Vetus Latina,* the "Old Latin" translation common in the West before the *Vulgate*.[31] When Augustine references Psalm 46:10, the Old Latin reads, *Agite otium* (that is, "do/lead/work/act/ drive/ pursue/put in motion" in the imperative, with *otium* as its direct object), before *et cognoscite*, "and consider/reflect upon/know."[32] An approximate yet appropriate translation of this could be, "be active in rest, and consider" or even "In your motion, put in motion rest, and reflect..." Jerome's *Vulgate* renders the *agite otium* as instead simply *cessate,* "cease, be inactive" (45:10 *Vulg.*). The difference is striking and, I suspect, bears considerable implication for Augustine's own understanding of *otium* as well as *later* Western conceptions.[33] These features of the landscape in which Augustine ministered assists in providing a setting for his writings. At last, then, we can turn to his specific writings on work itself and, from there, seek his treatment of larger concepts of and surrounding profession.

On Work: Augustine's Writings

Three related collections best occupy an investigation into Augustine's depiction of work itself: several sermons on Mary and Martha, his remarks about human labor in his commentary on Genesis, and his articulations regarding work in *On the Work of Monks.* Mary and Martha might seem like an odd place to begin: is Mary not praised, Martha not chastised? For Augustine, the scene is not so simple:

> In these two women, two lives are shown—the present and the future, work and repose, duress and flourishing, temporal and eternal. These are two lives, but *you must consider them more fully*. What *this life* contains, I do not imply an evil life, or one of immorality, wickedness, luxuriousness, or ungodliness, but a life of

> *labor*. It might be full of sorrows, subdued by fears, disquieted by temptations, even this harmless life, such as was the case for Martha. … Both harmless, both praiseworthy: but one of labor, the other of rest: neither vicious, which the life of labor must beware of; neither slothful, which the life of ease must beware of. There were thus in that house these two lives and Himself, the fountain of life. In Martha was the image of things present, in Mary of things to come. What Martha was doing, that we are now; what Mary was doing, that we hope for. *Let us lead the first well*, that we may have the second fully (*Sermo* 104.4, emphases mine).

In Sermons 103 and 104, and in brief references to the sisters throughout his varied works,[34] Mary and Martha are complimentary. One prepares food to feed others, one receives food; one is a way of life, one is a state of the heart. Augustine interprets "Martha, Martha," as a tender encouragement as to her *direction* and *desire,* not chastisement of action: she cannot be frustrated that she cannot have repose *now* (103.3). Mary, rest, has chosen the best and will only be at the culmination of time in the presence of Christ. Augustine crafts numerous analogies for his explanation. Martha—"you!" he tells his congregation—must navigate the sail that Mary may yet come safe to port (104.3); "we labor in this world … let us continue onward, without sloth, that we may come to our destination" (103.1-2).[35] It is not that one can be Martha and another Mary. Each is to be both, in the words of Paul Kuntz, as "complimentary and supplementary … in a *vita mixta.*"[36]

Augustine's commentary *On the Literal Meaning of Genesis* also presents striking remarks pertaining to work. His interpretation that cultivation of the land was without obstacle prior to the fall (8.8.15-23) is unsurprising. While the ease of labor was affected by the fall, nonetheless, even now, productive "work comes from a human in a world under the governance of God" (8.16-9.17). "Creatures are instructed and learn, fields are cultivated, societies are governed, arts are engaged, and other works ... Man was to work in the garden not in servile labor but in dignified delight of spirit … what could be of more profound reflection than this?" (9.17-18).[37] Augustine here relates dignity and work, and he sees daily evidence of God's administration in the productivity from the labor of people. The picture becomes all the more nuanced, however, as he continues.

Commentary on Genesis 2.15 commences with a breathless series of questions, the more pressing of which involves just *what* is being cultivated

and *what* is being guarded. Here Augustine renders his conviction that the latter portion of the passage, "and He [God] placed him in the garden to work and to guard it" (*posuit eum in paradiso operari eum et custodire*) actually implies that man is "to cultivate (or work) in the garden to guard *him*"—"what was being guarded in the garden? ... that thing which man cultivated in the earth by the craft of agriculture he guarded in himself by the practice" (*ut quod operaretur in terra per agriculturam, in seipso custodiret per disciplinam*, 10.19-20). The human is being "guarded" in the very action of working the earth; from the beginning, *in our cultivating we are cultivated* (as Augustine's words fairly sing throughout 10.23) and thus do not labor for God's advantage but for ours (*quae non est illi sed nobis utilis* and *quia non illi ad suam, sed ad nostram utilitatem salutemque servimus,* 11.24). In work, then, Augustine sees inherent dignity as well as effect, that of production indeed but also of our own well-being.

On the Labor of Monks, Augustine's seeming tirade against labor-eschewing monastics, is perhaps best viewed as a lengthy commentary on the value of work, particularly that among monastics (as they were his audience). While the occasion for writing was somewhat peculiar, the symptoms it displayed were less extraordinary. Merely three years earlier, Augustine had sent a letter to the abbot of a monastery built pleasantly on an island off the coast of Tuscany. Sarcastic intonations are not difficult to detect. He communicates profuse gratitude for the numerous prayers of those on the island, since he and his companions are in the midst of "so many tasks we can barely breathe" but are "nonetheless persevering in that ministry in which He [God] has determined to place us" (*Ep.* 48.1).[38] Brusque assurance quickly follows: "But we encourage you in the Lord, brothers: do keep to the way of life you have undertaken … and do not privilege your rest over the needs of the church" (48.2).[39] Lawless has rightly here commented, "flight from the world, *fuga mundi,* though essentially spiritual and a matter of the heart, was never a matter for geographical relocation. The Bishop of Hippo regarded separation from other people as humanly impossible, altogether incompatible with the social nature of humanity and the exigencies of Christian charity."[40]

If monastics in search of a permanent geographical retreat were not so rare a manifestation in Augustine's world, his lengthy challenge to the audience of *On the Work of Monks* is unsurprising. Numerous avenues of retort and exhortation operate here. Augustine invokes the example of Paul consistently,

but he also strikes towards the heart. He relates a story of an impoverished man who had done manual labor before joining a monastic community. As monk, he continued to *do* exactly the same kind of work, but it was not that nothing had changed. Before the man had worked from the hope for increase of material possessions; now, he works with hope among "those who have one soul and one heart tending towards God" (*De Op Mon* 25.32). With satisfaction or tears, work is undertaken with a united heart with others and within the self (one of Augustine's many allusions to Acts 4.32[41]), with hope oriented towards and in the unceasing eschatological rest. For this reason, the work of monks does not deny rest (*requiem*) but acknowledges that Christ "Himself was not free from duress" (*nec ipse sine pressuris fuit,* 29.37). In the same section, Augustine voices a significant comment,

> Investigate and learn about the labors of our occupations … and about the related customs of the churches that we serve … for all of us, you and us, who labor according to our rank and duty, the way is narrow, attended by labor and exertion. Yet, to those rejoicing in hope, sweet is the yoke and light is the burden of He who has called us to rest (29:37).[42]

An eschatological component to his view of work is expanded: people partake in hope-oriented work situationally, according to "rank and duty," "in our occupations," while all are ultimately "called" (*vocavit*) to rest. He may be here indicating different ranks and tasks among monastics, but his writings and sermons elsewhere would open further possibilities. After all, throughout his life, Augustine was ambivalent to uniformly endorse specific disciplines as method for spiritual living, even as he himself was an avowed monastic.[43] In such reticence, his conviction is evident: even if grounded in the same hope and oriented in the same love, humans will not necessarily partake in the same programs of disciplines, types of work, nor even professions. This, of course, leads to another question: how does he speak of "secular" professions?

Augustine on the "Secular" Professions

When faced with the challenge of elucidating Augustine's view of … almost anything, namely anything secular, *City of God* seems the best place to begin.

Indeed, that *opus* will have bearing here. Yet sermons delivered over decades provide intimate details about Augustine's congregations and their contexts, and letters penned in response to inquiries both practical and theological and to incidents both quotidian and substantial reveal the width of Augustine's engagement with others. There is consistency of opinion between these different genres, but there is also different depth of detail.

Sermon 96, delivered around the year 416, revolves around Mark 8.34. "Somehow, people are like the loves that compel them," Augustine observes in exhorting his congregation to obedience. The command to follow Christ in obedience and hope is *not* directed to clergy but not married women, monks but not lay people, "but may the whole church, the entire body, with each of its members distinguished in and throughout various professions, pursue Christ" (*Christum, Serm.* 96.7).[44] While he speaks of each of these groups as having "chosen" their way of life (*elegit,* chose, 96.10), they must "follow Christ in their own way, place, and kind" (*in genere suo, et in loco suo, et in suo modo, sequantur Christum*, 96.9), curating the direction *of* their heart. Sermon 107A, unfolding from the day's passage warning about greed drawn from Luke 12.15, assumes that his congregation is partaking in numerous mercantile activities, including both holding and selling properties. Like comments in other sermons,[45] here his words paint parables about selling, gaining increase, and honesty and greed.[46] Warnings focus not on the activity or the possession but on "being possessed by" (a similar phrase used in 96.4), and he even connects the virtues to moral responsibility in one's mercantile decisions ("go into your conscience, and you will find the price of this possession. If faith, hope, and love are found there, pay for and buy it," 107A.8).

It is evident throughout his sermons that Augustine assumes his congregants are involved in *officia*. Sermon 302, for example, further addresses specific professionals, namely soldiers, tax-collectors, and merchants, mentioned in the Scriptural passages of the liturgy that day. He contrasts ways that such professions can be abusively practiced and ways they can be done faithfully in the present tense. "Soldiering does not prevent you from doing good," he comments, "but spite does," and publicans ought follow the Lukan command to "demand no more than the set fee" (302.15). The comments focus on specific abuses versus honorable participation in those professions, culminated with a flourish: "To say it straightforwardly … we are all Christians" (302.17). As such, an account to God will be given for one's realm of

responsibility in a profession (302.17).

Augustine's correspondence provides more detail here, particularly his exchange of numerous with three civil employees of various roles, Marcellinus, Macedonius, and Boniface. *Epistles* 133 and 138 address the former, a court magistrate. As Augustine lobbies Marcellinus to take a certain position on a judicial matter, he pointedly remarks, "you have been sent for the use of the church" (*pro ecclesiae utilitate missus es,* 133.3). While he does not indicate explicitly *who* did the sending, implication would seem to say God—that is, God placed him in this profession to be of efficacy to the *ecclesia.* In a consequent letter, he emphasizes to Marcellinus that Christians are not to withdraw from but participate well, "as the doctrine of Christ requires," in civic activities and positions, explicitly including that of military service, judges, rulers, servants, and publicans, that can contribute to "the state's well-being" (138.2.15).

A similar tone is found in correspondence with Macedonius, who around the years 413-414 posed various questions about the Scripture and apparently wondered if he ought to abandon his position as imperial governor of Roman Africa to pursue monasticism. The final letter in the collection (155) is most pointed, drawing on Ciceronian philosophical concepts and Augustine's own theology of human flourishing (the *beata vita*[47]). As Clair remarks, "Augustine takes Macedonius further out and further up the expanding circles of *oikeiōsis* [the transformative vision of the City of God], encouraging him to view his responsibility for the peace of North Africa in light of his primary responsibility to love God, the highest good."[48] "Serving in the position of earthly judge," Macedonius can live "in the reign of Christ," pursuing by means of the virtues of faith, hope, and love "a true life of flourishing" (155.4.17). Professions can disappear in disaster, Augustine notes soberly, but "the flourishing life lies in our own control … and the highest good will never be lost" (155.1.3, 155.3.12). As Dodaro has noted, "Augustine's description of a public official whose official duty in the earthly city is explicitly connected—not contrasted—with citizenship in the heavenly city."[49] He articulates to Macedonius that a Christian governor's objective is to "assist his subjects in loving God as completely as possible in this life," an objective that shapes all other endeavors, no matter how temporal they may seem.[50] In Augustine's exhortation, a person's virtues in and aims of a profession are key; theological virtues redirect, but do not necessarily replace,

professional positions and their corresponding actions. This theme is all the more brought to bear in his communication with the prominent military commander Boniface.

Augustine's letters to Boniface are explicit in conviction that even as the transitory *must* submit to the eternal, secular authorities have the task (*officium*) to protect social order and the populations entrusted to them. As R. A. Markus articulates, in Augustine's vision "all human order was fragile,"[51] and secular authorities, Christian or not, were given responsibility for reinforcing this order. As a Christian, Boniface is instructed seek the eternal while participating in the temporal—even in facing prospect of warfare. "Do not presume that the one who as soldier carries weapons of war cannot please God," *Epistle* 189 proclaims, listing various soldiers in the scripture, "for even your bodily strength is a gift from God; in that way, remember not to act against God by means of a gift of God … Your will ought to be aimed at having peace" (189.4, 6).

Directives in *City of God* 19.19 compliment those expressed in sermons and letters. This well-known passage focuses on professional options for Christians. Not only is the content of this passage noteworthy, however, it is immensely significant but rarely acknowledged that it comes immediately prior to Augustine's confirmation that human flourishing is attainable—at least, in part—when hope and love are aligned in appropriate orientation (19.20). One's labors, profession, and flourishing-in-hope (*beatus in spe*) are, in short, associated with one another. Again, his audience is instructed to consider their orientation and resultant action within whatever profession: "No one ought to be in such leisure as to, in his own ease, forget useful service to his neighbor; nor may anyone be so entrenched in an active life that he does not seek contemplation of God" (19.19). Those in places of action and authority must partake in their work (*opus*) in such a way that it is useful, working for the welfare of all under their jurisdiction.[52] Even promotion in these offices is fine, provided that one's ambition does not consist of myopic pride.

Augustine's perspectives, however, do reflect a bit more nuance than his infamous "love, and do what you will" (*Io. Ep. Tr.* 7.8). He frequently references compulsion and burdens of work, particularly his *own* work. "It is under the *compulsion* of love" that *negotium* must be undertaken, *City of God* 19.19 further declares; indeed, "it is necessary for love's sake to receive

and undertake it" (19:19).[53] Apparent is the acceptance of a burden that is *imponit,* imposed. What is this burden imposed and yet received, and who is imposing it?

Augustine's Depictions of the Pastoral Task

Augustine's depictions of the pastoral task are informed by his *own* task. Approximately two years after his baptism in Milan, Augustine had relocated to provincial Roman North Africa.[54] In a wake of grief from the loss of his teenage son and a beloved friend soon after, he formed a small monastic community there, devoting himself to writing and prayer. His quiet was short-lived, for the Bishop Valerius and his congregation in Hippo ordained Augustine into the priesthood in 391. By 395, he had been declared co-bishop, then soon became sole Bishop of Hippo, with his cathedra in a church named the Basilica of Peace.[55] He continued to labor there as he lived in a clerical monastic community until his death in 430.[56]

Some have indicated that Augustine's appointment to the priesthood changed little "the practical parameters of a life centered on speaking" for the recently retired teacher of rhetoric,[57] but this seems only partially the case. He depicts this retirement in the narrative of the *Confessions.* As the ninth book begins, Augustine is a new convert. "I am Your servant," he acclaims, "You [God] have loosed my bonds," and his heart, tongue, and bones can now be united in praise (9.1). In this state of freedom, he declares that it was pleasing both to both himself and God "to withdraw the ministry of my tongue from the talker's trafficking place," so that students could no longer "purchase the weapons of my mouth to further their own frenzy" (9.2).

In his retirement, however, he does not necessarily lay down the tools of the trade. Rhetoric remains a significant tool at his disposal, but it is poised towards a different end, employed in a different setting, and bore fruit among different recipients. *Prima facie,* perhaps, Augustine quits his secular job involving persuasive speaking and soon enters another job involving persuasive speaking. Yet he regards the professions as two completely different ways of life, relationship, and work: one is slavery, one servitude. "I serve with my heart and voice and writings" (*Conf.* 9.13.37), he proclaims. Yet all was not entirely well. Augustine was thoroughly overwhelmed with the gravity and extent of the task.

The *Confessions* might have used the metaphor of loosed bonds for his conversion, but his writings uniformly return to the language of involuntary burdened affliction and sheer obedience in speaking of his work as bishop throughout his thirty-five year tenure. In an early epistle, written while he was still a Bishop's assistant, he wrote, "I am clenched in the fist of church administration" (*qua Ecclesiae cura tenear,* 31.4). The bishop Valerius "imposed on me the burden of cobishop" (*coepiscopatus sarcinam imponeret*), yet "I trusted that the Lord had willed this" (*Dominum id velle credidi*, 31.4). "There are some who God has willed to be guides of churches" (*quos gubernatores ecclesiarum esse voluit, Ep.* 10), and "we persevere in that ministry in which He has placed us" (*perseverantes nos in eo ministerio, in quo dignatus est collocare*, *Ep.* 48.1). In the case of a new presbyter, "Pinianus took his oath in my presence and with my permission, but it is not true that he did it in obedience to any command from me … for the consecration of a presbyter is a work of God" (*opus Dei, Ep.* 126.6).

Such assumption is not made without some caveat on Augustine's part and, indeed, only exists in connection to his larger theological perspectives. "God has placed you in that seat" (*te in illa sede Dominus Deus noster constituit*), he tells the Bishop Caelestine in *Epistle* 209. In the same letter, however, Augustine admits to his own mistaken "imposing" of a bishop on a congregation, a young man "whom I had not proved, who was, at least in age, not yet established, by whom they have now been afflicted" (209.9). What makes a bishop willed and placed by God or imposed by man? Augustine does not indicate it here, but in every one of Augustine's letters to or about Caelestine, Augustine admires Caelestine's *unity*—with his congregation but also within his own heart, in loves and in direction of hope. The shamed young bishop (who apparently had difficulty keeping his hands off the wealth and women of his congregation) demonstrated the opposite, and he was certainly not alone in his abuse of the pastoral task.

Sermon 340A, delivered at the ordination of another bishop, expertly advises both the cleric and the congregation on the qualities of a good bishop versus those of a bad bishop. The latter, he explains, has only an empty name; like a scarecrow contrasts to a farmer, a bad bishop simply enjoys the views in the field without tilling (340A.4-6). *All* Christians, after all, "are mixed together in public appearance but distinct in their roots" (340A.10). A similar note can be heard in Sermon 340,[58] delivered on an anniversary of his own

ordination. He notes that some pastors enjoy the title without undertaking the *officium* (340.1), some do that work but are negligent with their own lives (340.9-10), some falsely promise present happiness to their congregants (*promittunt felicitatem*[59] *huius saeculi,* 340.11), and others naively forget that "the sheep are insolent" (340.14).[60] Here a passage from *City of God,* itself Augustine's grand envisioning of God's omnipotence and omniscience, may be worth recalling: "He [God] gives earthly kingdoms to both the good and the wicked. He does not do this flippantly, for He is God not fortune. Rather, He acts in accordance with His order of things and times, obscure to us but entirely known to Him" (*Civ. Dei* 4.33). It would seem, just as he expressed in his letter to the official Marcellinus, "you have been sent for the beneficial use of the Church" (*pro Ecclesiae utilitate missus es, Ep.* 133.3) for reasons unbeknown, but the action within that position is determined by personal orientation.

Proper orientation may be inextricable from Augustine's envisioning of flourishing, but it did not imply an easy journey. "When will I ever suffice with the tongue of my pen to express all Your exhortations, and terrors, and comforts, and guidance, whereby You led me (*me perduxisti*) to preach Your Word and to dispense Your sacrament unto Your people?" (*Conf.* 11.2). Augustine accepts liability for his submission nonetheless: "It is because of our own stubbornness and weakness, if this chain chafes me in some ways" (*Ep.* 31.4). This submission only happens in hope's recalibration: "He who truly gives up everything is the one who gives up not only as much as he was able to have but also as much as he wanted to have" (*Ep.* 31.5).[61]

Augustine alludes to what *he* wanted to have often. "Nobody could outdo me in grand, anxiety-free *otium*" he reflects in the midst of a sermon, "but preaching, arguing, rebuking, edifying, having to manage for everyone, is a great task, a great burden, a great labor (*magnus labor*)—who would not seek refuge from such labor? But the Gospel terrifies me" (*Sermo* 339.4; cf. similar sentiment in *Sermo* 340.2). Tasks, burdens, labors—indeed, bishops faced numerous demands. They served as church administrators, delivered sermons to sizeable congregations, rendered judgments in both civil cases and ecclesial matters, and often acted as lobbyists to civic officials, among other tasks.[62] What of Augustine's monastic lifestyle in the midst of such commitments? In a clerical monastery, Lawless notes, one's life was "transmuted into the communal practice of the church."[63] To Augustine, this would

have been part of the human's reorienting relationship with God and others, in a nexus that was far more composite than a simplistic *vita comtemplativa* or a *vita activa*.

Accordingly, even as monastic, he remarked amidst his communications with Marcellinus, "You would also be astonished at the number of things which I cannot put off and which pluck me by the sleeve" to prevent him from writing (*Ep.* 138). "As for the whole management of those ecclesiastical tasks (*istam omnem rerum ecclesiasticarum procurationem*), which we are believed to love to have authority over, I endure it as part of the service, out of love for the brethren and fear of God. It is tolerated, not loved. If I could, without unfaithfulness to my office, I would be rid of it" (*Ep*. 126.9). He wrote in a terse series of letters with Jerome, "I do not have such great knowledge of the Divine Scripture as I see you do. If I do have some acumen here, it is expended on the people of God, as because of this ecclesiastical occupation (*ecclesiasticas occupationes*) I am not able to have the vacant time of more details than the people will listen to" (*Ep.* 73.2.5). I suspect Augustine would be astonished to see most artistic depictions[64] of him—typically alone, in authorial contemplation—for that seems not to have been his primary *modus operandi*. "Nothing in this life is more difficult, laborious, and dangerous than the office of bishop, priest, or deacon," another early epistle opines, "yet before God, nothing is more blessed than if one soldiers as our emperor commands" (*Ep.* 21.1).[65]

Various other works echo this refrain. Both *On the Work of Monks* and *Epistle* 48 comment that even as he and his clerical companions are engaged in "so many tasks we can barely breathe," they are "nonetheless persevering in that ministry in which He [God] has determined to place us" (*perseverantes nos in eo ministerio, in quo dignatus est collocare*, *Ep.* 48.1). In *On Christian Doctrine,* a discussion about the Christian's proper orientation moves into illustration: human action itself takes place in the present yet is founded upon inference from the past and expectation for the future. The work of numerous professions, from artisans of dining-ware and wrestlers to doctors and managers, are specifically given as examples. After listing these professions, Augustine hastily adds that he is not necessarily encouraging his audience to engage in any one of them "unless led by compelling *officium*."[66] This should not be considered an invective to avoid labor unless one must; its juxtaposition of *officium* and the state of being compelled, viewed

in light of Augustine's comments elsewhere, seems rather to hint at divine placement in specific professions.

Summary of Augustine on Vocational Calling: Voluit, Duxit, Collocavit

In sum, Augustine consistently used terms indicating that God "willed," "led," and "placed" (*voluit, duxit, collocavit*) for something more specific than a *vocatio,* the general call to faith. The latter of those terms, from *collocare*, is illustratively layered. It implies "to invest, place, set, station, order, arrange, occupy, and employ," and it is Cicero's term for both the arrangement of words in speeches and the depiction of people waiting in ambush.[67] Augustine likely would have concurred. Professions, with their relationships of exchange and specific labors, seem to be God's arrangement, as well as a kind of ambuscade on one's life (at least as he certainly viewed his own). His sense of "calling" entailed no bloated sense of responsibility or micromanagement: Augustine is seen delegating tasks when able.[68] He spoke of his ministry and his monastic identity as both personal and directed by God (e.g., *Conf.* 11.2, *perduxisti*), but he never communicated that these identities were applicable or directed to all. He did not recruit. Even as he noted the significance of work in itself, he refrained from prescriptions as to the *kind* of work.[69] He recognized his own tendency to solitude and inaction, just as he was cognizant of others' propensities to task-oriented, nearly frenzied public service and action (e.g., *Ep.* 10). In itself, an occupation generated no special sanctity to practitioners or those in proximity. Professions were unique in demands, and are often referred to as placed on a person's shoulders by God, but in the larger picture of Augustinian thought were not in themselves privileged. The rightly-oriented love of God, on the other hand, was something to which *all* Christians were called in their quotidian lives.

It can be said, then, that in Augustine's writings there is a general *vocation* to orientation and a specific *placing* or *leading* into profession within that. For the latter, there are specific kinds of work and relationships of exchange entailed in each, and these can be properly or improperly stewarded. This work is ultimately a means by which God works in (or cultivates) his creatures. There are numerous limitations, further questions, and practical trajectories that emerge from such conclusions, of course. As thoughtful conversations

about vocation continue,[70] however, it seems that we would do well to engage in retrospection. Perhaps Augustine can be said to articulate significant theological perspectives regarding vocation and labor ... that is, perhaps Isidore of Seville was right, after all.

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1 Augustine's works in Latin obtained from S. Aurelii Augustini *Opera Omnia*, editio Latina, accessed at http://www.augustinus.it/latino/index.htm. Unless otherwise noted, translations are my own. Titles of Augustine's works are abbreviated in citation and follow those of James O'Donnell's commentary on Augustine's *Confessions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992). I am grateful for the invitation from the Commonweal Project to explore this topic.

2 Paul A. Marshall, "Work and Vocation: Some Historical Reflections," *Reformed Journal* 30:9 (1980), 17. He also reflects this view in *A Kind of Life Imposed on Man: Vocation and Social Order from Tyndale to Locke* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 19.

3 E.g., the classic article by Karl Holl, "The History of the Word Vocation," trans. H. F. Peacock, *Review and Expositor* 55 (1958), 126-154; William Placher, *Callings: Twenty Centuries of Christian Wisdom on Vocation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005).

4 Distinction between these is interesting but not always apparent. For example, a job generally involves transactional relationships and commitments oriented around certain labors, whereas labor itself might be said to imply the action that specifically embodies the job and actualizes a vocation.

5 Indeed, among authors of all Christian traditions—Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Eastern Orthodox. As an example of this grand inclusivity, Steven Garber's *Visions of Vocation* painted in beautifully compelling prose a dauntingly vast panorama: vocation is woven into God's work, incarnates the gospel, involves tasks that are chosen "for love's sake," attends to the flourishing of ourselves and of others, and ultimately answers the question, "knowing what I know, what will I do?" in *Visions of Vocation: Common Grace for the Common Good* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2014), 18, 224, 238-9.

6 E.g., Luke 14:16, Matt 10:5; 2 Thess 2:14, Eph 4:4, 1 Pet 5:10, Rom 11:29, Gal 1:6; 1 Cor 1:9.

7 1 Cor 7:17, "Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him" (ESV) and 7.20, "Each one should remain in the calling (typically translated as "condition", e.g., ESV) in which he was called." The latter verse contains two uses of the same word, within a larger passage that employs 'calling' otherwise as that of Christ unto Himself.

8 Eph 4:11-12; In 1 Cor 12:28, we see instead τίθημι (*tithēmi*), to establish, fix, or put in place (which is also used in John 15:16); in 1 Tim 3:1, such offices are "aspired to" (ὀρέγω, *oregō*).

9 E.g., in 1 Cor 7, v.17 features *sicut vocavit Deus*, and v.20-21 reads, *unusquisque in qua vocatione vocatus est in ea permaneat servus vocatus es non sit tibi curae sed et si potes liber fieri magis utere* (ESV: Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called. Were you a bondservant when called? Do not be concerned about it, but if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity).

10 Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (trans., T. Parsons; London: Unwin Hyman, 1930, orig. 1905).

11 Weber, *Sociology of Religion* (trans., E. Fischoff; Boston: Beacon Press, 1963), 182.

12 Thus emerges arguably unforeseen attitudes and comments, such as Sir John's irony-laden comment in Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, "'tis no sin for a man to labor in his vocation" in defense of his thievery:*Henry IV*, act 1, scene 1, lines 104-5.

13 Edward Hahnenberg, *Awakening Vocation: A Theology of Christian Call* (Minneapolis, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996), 4; cf. Paul Marshall, *A Kind of Life Imposed on Man: Vocation and Social Order from Tyndale to Locke* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).

14 E.g., inquiry into notions of "vocation" in the medieval world could be undertaken by examining medieval sermons, e.g., the 13th c. *Sermones* of Étienne de Bourbon, as well as the writings of Petrarch and Dante, are certainly worth examining on this topic.

15 He also famously declared in the same stanza that anyone claiming to have read every word produced by

Augustine's pen is an obvious liar (Isidore of Seville *Etymologies* 7).

16 *Electi sunt autem de mundo vocatione in qua Deus id quod praedestinauit, impleuit, De Praes.*

17 *Quis enim digne cogitans habitationem apud Deum, in qua omnes praedestinatione sunt deputati, qui secundum propositum vocati sunt, non enitatur ita vivere, ut tali habitationi congruat?* The passage integrated into his comment similarly used a form of *vocare* (*vocati sunt,* Roms 8:28) in its Latin translations. Rowan Williams comments briefly on Augustine and *vocatio* in this way: it is "the receiving of the grace of Christ which reconnects us with our vocation to be God's created image … we come to "image" God by grasping that our reality exists solely within His activity" Rowan Williams, *On Augustine* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 175.

18 See the significant recent volume edited by Koenraad Verboven and Christian Laes, *Work, Labour, and Professions in the Roman World* (Leiden: Brill, 2017); resources for investigation into the language also include De Gruyter's voluminous *Thesaurus Latinae Linguae* and the classic Lewis and Short Latin Dictionary, accessible at http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/resolveform?redirect=true&lang=Latin. We should of course add the caveat that ancient literature on labor should be expected to reflect the perceptions of a minority in society (a minority that often inconsistently speaks of and does not follow its own ideals—and one with very different assumptions than our own era, e.g., significant civic positions with obvious economic return, such as that of provincial governor, are not typically referred to as professions; cf. Verboven and Laes, "Work, Labour, Professions. What's in a Name?" in *Work, Labour, and Professions in the Roman World* (ed., Verboven and Laes; Leiden: Brill, 2017, 2-4).

19 Cf. *Vulgate* Num 7:8; Pliny *Ep.* 7.15; Suetonius *Aug.* 57.

20 *De Offic.* 3.1-4. 3.28; Catullus' poetry similarly observes "*otium* has in the past destroyed kings and flourishing cities," 51.15-16.

21 Cicero *Tusc.* 1.6.

22 Ezek 21:22; 1 Thess 4:6 entails a warning about taking advantage of others in *negotium*, but 2 Cor 7:11 is positive, complimenting a *negotium* wholly without contamination. Cf. Jean Leclercq, *Otia Monastica:* études *sur le vocabulaire de la contemplation au moyen* âge, Studia Anselmiana 51 (Rome: Herder, 1963), 13-49, for these term as carried on through the Middle Ages.

23 Ennius, *Iphigenia,* preserved in Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights,* 19.10: *otio qui nescit uti plus negotii habet quam cum est negotium in negotio*.

24 With excellent documentation and explanation, Catharina Lis and Hugo Soly, "Work, Identity, and Self-Representation in the Roman Empire," in *Work, Labour, and Professions in the Roman World*, ed. Verboven and Laes, (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 262-289; the majority of the labor force in Roman antiquity consisted of free labor, not slavery, cf. Verboven and Laes, 8-9.

25 Verboven and Laes, 4; this is particularly so in terms of the significant social framework of *collegia*.

26 Ibid., 13.

27 E.g., *Sermo* 107A, 302.2-16, 107.4-6, 108.6, 93.

28 Arendt argued that Augustine essentially accepted the typical classical dualism between a civic, active life and a restful contemplative life, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 14-16, 288-292, 304. Without invoking Arendt, some scholarly works still view Augustine with such a dualistic lens: Paul Marshall, *A Kind of Life Imposed on Man: Vocation and Social Order from Tyndale to Locke* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 18-20;

29 E.g., *Conf.* 1.1, *requiescat in te*; God's rest described with *requiescere* in Augustine's discussion of God's ongoing works (*operari*) and God's rest in Genesis, *De Gen ad Litt.* 7.28.42.

30 E.g., *Trin.* 13.9, *Civ. Dei* 19.5, *Gen. Litt.* 4.16.27, *Ep.* 130. My translation of *beatus/beata* is "flourishing," to emphasize its layered meaning. Some translate this term as "happy," others as "blessed," but I am convinced that "flourishing" is the most appropriate term to use today. Cf. Megan DeVore, "'This is the Beata Vita': Augustine on Human Flourishing," delivered at the Commonweal Project Spring Symposium at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY, 2017.

31 For more thorough information, H. A. G. Houghton, *The Latin New Testament: A Guide to its Early History, Texts, and Manuscripts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

32 E.g., in *De Ver. Rel.* 35.65.

33 Cf. Jean-Marie André, *L'otium dans la vie morale et intellectuelle romaine des origines à l'époque augustéenne,* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966).

34 E.g., *Trin.* 1.10.20.

35 Another pair of Scriptural sisters present the same lesson, in Augustine's exegetical method and theory: in his polemical *Against Faustus,* Leah represents "the temporal life in which we labor," and Rachel "the hope of life eternal" (*Cont. Faust.* 22.55). The present life will engage in *laborosia opera ad utilitatem,* toilsome

work with a useful end, that is, the service of others. This is productive: Leah bears children. In this life, however, Augustine continues, the purely contemplative mode is "sterile" and potentially breeds vices: cf. Giovanni Catapano, "Leah and Rachel as Figures of the Active and the Contemplative Life in Augustine's *Contra Faustum Manichaeum*," in *Theoria, Praxis, and the Contemplative Life after Plato and Aristotle* (ed., Thomas Bénatouïl and Mauro Bonazzi; Leiden: Brill, 2012), 215-228. Augustine's fascinating interpretation of Martha and Mary, while not typical (E.g., Cyril of Alexandria saw Mary as a symbol of the gentiles, and Martha as a symbol of the Jews, *In Joannem* 7.9.6.), and similar to only the commentaries of Chrysostom (*Homilies on the Gospel of John* 44), will be echoed by others in the Western tradition for several centuries, e.g., Gregory the Great *Ep.* 5: "I loved the beauty of the contemplative life as a Rachel, barren, but able in sight and pretty. Though in her repose she is less fertile, she sees the light with more ability. But for reasons I do not know, Leah has been coupled with me at night—that is, the active life, fruitful but weak in eyes, seeing less but bearing more … I am compelled to serve with Martha in many public tasks."

36 Paul Kuntz, "Practice and Theory: Civic and Spiritual Virtues in Plotinus and Augustine," in *Arbeit Musse Meditation* (ed., Brian Vickers; Stuttgart: Tuebner, 1991), 71. The *vita mixta* is explained beautifully in Augustine's *Ep.* 10, as well.

37 *In hac autem altera signa dari, doceri et disci, agros coli, societates administrari, artes exerceri, et quaeque alia… ut operaretur agriculturam, non labore servili, sed honesta animi voluptate… quid plenius magna consideratione?*

38 *Tamen… perseverantes nos in eo ministerio in quo dignatus est collocar.*

39 *Vos autem, fratres, exhortamur in Domino ut propositum vestrum custodiatis… nec vestrum otium necessitatibus ecclesiae praeponatis.*

40 Laweless, 142.

41 Luc Verheijen opined that Augustine's monastic ideal, the "symbol of monastic life as he conceived of it" is Acts 4.32: Luc Verheijen, *Saint Augustine's Monasticism in the Light of Acts 4.32-35*, The Saint Augustine Lecture Series (Villanova, PA: Villanova University Press, 1979).

42 *Quaerite, et cognoscite labores occupationum nostrarum… et Ecclesiarum quibus servimus talem iam consuetudinem … Sane omnibus et nobis et vobis pro nostro gradu et officio laborantibus et arcta via est in labore et aerumna, et tamen in spe gaudentibus iugum eius lene est et sarcina levis, qui nos vocavit ad requiem.*

43 E.g., *Ep.* 36 and 130. Cf. George E. Demacopoulos, "Augustine of Hippo and Resistance to the Ascetic Model of Spiritual Direction," in *Five Models of Spiritual Direction in the Early Church* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 95; George Lawless, "Augustine's Decentering of Asceticism," in *Augustine and his Critics* (ed., Robert Dodaro and George Lawless; London: Taylor and Francis, 1999), 141-162.

44 *Sed universa ecclesia, universum corpus, cuncta membra per officia propria distincta et distribute, sequantur.*

45 *Sermo* 302.16 asks, "have *you* always traded honestly?"; *Sermo* 108 has a pointed example that assumes similar activity in household business specifically, "You at least pay wages to those who do work for you" (108.6).

46 This paper will not explore how wealth itself is viewed: such studies have been done thoroughly elsewhere, e.g., Peter Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle Wealth, the Fall of Rome, and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350-550 AD* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012).

47 The most appropriate translation of *beatus/beata* is "flourishing:" cf. footnote 29.

48 Joseph Clair, *Discerning the Good in the Letters and Sermons of Augustine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 102; Clair more thoroughly explains the leitmotif of "*oikeiōsis*" on p. 39-40.

49 Robert Dodaro, "Augustine the Statesman and the Two Cities," in *A Cambridge Companion to Augustine* (ed., Mark Vessey and Shelley Reed; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 388.

50 Ibid., 391. Milbank's position that Augustine ultimately envisions a transformation of the profession to such an extent that he insinuates a theocracy seems too excessive a reading: cp. J. Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), 380-438.

51 R. A. Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St. Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. xi.

52 Augustine instructs "pilgrims" in this world that they can maintain the customs and institutions of the day, so long as these do not hinder worship of God (*Civ. Dei* 19.17). "Those who live by faith expectantly desire the eternal peace which is promised, and they use (*utitur*) as pilgrims the advantages of earth and time that do not captivate and divert them from God but that nourish (*sustentetur*) them to bear on with greater ease and keep down to a minimum those burdens of the temporary body that weigh upon the soul" (*Civ. Dei* 19.17). Thus, firstly, the well-oriented utility of goods is an important component to our nourishment as we seek with faith, hope, and love the *summum bonum.* Secondly, an overemphasis on the total unattainability of flourishing in this world might be an overly limited reading of Augustine, for while the *perfection*

of flourishing is eschatological, it would seem that there are instrumental "advantages of earth and time" that are useful to nourish and to assist our trajectory thereunto. Augustine seems to be indicating that part of our expectant desire for the fulfillment of all things is the use of (not captivation *with*, but proper *use of*) such resources that allow us to be sustained in this body, because the burdens that exhaust our bodies have the power to press upon the whole of our lives, reaching to our very souls. This seems consistent with Augustine's convictions in other works. "If a thing is to be loved for its own sake," that is, when God is loved rightly, "then in the enjoyment of this comes a *beata vita*—if not yet the reality, the hope of which is our comfort" now, in our present pilgrimage (*Doct. Chr.* 1.22; cp. *Ep.* 130.7; *Div. Qu.* 83.3; *Lib. Arb.* 2.13.26).

53 *negotium iustum suscipit necessitas caritatis … si autem imponitur, suscipienda est propter caritatis necessitate.* A note on choice of vocabulary: *suscipere,* rendered here "to receive and undertake," is the verb used when a father formally held up and therefore acknowledged his newborn child, for the voluntary undertaking of a lifelong civil position, and when the Roman state formally admitted a citizen. All are presented for one's acceptance, and have their own demands, but each can be potentially abused in their undertaking.

54 For more on this city, see Jane Merdinger, *Rome and the African Church in the Time of Augustine* (London: Yale University Press, 1997); Naomi Norman, "Carthage," in *Augustine through the Ages* (ed., Allan Fitzgerald; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 132-133; Claude Lepelley, "The Survival and Fall of the Classical City in Late Roman Africa," in *The City in Late Antiquity* (ed., John Rich; London: Routledge, 1992).

55 There is debate about how many were in his congregation there: estimates range from three hundred, limited by architectural space suggested by excavation, to over a thousand. Cf. discussion in Peter Sanlon, *Augustine's Theology of Preaching* (Augsburg Fortress Press, 2014), 13-15: O'Donnell, van der Meer, and MacMullen all present differing voices as to both numbers and composition of attendees. The city of Annaba in Algeria, formerly the Roman metropolis Hippo Regus, still has a Basilica of Peace on the site. Augustine was buried there in 430 (though his body was later moved, like so many others, to Italy).

56 This kind of coenobitic lifestyle was very common for clerics at the time: cf. Andrea Stark, *Renouncing the World yet Leading the Church: The Monk-Bishop in Late Antiquity* (London: Harvard University Press, 2004).

57 Hildegund Müller, "Preacher: Augustine and His Congregation," in *A Companion to Augustine* (ed., Mark Vessey and Shelley Reid; Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 297.

58 Sometimes listed as *Sermo* 46, depending on collection.

59 It is worthy of remark that the term "happiness," *felix/felicitas,* ought not be confused with *beatus/beata, "*flourishing" (itself sometimes translated as "blessed" or "happy", but certainly not in the same sense as *felix*).

60 He knew that both leaders and lay, in their various posts, had their own fragmentations of the heart: ordination did not a saint make. This might explain why his criteria for ordination focus on education and administrative competence, as can be seen throughout *de Doctrina,* which was composed as a handbook for Christian preachers. Cf. discussion in Demacopoulos, 85-106.

61 Van der Meer gravely affirms here, "The nature of Augustine's choice is evident in all he did" (233).

62 On a bishop's many tasks, cf. Henry Chadwick, *The Role of the Christian Bishop in Ancient Society* (Berkeley: Center for Hermeneutical Studies in Hellenistic and Modern Culture, 1980); discussion in F. Van der Meer, *Augustine the Bishop* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1961), 235-274.

63 John Peter Kenney, "Mystic and Monk: Augustine and the Spiritual Life," in *A Companion to Augustine* (ed., Mark Vessey and Shelley Reid; Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 295.

64 E.g., the well-known paintings of Philippe de Champaigne, Gerard Seghers, Fra Angelico, Antonio Rodríguez, *et al.* An exception to this would certainly be the stunning 15th c. altarpiece panels by the Vergós group (incl. Jaume Huguet).

65 "Burden" appears often in his letters: *Ep.* 31.4, 69.1, 71.2, 85.2, 86, 101.3, 149.34, 242.1, 34.1, etc.

66 The fascinating section in whole reads: "Further, as to the remaining arts, whether those by which something is made that remains as a result of his work when the effort of the workman is over, as, for example, a house, a bench, a dish, and other like things; or those that (so to speak) display God in His works, like medicine, agriculture, and navigation; or those whose sole result is an action, such as dancing, racing, and wrestling—in all these arts, experience leads us to infer the future from the past. After all, no one who is skilled in any of these arts moves his limbs in work without connecting the memory of the past with expectation for the future. Thus a general, basic knowledge is to be acquired from these arts, not with a view to practicing them (unless led by compelling duty, which I am not going to engage at present), but in terms of forming a judgment about them, so that we would not be ignorant all that Scripture conveys when it uses figures of speech derived from these arts."

67 Cicero *Or.* 51, *Tusc.* 5.1, 5.4.10, *Fam.* 2.13.3, *Fin.* 5.2.4; Suet. *Aug.* 49, etc., each with slightly varied meanings.

[68] In a discussion of the operations of a *collegium* of silversmiths, he notes that a better product is produced more quickly by the "combined work of many craftsmen": "in the street of the silversmiths, one vessel, in order that it may go out perfect, passes through the hands of many craftsmen, when it might have been finished by one perfect craftsman. But the only reason why the combined skill of many was thought necessary, was that it is better that each part of an art should be learned by a particular craftsman, which can be done speedily and easily, than that they should all be compelled to be perfect in one art throughout all its parts, which they could only attain slowly and with difficulty," *Civ. Dei* 7.4. See R. Arbesmann, "The Attitude of St. *Augustine* Toward *Labor*," in *The Heritage of the Early Church* (ed., D. Neiman and M. Schatkin; Rome, 1973), 245-259, and E. Booth Consult, "A Marginal Comment of St. Augustine on the Principle of the Division of Labor, *De Civ. Dei* VII.4," *Augustinianum* 17 (1977), 249-256.

[69] It is not certain that this implies that Augustine is a curmudgeon, nor that he felt insecure by the possibility of competition. The latter was proposed by Maureen Tilley as the reason that Augustine does not advise men to be monastics, that is, there was potential for men who became monastics to earn a renown greater or contradictory to Augustine's own: Maureen Tilley, "No Friendly Letters: Augustine's Correspondence With Women," in *The Cultural Turn in Late Ancient Studies: Gender, Asceticism, and History* (ed., P. Cox Miller and D. Martin; Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 40-62; this is countered by Demacopoulos, 94.

[70] A more lengthy elucidation explicitly relating flourishing and the ethical nuance addressing enjoyment and use with work, profession, and vocation in Augustine would enrich the present discussion. Further inquiry as to whether all people have been placed in professions is also necessary. Further research on the *Augustinian* legacy of many of Luther's perspectives on work (e.g., "everyone must tend to his own vocation and work," *WA* 8.588, 1521) is also possibly in order. Lastly, even as Augustine might pose an "Augustinian Option" to us today (one in which the question is not whether we ought to be engaged in the secular but *how* our labors in this "mixed" world and life properly reveal the orientation of our hope), conversation must still occur about nuance needed in the purported fusion of calling or leading by God and existing jobs or roles in contemporary society.

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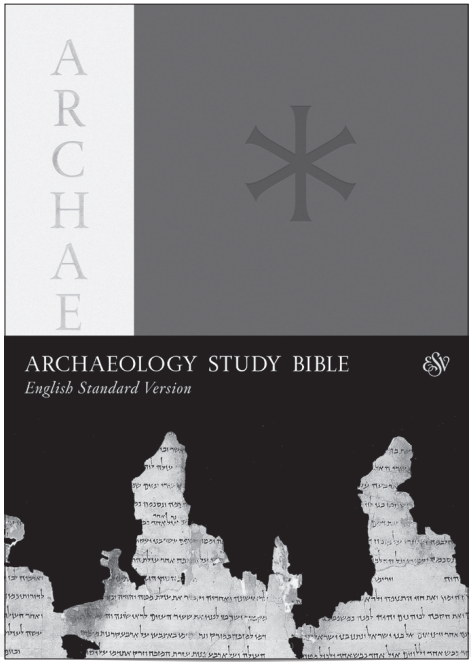

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"Some Kind of Life to Which We Are Called of God:" The Puritan Doctrine of Vocation

Leland Ryken

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The occasion for this essay and its companions is the five-hundredth anniversary of Martin Luther's act of nailing a piece of paper to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenburg. The contemporary context within which we consider our topic of vocation is the explosion of interest among Christians on the topics of work and vocation. No one could have predicted twenty years ago that this would become the next growth industry among evangelicals. The question I will consider is whether a historical inquiry into the Reformation era has anything to add to the conversation beyond what is already on the table. We will see that it does.

My discussion in this essay will be guided by two overriding questions: 1) How did the Puritans reform thinking about vocation in their own day? 2) How can the Puritans reform thinking about vocation in our day? As I pursue these two questions, I will consider four subordinate questions, to be posed individually as my essay unfolds.

My first question is this: if the Continental Reformers and Puritans reformed attitudes toward vocation in their own day, exactly what attitudes existed that required reformation? In 1958 a German scholar named Karl

Holl published a copiously researched article entitled "The History of the Word Vocation," and because it contains such a wealth of references to primary sources, I am going to base the following sketch largely on this article.[1] According to Holl, the medieval Catholic institution of monasticism wrote the pre-Reformation chapter in the history of the concept of vocation. It is true that there was something even older than monasticism that bears on the subject, namely, NT references to *call* and *calling*, based on the Greek word *klesis*. With the exception of three verses in 1 Corinthians 7 (vv. 17, 20, and 24), all of these references are a call to conversion and discipleship. The NT applies this call to everyone universally and to believers supremely.

But the matter does not rest there because, as Holl demonstrates, medieval monasticism broke with NT Christianity, retaining the terminology of calling but changing its meaning and application. Medieval monasticism did not embrace the ideal of the priesthood of all believers. The idea of a high calling worthy of the title *vocation* became limited to priests. They were the only ones who had a genuine calling. This was reinforced by the way in which the liturgy for ordination of monks accentuated the terminology of calling. The idea of vocation thus became linked to a specific profession, so that, in the words of Holl, "only the monk has a *klesis*" (131). Furthermore, according to Holl, "there is no passage in the writings of the early Fathers where *vocation* means anything like occupation" in the world (136).

Holl and others ascribe a modification of this mainstream view to a late medieval movement that they call "German mysticism." This modification consisted of "the elevation of the religious evaluation of secular work" (143), but "this meant in no way the overthrow of the social teaching established by late scholasticism" (145). Active life was accorded a status of being legitimate in God's eyes, but it was not equal to the contemplative life of the monk and manual labor within a monastery.

This mindset goes by the more common vocabulary of sacred vs. secular. In this framework, truly spiritual people are monks, nuns, and clerics. Ordinary people belong spiritually to a lower class. This attitude can be traced back all the way back to the Jewish Talmud, where one of the prayers states,

> I thank thee, O Lord, that thou hast given me my lot with those who sit in the house of learning, and not with those who sit at the street-corners; for I am early to work and they are early to work; I am early to work on the words of

> the Torah, and they are early to work on things of no moment. I weary myself, and they weary themselves; I weary myself and profit thereby, and they weary themselves to no profit. I run, and they run; I run towards the life of the age to come, and they run towards the pit of destruction.[2]

The same division of life into the categories of sacred and secular, clerical and ordinary, became a leading feature of medieval Roman Catholicism, as expressed in the following passage from Eusebius, penned in the fourth century:

> Two ways of life were given by the law of Christ to his church. The one is above nature, and beyond common human living ... Wholly and permanently separate from the common customary life of mankind, it devotes itself to the service of God alone ... Such then is the perfect form of the Christian life. And the other, more humble, more human, permits men to ... have minds for farming, for trade, and the other more secular interests as well as for religion. ... And a kind of secondary grade of piety is attributed to them.[3]

What was the entrenched view of vocation that the Reformation reformed? That only monks had a vocation fully worthy of that title.

My second question is, How did the early Continental Reformers provide a foundation on which the English and American Puritans could build their edifice? I will take a wide-angle view and ascribe a single main idea to Luther and Calvin respectively. Luther's supreme achievement in regard to the doctrine of vocation was to obliterate the division between sacred and secular spheres. To return to Karl Holl's essay on the history of the word *vocation*, near the end of the article Holl writes, "The history of the word [*vocation*] thus shows a complete reversal of its meaning. At first it meant, the monk alone has a calling (*Beruf*); Luther says just the reverse, it is exactly monasticism which has no calling" (153). Luther's primary breakthrough was to eliminate the chasm between what had been regarded as sacred and secular. I will divide this into two complementary halves. The first is Luther's demolishing of the premise that ordinary people and tasks are inferior to the monastic or clerical life. Once this leveling was in place, Luther proceeded to elevate the common life to the status of a vocation. We can think in terms of a lowering and a raising—a lowering of the clerical calling from its alleged

superiority, and a raising of the common life from its alleged inferiority.

First, then, Luther's great denial. "It is pure invention," wrote Luther, "that pope, bishop, priests, and monks are called the spiritual estate while princes, lords, artisans, and farmers are called the temporal estate. This is indeed a piece of deceit and hypocrisy [and] no one should be intimidated by it."[4] Again, "There is no true, basic difference between laymen and priests, princes and bishops, between religious and secular, except for the sake of office and work, but not for the sake of status. They are all of the spiritual estate, and are truly priests, bishops, and popes."[5] Luther was scornful of how people stand in awe of priests when they put on a spectacle in a church or cathedral, burning incense and ringing bells, standing in a surplice embroidered with gold, while a poor girl taking care of a little child "is considered nothing."[6]

Even more recurrent in Luther's works is his elevation of the common life. "It looks like a small thing," writes Luther, "when a maid cooks and cleans and does other housework. But because God's command is there, even such a small work must be praised as a service of God far surpassing the holiness and asceticism of all monks and nuns."[7] Again, household work "has no appearance of sanctity; and yet these very works in connection with the household are more desirable than all the works of all the monks and nuns ... Seemingly secular works are a worship of God and an obedience well pleasing to God."[8] Then there is Luther's famous statement about the maidservant: "If you ask an insignificant maidservant why she scours a dish or milks the cow, she can say: I know that the thing I do pleases God, for I have God's word and commandment ... God does not look at the insignificance of the acts but at the heart that serves Him in such little things."[9] According to Luther, if we viewed work correctly, "the entire world would be full of service to God, not only churches but also the home, the kitchen, the cellar, the workshop, and the field of the townsfolk and farmers."[10]

This does not by any means exhaust all that Luther said about vocation, but I believe that his major contribution was to remove the cleavage between so-called sacred and secular callings, and to elevate the daily routine of life to a status of true dignity. Monumental and world-changing as Luther's contribution was, scholars regularly make statements to the effect that Calvin took the concept of vocation a step beyond what Luther proposed.

One way to express the difference is as follows: "To serve God *within* one's calling is not the same as to serve God *by* one's calling, and this last

step Luther was too much of a traditionalist to take ... Calvin took this step. The obligation to glorify God in one's daily toil passed from service *in vocatione* to *per vocationem*."[11] The passages that I quoted earlier from Luther all claim that our actions in the world bear God's approval, but in Calvin we find a stronger emphasis that God is the one who calls people to their tasks, thereby making the discharge of our callings more directly a service to God.

Calvin writes that "[God] has assigned distinct duties to each in the different modes of life."[12] Elsewhere he claims that a person's calling "is connected with God, who actually calls us."[13] This opens the door to viewing our tasks and actions as themselves a service and worship. "No sacrifice is more pleasing to God," writes Calvin, "than when every man applies himself diligently to his own calling."[14] Performing the work of our callings is itself a sacrifice to God. In Calvin's view, the very skill that people possess to perform their callings comes from the Holy Spirit, so that exercising a calling is itself a work of the Spirit. Calvin writes at length on this in his commentary on Exodus 31:2, which narrates God's calling of Bezalel to perform the artistic work on the tabernacle. At one point he writes, "No one excels even in the most despised and humble handicraft, except in so far as God's Spirit works in him ... Nor is this only the case with respect to the spiritual gifts which follow regeneration, but in all the branches of knowledge which come into use in common life ... We should honor God as the Author of so many good things, since He sanctifies them for our use."[15] As a total package, the statements I have quoted from Calvin tend in the direction of claiming that not only the person who discharges a calling but the very actions that people perform are a service to God and a means of glorifying him.

To sum up, Luther and Calvin laid a foundation that the Puritans fully embraced and on which they set about to build an edifice. Luther declared the daily sphere sacred, and Calvin asserted that people can serve God by means of their earthly activities.

My third and major question is, What did the Puritans teach about Christian vocation? The Puritans were great systematizers, and this genius did not fail them when they turned to the subject of vocation. We need to piece together Luther's and Calvin's views on vocation from hither and yon in their writings, whereas the Puritans wrote whole treatises and books on the subject.

The greatest Puritan contribution to our understanding of vocation was to divide God's calling of people into the two categories of a general calling

and a particular calling. The general call comes in the same form to every person and consists of the call to conversion and sanctification. In his work entitled *A Treatise of the Vocations or Callings of Men*, William Perkins defined the general calling this way: "The general calling is the calling of Christianity, which is common to all that live in the Church of God ... The general calling is that whereby a man is called out of the world to be a child of God, a member of Christ, and heir to the kingdom of heaven. This calling belongs to every one within the compass of the Church."[16] Richard Steele's definition of the general calling is similar: "Our general or spiritual calling ... is whereby a person is called of God to believe and obey the Gospel ... It is termed our general calling … because this is common to all Christians, requires of all the same duties, ... and obliges all to the same conditions."[17]

The particular callings of people are the external roles and tasks that make up their daily lives. This particular calling most immediately encompasses one's primary occupation, but as we will see, it cannot be limited to it. The Puritans seem to assume that we know what a particular calling is and spend little time in defining it. Richard Steele wrote that "a particular or temporal calling is a settled employment in some special business of God's appointment."[18] John Preston similarly equates the phrases "our particular calling" and "our ordinary business."[19]

Before I leave the Puritan concept of general and particular callings, I want to note the important further point that the Puritans emphatically declared that the general calling to conversion and life in Christ was more important than our callings in the marketplace of life. John Downame wrote that "the duties of our particular callings must give place to the general calling of Christianity ... No calling must call us from God, or withdraw us from this blessed fellowship."[20] George Swinnock said similarly that "the general [calling] must reign in the city, in thy heart, thy particular calling only in the suburbs of thy hands."[21] And William Perkins called the general vocation "the most excellent calling in the world," adding that "the particular calling of any man is inferior to the general calling of Christian ...; because we are bound unto God in the first place."[22]

This, then, is the first contribution of the Puritans: they divided the subject of vocation into two categories and asserted the primacy of the spiritual. I want secondly to define more precisely how the Reformers and Puritans defined the particular callings of life.

There is no doubt that usually their discussions of particular callings have a person's main occupation or job in view, but sometimes they enlarge the scope in a very helpful way by claiming that all of the tasks and roles into which God leads us have the status of a calling. Gustaf Wingren, in his book *The Christian's Calling: Luther on Vocation*, writes as follows: "The life of the home, the relation between parents and children, is vocation, even as is life in the field of labor, the relation between employer and employee ... From this it is clear that every Christian occupies a multitude of offices at the same time, not just one: the same man is, for instance, father of his children, husband of his wife, master of his servants, and office-holder in the town hall ... All these are vocations."[23]

Calvin shared Luther's view in this matter, claiming that God "has assigned distinct duties to each in the different modes of life. And ... he has distinguished the different modes of life by the name of callings."[24] In this same passage Calvin asserts that the blessing that comes from fulfilling our callings is "harmony in the different parts of [one's] life," implying a broader context than only one's job.[25]

The English Puritans likewise spoke of vocation in a way that implies that we have a plurality of vocations commensurate with the entire scope of life. Perkins, for example, described vocation as "a certain kind of life, ordained and imposed on man by God, for the common good."[26] "A certain kind of life:" that embraces life off the job as well as life on the job, as all of life becomes a vocation. Elsewhere Perkins defines vocation as "the order and manner of living in this world," a formula that embraces all of life.[27] And in yet another passage, Perkins speaks of "the calling of a … father, of a child, of a servant, of a subject, or any other calling that is common to all."[28] Richard Steele similarly said that "a calling is some kind of life to which we are called of God."[29]

Other Puritan comments tend in the same direction. Richard Bernard puts marriage into the category of a "calling," as he does also Ruth's faithfulness to Naomi in accompanying her to Bethlehem.[30] Richard Sibbes speaks the familiar vocabulary of Puritan discussions of calling when he writes that "the whole life of a Christian ... is a service of God ... Our whole life, not only in the church, but in our particular places, may be a service of God."[31] Thomas Gataker, in a book on marriage, places the duties of spouses to each other into the category of special or particular calling.[32] Perkins similarly writes

that "a master of a family is to lead his life in the government of his family, and that is his calling."[33]

I do not wish to create a misconception: usually when the Puritans speak of vocation or calling, they have a person's chief occupation in view. The next most numerous category of references is to work generically, but I would observe that work is a broader category than occupation. Often as I read the Puritan discussions of work as a calling, I picture the tasks that I perform off the job. They, too, are callings.

A third cornerstone of Puritan teaching on vocation is that God is the one who calls people in the ways I have delineated. "The author of every calling," wrote Perkins, "is God himself … And for this cause, the order and manner of living in this world is called a *vocation*, because every man is to live as he is called of God."[34] Richard Steele was of the same opinion when he wrote that "the author of a particular calling ... is God ... Hence certainly these employments are named *Callings*, because every man must be called of God unto them: he directs men to them, he inclines them, he enables them for them."[35] John Downame wrote that "the Lord himself is the Author of our callings."[36]

Several implications can be extracted from the belief that God is the one who calls people to their vocations, the most important of which is that if God is the who calls us, as we respond to that call we become stewards who serve God. Fulfilling a calling is a response of obedience to God. God, moreover, is one to whom we are accountable. Work or service is not just a task that is completed; it is part of a believer's relationship to God. John Cotton wrote, "A man therefore that serves Christ in serving of men ... doth his work sincerely as in God's presence, and as one that hath an heavenly business in hand, and therefore comfortably as knowing God approves of his way and work."[37] Cotton Mather enjoined his readers, "Let every Christian walk with God when he works at his calling, act in his occupation with an eye to God, act as under the eye of God."[38] "Whatsoever our callings be," claimed John Dod, "we serve the Lord Jesus in them, and shall be sure of full reward from him."[39] William Perkins asserted that in our callings we "serve God in serving of men," and in that terminology we can see that the Puritans followed Calvin in claiming that Christians can view their endeavors not only as an arena within which they serve God but through which they serve him.[40] In summary, the Puritans held that God is the one who calls

people personally to the specifics of their life, so that their fulfillment of a calling is a form of stewardship in which they obey God and live out their relationship with him.

A further important question is, What are the goals and purpose of our callings? The Puritans claimed three goals, arranged into a hierarchy of value: in our callings, we meet the physical needs of our lives, we serve the public good, and we glorify God. The key concept is service. If a calling does not provide service to people, it is not warrantable, which was an omnipresent Puritan touchstone by which they measured whether a given calling was legitimate.

The goals propounded by the Puritans followed a formula, as the following quotations show. Richard Steele wrote, "The ends you should aim at in every particular calling are ... these three. First, and chiefly, the glory of God ... A second thing ye should aim at is the common good. And then, thirdly, you may ... aim at your own good ... Direct all to a right end, the honor of God, the public good as well as your private commodity, and then every step and stroke in your trade is sanctified."[41] "The main end of our lives," wrote Perkins, "is to serve God in the serving of men in the works of our callings ... Some man will say perchance: what, must we not labor in our callings to maintain our families? I answer: this must be done: but this is not the scope and end of our lives. The main end of our lives is to do service to God in serving of man."[42] John Preston was of the opinion that "our aim must be God's glory and the public good."[43] The following statement by John Downame is an admirable summary of Puritan goals for a vocation: "And here first is required, that our calling be lawful, and agreeable to God's will and word; that is, such an one as our labors in it may tend to God's glory, the good of the church and commonwealth, and the furthering not only of our temporal but also our spiritual good, and the eternal salvation of our souls."[44]

It goes almost without saying that the Puritans followed the Continental Reformers in rejecting the traditional cleavage between sacred and secular spheres. There are five results of this rejection when applied to vocation, and I will take these up in the following sequence: the Puritans (1) placed all vocations on a level playing field, (2) asserted the worthiness of vocations that the human race tends to despise, (3) affirmed the sanctity of the common, (4) enjoined people to be content in socially humble callings or when faced with distasteful tasks in the routines of life, and (5) opened the

door to integrating the life of faith with life in the world.

First, the Puritans followed Luther in claiming that no calling or task is less important than any other one. William Tyndale said that if we look externally "there is difference betwixt washing of dishes and preaching of the word of God, but as touching to please God, none at all."[45] William Perkins was of the same opinion: "The action of a shepherd in keeping sheep … is as good a work before God as is the action of a judge in giving sentence, or a magistrate in ruling, or a minister in preaching."[46] There was a strong "leveling" and democratic tendency at work in Puritanism, and we can see it in the elimination of the distinction between scared and secular spheres and placing them on the same playing field.

Secondly, if clerical and prestigious occupations are not automatically elevated as superior, then all vocations are viewed as important and worthy in God's eyes, even ones that the human race tends to despise. In fact, the Puritans spent much more of their time in elevating what in the parlance of the time went by the names of "low" and "mean" than in praising vocations that are externally impressive. As part of this enterprise, they regularly invoked the example of Jesus in his calling as a carpenter. The martyr Hugh Latimer wrote, "This is a wonderful thing, that the Savior of the world, and the King above all kings, was not ashamed to labor; yea, and to use so simple an occupation. Here he did sanctify all manner of occupations."[47] Another Puritan source claimed that "the great and reverend God despiseth no honest trade ... be it never so mean [lowly], but crowneth it with his blessing."[48]

Thirdly, the cluster of interrelated viewpoints that I am tracing led to one of the Puritans' most attractive features—their sanctification of the common life. William Perkins declared that people can serve God "in any kind of calling, though it be but to sweep the house or keep sheep."[49] Nathaniel Mather said that "exercising grace will ... spiritualize every action," so that even such simple acts as "a man's loving his wife or child" become "gracious acts ... of great account in the eyes of God."[50] John Cotton, in his treatise *Christian Calling*, claimed that "faith is ready to embrace any homely service his calling leads him to."[51] How can this be? Richard Baxter provides the answer: "God looketh not ... principally at the external part of the work, but much more to the heart of him that doth it."[52]

Fourth, and related to the theme of redeeming the routines, is the omnipresent Puritan theme that if Christians live by faith they can be content

in a calling that is in itself unfulfilling or distasteful. John Cotton wrote, "Faith having put us into a calling, if it require some homely employment, it encourageth us to it. [A Christian] considers, 'It is my calling.'"[53] Jeremiah Burroughs wrote in his classic treatise *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment*, "Your calling is low and mean, yet do not be discontented with that, for you have a principle within you ... of grace, which raises your lowest actions to be higher in God's esteem than all the brave, glorious actions that are done in the world ... Yes, and the truth is, it is more obedient to submit to God in a low calling than to submit to him in a higher calling."[54] Baxter similarly theorized that "if you cheerfully serve God in the meanest [i.e., most despised] work, it is the more acceptable to [God], by how much the more subjections and submission there is in your obedience."[55]

Of course the most famous statement along these lines is Luther's comment about washing a baby's diaper as part of one's domestic calling. His point of departure is to paint a picture of how distasteful a father might find it to care for an infant apart from a principle of Christian faith within him. Then Luther writes, "What then does Christian faith say to this? It opens its eyes, looks upon all these insignificant, distasteful, and despised duties in the Spirit, and is aware that they are all adorned with divine approval as with the costliest gold and jewels. It says, ... "How gladly will I do so, though the duties should be even more insignificant and despised." Then Luther applies the same principle to a mother: "A wife too should regard her duties in the same light, as she suckles the child, rocks and bathes it, and cares for it in other ways; and as she busies herself with other duties and renders help and obedience to her husband. These are truly golden and noble works." Climactically, Luther writes, "When a father goes ahead and washes diapers or performs some other mean task for his child, ... God, with all his angels and creatures, is smiling—not because that father is washing diapers, but because he is doing so in Christian faith."[56]

A fifth and final result of the Puritan elimination of the dichotomy of sacred and secular is that it opened the door to integrating all of life with the Christian faith. John Cotton wrote, "Not only my spiritual life, but even my civil life in this world, all the life I live, is by the faith of the Son of God; he exempts no life from the agency of his faith."[57] According to Thomas Gouge, we should "so spiritualize our hearts and affections that we may have heavenly hearts in earthly employments."[58] And George Swinnock said that the pious

tradesman will know that "his shop as well as his chapel is holy ground."[59]

What I have covered thus far might can be regarded as the theory propounded by the Puritans on vocation. As I turn now to Puritan practice, I will do so under the rubric of the system of virtues and vices that the Puritans evolved in regard to how we should and should not pursue our callings as Christians. A checklist bordering on something legalistic is discernible.

The starting point is that a calling needed to be "lawful" or "warrantable." John Cotton wrote, "Faith draws the heart of a Christian to live in some warrantable calling; as soon as ever a man begins to look towards God, and the ways of his grace, he will not rest, till he find out some warrantable calling."[60] William Perkins offered the rule "that we are to choose honest and lawful callings to walk in."[61] John Downame said that the first rule governing a calling is "that our calling be lawful."[62] What makes a calling lawful or warrantable? Richard Steele offers this definition: "A lawful Calling is that which some way tends to the Glory of God, and consequently doth some way further the true Happiness of Mankind, either Temporal, Spiritual, or Eternal. If the Calling do thus tend to the good of Mankind, it undoubtedly pleaseth and glorifieth God."[63]

Once a calling meets the criterion of being lawful, it is subject to a framework of virtues and vices. Not surprisingly, no virtue was more prized in regard to vocation than diligence. Here is a sampling of the chorus that greets us the moment we begin to read Puritan treatises on vocation: "be diligent and industrious in the way of thy calling;" "be diligent in your callings;" "every man must do the duties of his calling with diligence;" "every man must attend his calling, and be diligent in it."[64]

The corresponding vices that unleashed Puritan scorn were idleness and laziness. Robert Bolton called idleness "the very rust and canker of the soul."[65] Richard Baxter wrote, "It is swinish and sinful not to labor."[66] William Perkins brings some refreshing nuance to the subject when he writes that there are two "damnable sins that are contrary to this diligence. The first is idleness, whereby the duties of our callings, and the occasions of glorifying God, are neglected or omitted. The second is slothfulness, whereby they are performed slackly and carelessly."[67] Richard Steele offers the following winsome appeal to his reader's conscience: "I appeal to your own consciences, and to every man's experience, whether you find not more inward peace and comfort at night after you have been diligently employed in your calling, than when

you have trifled therein."[68]

Within the general framework of diligence and idleness, the Puritans elaborated further principles or rules on the practice of one's calling. John Cotton, for example, lists and discusses seven "acts of faith" in regard to a calling.[69]

What was the source of the Puritans' well-thought-out beliefs on the subject of vocation? The source was the Bible, in two forms—first directly, and then by logical inference from biblical data, accompanied by human reasoning and common sense. The data that comes directly from the Bible consists mainly by proof-texting. This is entirely appropriate. A Christian position on virtually any subject is based on Bible verses taken from many parts of the Bible. The Puritans' proof-texting on the subject of vocation is somewhat loosely applied in the sense that the Puritans were ready to see the subject of vocation in places of the Bible where we ourselves are unlikely to see it when left to our own designs. We need to remember in this regard that vocation and calling were one of the "hot button" items for the Puritans. It was a subject on their minds. For Puritan preachers and writers, the subjects of vocation and work were capable of making an appearance from seemingly nowhere.

I will take Luther's commentary on the account of Lot's domestic life in Genesis 13 to illustrate the loose application of proof-texting that undergirded Reformation and Puritan views on vocation. From the domestic details that the Genesis text provides, Luther devotes two pages to asserting the ideas that I have covered in this article. Everything that a person "does in faith," writes Luther, "even though in outward appearance it is most unimportant, such as the natural activities of sleeping, being awake, eating, and drinking, which seem to have no godliness connected with them, is a holy work that please God ... Lot's wife milks the cows; the servants carry the hay and lead them to water ... These facts are related in order that everyone may have a sure comfort in his calling and may know that 'the works of the body' must be done too, and that one must not always devote oneself to 'spiritual' works."[70]

As a literary critic, I am more inclined to condone this exegesis than most biblical scholars are. Literature is based on what older eras called "example theory," meaning that it is in the nature of the literary enterprise that the author places examples of life before us. These examples are of two types—positive examples that we are intended to approve and emulate, and negative ones that we are intended to avoid. Unless the author manages the text in such

a way as to indicate disapproval, we can safely assume that what is portrayed is intended as a norm of what is good. Fiction writer Flannery O'Connor went so far as to write, "It is from the kind of world the writer creates, from the kind of character and detail he invests it with, that a reader can find the intellectual meaning of a book."[71] We need to let that sink in: "the intellectual meaning of a book" resides in "the kind of world the writer creates."

Surely we are expected to do *something* with the details that appear in the spare, unembellished stories of the Bible. I am less critical than I once was when the Puritans adduce the family stories of Genesis as evidence that God wants parents to prepare their children for a vocation. The stories of Genesis do not *prescribe* that parents settle their children in a vocation, but they offer a picture of it, surely for our edification and emulation. A certain sense of life comes through the text of the Bible, and that sense of life is one that views the tasks of life as something to which God calls people. The Genesis text tells us explicitly that God called Abraham to the life of faith, and it shows us by inference that he called Abraham to be a nomadic herdsman as his occupation and livelihood.

In addition to prooftexting, the Reformers and Puritans elevated certain key passages to the status of touchstones for their doctrine of vocation. One of these was the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30). In this parable, the Puritans saw the principles of God's calling of people to serve him, the obligation of creatures to be responsible stewards of what God entrusts to them, accountability to the God who calls and enables people to fulfill their vocation, and judgment based on the adequacy of one's stewardship.

A second touchstone was the story of Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42). This story relates to vocation because it weighs the comparative merits of spiritual contemplation and active work. The Catholic tradition had used the story to praise the monastic life and disparage ordinary life. Puritans interpreted the story in multiple ways, but always in such a way as to reject the Catholic interpretation. Certainly the story was used by Puritan commentators to assert the primacy of the spiritual life—the general calling of all Christians—over the particular callings of our hands and works. Even when Mary is offered as a sympathetic norm, Martha's behavior is interpreted in such a way as to maintain the Protestant view of vocation over against the Catholic view. John Preston, for example, claimed that Christ did not find fault with Martha "because she was careful to provide, but because her care went

so far that it troubled her, that she could not attend upon spiritual duties."[72] Calvin used the story as the occasion to make a very strong statement of the Protestant view of vocation, asserting in his commentary on this text that "no sacrifice is more pleasing to God than when every man applies himself diligently to his own calling."[73]

Among the Puritans' touchstone passages on vocation, without doubt the chief one was 1 Corinthians 7:17, 20, and 24. I believe that this passage is the most far reaching biblical text for correct thinking about vocation, so I will quote it. As I do so, I will parse it according to the Puritan framework of general and particular callings (a format that William Perkins and Richard Steele also used in their commentary on this passage): "let each person lead the life that the Lord as assigned to him [particular calling], and to which God has called him [particular calling]. . . . Each one should remain in the condition [particular calling] in which he was called [general calling to salvation] ... In whatever condition [particular calling] each was called [general calling to salvation], there let him remain with God."

A modern scholar claims that Paul was forced to use the word *calling* in an entirely new sense to express the idea that one's work in the world is just as much a calling from God as the call to the Christian life. He writes, "Quite deliberately he places these secular conditions and circumstances … on the same spiritual level as … conversion itself."[74] Someone else writes that when Paul speaks of the new convert's remaining in "the calling wherein he was called" (KJV), he "uses the same Greek in two different senses. The second is the usual NT meaning and refers to the summons by which Christians are 'called' into God's Kingdom. The first is defined by the context as meaning one's station or status in life."[75]

The Puritans uniformly assert this same interpretation, and they were correct in doing so. Although most biblical references to God's calling are to the spiritual life of conversion and sanctification, it is wrong to limit the *concept* of vocation to the specific *vocabulary* of calling, such as the Greek word *klesis*. Surely anything that God commands or expects of us is something to which he calls us. For example, God commands hospitality, and therefore hospitality is a vocation for Christians. Jesus commanded us to "consider the lilies of the field" (Matt 6:28), so we are called to find a time and place for beauty, contemplation, and contact with nature in our lives.

The concept of God's *commandment* to work and serve is regularly invoked

in Puritan discussions of vocation and calling. I noted earlier Luther's statement that a maidservant can defend her daily work as important because she can say "I have God's word and commandment." What word and commandment? A command such as Colossians 3:23—"Work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men." Thomas Manton wrote that "a lawful calling is ... a duty, enforced by a commandment."[76] John Downame wrote similarly that "the duties of our callings must proceed out of ... obedience to God's commandment."[77] The logic of these assertions is impeccable: if God commands us to do something, he calls us to do it.

The Puritans were right to extend the concept of calling beyond what God commands us to do and include the role of God's providence in leading us into a position or role. Thomas Manton, for example, wrote that "what our callings should be is determined by providence giving gifts and education, and obtruding us upon such a course of life."[78] Richard Steele likewise claimed that God's "wise providence ... hath placed you in this your calling in particular."[79] Part of God's providence is his fitting of people to particular callings through abilities and inclinations, a subject on which the Puritans said much but that I do not have space to pursue here. It strikes me as entirely plausible that if God through his arrangement of a person's life opens a door of opportunity, buttressed by endowments to perform a certain kind of work or activity, we can view this as summoning or calling a person to enter the open door.

Thus far I have answered three questions, namely: What is the medieval background on the subject of vocation that the Puritans sought to reform? What was the early Reformation context in which the Puritans formulated their view of vocation? Exactly what did the Puritans say about vocation? My final question is, How might the Puritans reform our own thinking about vocation, just as they reformed thinking in their own day? I will make six applications.

The first is that it is important to give credit where credit is due. The Reformers and Puritans set the Christian world on the right track in regard to the doctrine of vocation. Even if current writers on the subject do not overtly draw sustenance from Puritan writings, they are nonetheless inheritors of a tradition that makes their insights possible. My heart leaps when I see contemporary writers on the subject of vocation adduce biblical data in support of their insights, but here, too, it was the Reformation that established

sola scriptura as the foundation for Christian belief and practice.

A second application flows from the Puritan framework of general and particular callings. The first lesson in this regard is the Puritans' assigning primacy to the general calling of conversion and sanctification. In the current rediscovery of bringing faith into the marketplace, there may be a danger that the spiritual life is taken for granted and not properly attended to. It sometimes appears to me that leaders of the revival of interest in vocation leapfrog over the general calling in their hurry to reinstate Christian values in the workplace. It would be possible for us, at our moment in history, to produce a Christianized version of careerism. The whole drift of our culture at large is to elevate people's careers to a position of highest priority in life. We need to find ways to set boundaries to the time and value we assign to our careers.

The Puritans can help us set that boundary by their way of placing career into a broader spiritual context. "Take this caution withal," Richard Sibbes counseled, "that we more highly esteem our Christian calling than our ordinary vocations and duties."[80] Richard Steele noted with disapproval the large number of those "that are very diligent in their worldly employments ... but neglect the welfare of their souls." Steele then added the exhortation, "Let not diligence in your earthly callings thrust out the service of God ... You have a soul as well as a body, and both must live and consequently be fed ... Your work on earth will be done best when your work in heaven is done first."[81]

Thirdly, we also need to embrace the other half of the Puritan paradigm of our twofold calling. Our work and activities in the everyday world are also a calling. They carry God's approval and are subject to his interest just as much as our praying and reading of the Bible and attending church. Richard Sibbes wrote, "Our whole life, not only in the church, but in our particular places, may be a 'service of God'... To 'serve' God is to carry ourselves as the children of God wheresoever we are: so that our whole life is a service to God."[82] John Downame was of the opinion that "if we thus perform the duties of our callings, in love towards God, and in obedience of his commandment ... then shall we therein do service unto God ... as well as in hearing the Word, or receiving the Sacrament."[83] We cannot remind ourselves of this truth too often, and the Puritans can help remind us.

Additionally, I believe that we can learn a salutary lesson from the way in which the Reformers and Puritans envisioned our particular callings as a

plurality and not only the primary job by which we earn our living or oversee the family and household if we are a homemaker. All of the roles and tasks that are entrusted to us are callings in the sense that God has called us to them. Mowing the lawn and vacuuming the house are things to which God calls us. Serving on a committee and teaching a child are callings. Taking time for leisure pursuits is a Christian calling.

Does it make any practical difference to view the myriad tasks of life as vocations? My answer is yes. I fulfill the duties of life with a much better attitude, and with greater excellence, and with a better understanding of how they fit into the larger context of life, when I view them as callings. For me personally, there is a difference between praying at the beginning of my day in the office that God will cause me to have a productive day and, on the other hand, praying that God will enable me to serve him well as I pursue my tasks of the day. Furthermore, our culture tends to demote tasks for which people do not receive pay. Placing these tasks under the rubric of vocation can serve as a corrective.

Closely related to this but deserving of separate mention is the Puritan embracing of the common life and the dignity of seemingly menial and undignified work. There is a permanent tendency in human nature to elevate what is prestigious and disparage what is common and lacking in glamor. Theoretically we deny that God has a low view of mundane tasks, but in practice we ourselves struggle to elevate such tasks to a position of being worthy and commendable and something that can be performed with zest. We also tend make a transfer from the lowly nature of a task to the person who performs that task for a livelihood. The Puritans can help us curb this unworthy way of thinking. Richard Steele said that "no man should think that God likes him either the better or the worse, merely for his outward calling."[84] Richard Sibbes claimed that "though the matter of my service be a common, base, mean matter … God hath placed and planted me here, and he will be served of me in this condition at this time, though the matter of it be an ordinary thing."[85]

Finally, the Puritans offer a model of integration that is more nuanced than what we ourselves ordinarily practice and articulate in regard to vocation. We tend to conceive of Christian vocation in terms of carrying over Christian values and principles into our callings. It is a good model of integration. Nonetheless, when I read certain passages in Puritan writings, I catch a

glimpse of something that goes beyond merely carrying Christian principles into life in the world and focuses more on embodying or incarnating the Christian faith in oneself while pursuing the callings of life. I have already done justice to how the Reformers and Puritans work and the duties of life not only as an arena within which we can live the Christian life but also as the very means by which we serve God and relate to him. I will simply note here that this represents a very high degree of integration.

In the same vein are Puritan comments about *being Christians* in the workplace that go beyond simply applying Christian principles and values. Richard Steele, for example, wrote that "every man ought to manage his temporal calling in subordination to his spiritual, and must remember that in the throng of all his business he is a Christian."[86] Simlarly, William Perkins wrote, "It is not sufficient for a man in the congregation and in common conversation to be a Christian, but in his very personal calling he must show himself to be so ... A schoolmaster must not only be a Christian in the assembly, when he heareth the word and receiveth the sacraments, but he must also show himself to be a Christian in the office of teaching ... And therefore both callings must be joined, as body and soul are joined in a living man."[87]

Can the Puritans instruct us on the subject of vocation? Yes, like David, they served God in their generation. Like Abel, they being dead, still speak. On the subject of vocation, they have bequeathed to us a birthright of excellence.

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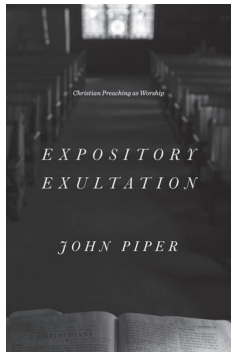

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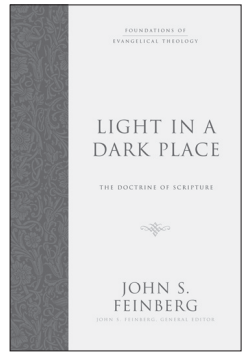

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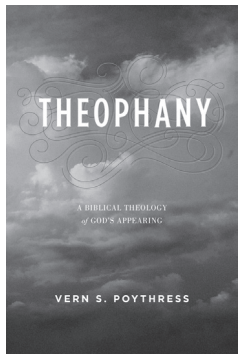

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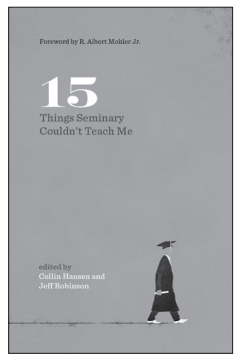

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English Calvinistic Baptists and Vocation in the Long Eighteenth Century, with Particular Reference to Anne Dutton's Calling as an Author[1]

Michael A. G. Haykin

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Towards the close of his preaching ministry, the celebrated Victorian Baptist preacher C. H. Spurgeon (1834–1892) happened to reflect on his calling as a herald of the gospel in a sermon that he preached in 1889. He admitted to his congregation:

> When some of you do not behave yourselves, and matters in our church get a little out of order, I say to myself, "I wish I could give this up, and turn to an

> employment less responsible, and less wearing to the heart"; but then I think of Jonah, and what happened to him when he ran away to Tarshish; and I remember that whales are scarcer now than they were then, and I do not feel inclined to run that risk. I stick to my business, and keep to the message of my God; for one might not be brought to land quite so safely as the runaway prophet was. Indeed, I could not cease to preach the glad tidings unless I ceased to breathe. …I had sooner be a preacher of the gospel than a possessor of the Indies. Remember how William Carey, speaking of one of his sons, says, "Poor Felix is shrivelled from a missionary to an ambassador." He was a missionary once, and he was employed by the government as an ambassador; his father thought it no promotion, but said, "Felix has shrivelled into an ambassador." It would be a descent indeed from bearing the burden of the Lord, if one were to be transformed into a member of Parliament, or a prime minister, or a king.[2]

Informing this rather humorous reference to Jonah is Spurgeon's determination to be faithful to his calling as a gospel minister. The reference has added gravitas in view of the fact that Spurgeon had recently gone through what has come to be called the "Downgrade controversy," in which the London Baptist found himself contending against fellow Baptists for some of the essentials of classical Christian orthodoxy. But the other reference, namely, the remark of the iconic missionary William Carey (1761–1834) about his son's calling, is of a different order. Felix Carey (1786–1822), the eldest son of William Carey, had gone to Burma from Bengal as a missionary in 1808, but seven years later returned to Calcutta as the ambassador of the Burmese government.[3] His father, deeply grieved by his son's decision to abandon his missionary calling, bluntly told his close friend John Ryland, Jr. (1753–1825) back in England that his son had "shrivelled from a missionary into an ambassador."[4] Carey probably meant no disparagement of so-called "secular" callings per se—after all, he had served co-vocationally as the manager of an indigo factory in Mudnabati during the 1790s. But his remark, and Spurgeon's later use of it, does indicate an approach to vocation that seems out of sync with the Reformation perspective of the fundamental equality of all legitimate callings. It is somewhat reminiscent of the medieval perspective that accorded a greater spirituality to what were viewed as "sacred" vocations.[5]

In fact, possible proof that service for God as a pastor or deacon was

deemed a more spiritual vocation than others in the long eighteenth-century English Baptist community can be found in a stray comment by John Gill (1697–1771), the doyen of London Baptists. Commenting on Proverbs 22:29, Gill observed:

> Every good man has a work or business to do in a religious way; some in a higher sphere, as officers of churches, ministers and deacons; the work of the one lies in reading, study, meditation, and prayer, in the ministration of the word and ordinances, and other duties of their office; and the business of the others in taking care of the poor, and the secular affairs of the churches; others in a lower way, and common to all Christians, which lies in the exercise of grace, and performance of all good works, relative to themselves, their families, and the church of God.[6]

Gill here distinguished between the "higher sphere" of the calling of pastors and deacons and the "lower way" of other Christians, who had secular callings. While Gill did not explicitly call the former a more spiritual calling, his use of "higher" and "lower" leaves the reader with the impression that being a pastor or deacon was somehow a "better" calling than others.

"Setting an Example of Diligence and Fidelity:" Co-Vocational Pastors

Gill was also convinced that pastors should be "exempt from all worldly business and employment," since the ministry is "sufficient to engross all a man's time and thoughts."[7] Gill's understanding of what is entailed in pastoral ministry obviously shaped this judgment. As he stated in an ordination sermon that he preached in 1734: "Time is precious, and ought to be redeemed, and diligently improved, by all sorts of men; but by none more than the ministers of the Gospel, who should spend it in frequent prayer, constant meditation, and in daily reading the Scriptures, and the writings of good men."[8] Yet, most Baptist pastors in this era were co-vocational by necessity. As Faith and Brian Bowers have noted, "Few eighteenth-century ministers received an adequate income from church alone."[9] For instance, the leading Baptist pastor in Southwark, London, at the beginning of the long eighteenth century was James Jones. He had trained as a tailor, but in Baptist tradition he has been known as the "coffee-man in Southwark." He

was so named due to his ownership of a coffeehouse in the parish of St. Olave, Southwark, from which he sought to lead his congregation and to plant others in the 1670s and 1680s.[10] Further north, in Liverpool, the oldest Calvinistic Baptist congregation had been formed in the first decade of the eighteenth century, but struggled financially for a good number of decades. In 1714 the church called Peter Davenport, a tobacconist, as its pastor. He was succeeded by John Sedgefield, who soon left to take up farming because the congregation could not support him financially. By 1730 the congregation was meeting on Byrom Street and John Turner (d.1741), a pharmacist (then called an apothecary), was its pastor. Occasionally people would turn up on Sunday mornings seeking medical aid, and Turner would have to ask the congregation to sing and pray while he went to help his patients and then return to lead worship! When Turner died in 1741, the financially-feeble congregation of twenty or so members called the theological eccentric John Johnson (1706–1791), and he too had to supplement his meagre salary by engaging in business.[11]

When John Hirst (1736–1815), the superintendent of a woolen factory in the north of England, began to preach in the late 1760s, his work entailed him to be "at his post from Monday morning to Saturday night." What little time he had for study he snatched from sleep so that he could prepare to preach throughout the Lord's Day. His biographer James Hargreaves noted that although Hirst loved to preach, he was also conscious of his need to provide for his five children—his first wife had died by this point—and thus he was "diligent in business, … setting an example of diligence and fidelity to servants."[12] Hirst was called to pastor the Baptist church in Bacup, Lancashire, in late 1772, but the church's fifty-five members could not pay him an adequate salary. He thus engaged in a business venture, but by 1775 he had lost all of his investment. Some friends initially paid his debts, rescuing him thereby from debtor's prison, and over the next few years his "diligence, frugality, and the blessing of God" enabled him to repay what he owed. He even worked at a loom in a factory till he got to the point that "ministry was his sole employment."[13]

Or consider Benjamin Francis (1734–1799), who graduated from Bristol Baptist Academy in 1756 and preached for a while in Chipping Sodbury, Gloucestershire. Eventually, in 1757, he moved to Horsley, where the following year he was ordained at the age of twenty-four.[14] Although the church

there consisted of sixty-six members, most of them were poor artisans and clothworkers and were unable to provide enough financially for his support. Francis once described the circumstances of most of the congregation as being "extremely indigent." And near the end of his life, he remarked that his congregation was for the most part "poor, plain, and have not had the advantage of literature."[15] Thus, "he was obliged to rear pigs, to grow his own fruit and vegetables, to keep a school, and to venture into the woolen trade (with disastrous financial consequences) in order to make ends meet."[16]

Other co-vocational ministers included Thomas Newcomen (1664–1729), an ironmonger in Dartmouth and the inventor of the first practical steam engine; Andrew Gifford, Jr. (1700–1784), the assistant librarian of the British Museum; Robert Parsons (1718–1790) in Bath, a widely-admired carver in stone and marble; the eccentric John Ryland, Sr. (1723–1792), a schoolteacher; and William Carey, also a schoolteacher and cobbler.[17] There were also a significant number of lay persons in the Calvinistic Baptist community who made notable contributions to the worlds of English art and trade, men like Emanuel Bowen (1693/4–1767), a Welsh Baptist who was cartographer to George II[18]; Robert Bowyer (1758–1834), a miniature painter to George III and publisher, who later became a lay preacher;[19] and William Burls (1763–1837), a wealthy London merchant who served as a deacon at Carter's Lane Baptist Church in London and was the treasurer of the Baptist Missionary Society for many years.[20] What these pastors and lay persons may have thought with regard to the various callings in which they were involved is largely speculative, however, since few of them left any substantial writing about their quotidian occupations. Possibly the best resource for examining Baptist thought about vocation in the long eighteenth century, therefore, are the various works of the voluminous autodidact John Gill, especially his critical commentaries on the entire Bible that enjoyed a wide circulation in the English Baptist community.[21] *An Exposition of the New Testament* appeared in 1748 and seventeen years later Gill began to issue *An Exposition of the Old Testament*, which was published over three years in a number of large folios.

"Man was Created an Active Creature:" John Gill on Vocation

In Gill's comment on 2 Thessalonians 3:11, for example, the Baptist exegete

observed that the refusal of some of the Thessalonians to work,

> at their callings, trades, and businesses in which they were brought up… was walking disorderly indeed, even contrary to the order of things before the fall, when man was in a state of innocence; for before sin entered into the world, Adam was put into the garden of Eden to keep and dress it; man was created an active creature, and made for work and business; and to live without, is contrary to the order of creation, as well as to the order of civil societies, and of religious one, or churches, and even what irrational creatures do not.[22]

From the fact that God's design for Adam was for him to be a gardener in the paradise of Eden, Gill reasoned that human beings in general were "made for work and business" and so were to be "active" in creation. Adam's son Abel, though heir to one who was "the lord of the whole earth," was thus "a keeper of sheep" that he might not be idle but engaged in a "useful and laborious employment."[23] Possibly because the figure of a shepherd is employed in both Testaments for pastoring the people of God, Gill expressly cited the secular calling of shepherding as one that is "valiant, honourable, innocent, and useful."[24]

In fact, Gill argued from the phrase "to dress it, and to keep it" in Genesis 2:15 that even before the Fall from Eden, there was work:

> [S]o … it seems man was not to live an idle life, in a state of innocence; but this could not be attended with toil and labour, with fatigue and trouble, with sorrow and sweat, as after his fall; but was rather for his recreation and pleasure; though what by nature was left, to be improved by art; and what there was for Adam to do, is not easy to say: at present there needed no plowing, nor sowing, nor planting, nor watering, since God had made every tree pleasant to the sight, and good for food, to grow out of it; and a river ran through it to water it.[25]

Gill proceeded to cite a number of Jewish commentators who understood this primeval work of Adam to involve the study of and obedience to the law. Gill did not affirm this interpretation, but remained somewhat agnostic about what exactly Adam would have done before the entrance of sin into the Garden. What is noteworthy is his affirmation that the goal of Adam's primeval labours were "his recreation and pleasure."

Whatever calling is God's lot for a believer in life, it is to be pursued with "all diligence and industry."[26] Thus, when Christ had yet to pour out his Spirit and so initiate the commission to preach the Word throughout the world, Peter went back to fishing "partly that he might not live an idle life, and partly to obtain a livelihood."[27] A person is to be commended, therefore, if he or she is "constant" at their calling, namely, "swift, ready and expeditious at it; who industriously pursues it, cheerfully attends it, makes quick dispatch of it; does it off of hand, at once, and is not slothful in it." Gill obviously regarded all true vocations as important. They merited mindful attention and significant effort. At the same time, God's direction, "strength and assistance" in one's calling is to be sought by prayer, and glory given to him when such prayer is answered.[28]

Gill identified various reasons for being diligent at one's vocation. It was the God-given way to secure the finances needed for life's basic necessities for oneself and one's family.[29] It was also the means to provide for "the relief of the poor" as well as "the support of the Gospel, and the interest of Christ."[30] Gill thus included working in "honest lawful employment" under the rubric of the "good works" enjoined by Paul in Titus 3:14.[31] On the other hand, Gill was very aware of the dangers that attended success in one's vocation and the financial wealth that might accrue from such success, namely, the formation of "an immoderate care for, and pursuit after the world" and so becoming "inebriated with the world."[32] One central cause for such inebriation was a distinct failure to lay to heart "the power, providence, and faithfulness of God."[33] Alluding to a statement by the North African Latin author L. Caecilius Firmianus Lactantius (*c.*260–*c.*330) that "the highest good of man is in religion alone (*summum… hominis bonum in sola religione est*),"[34] Gill was adamant that man's true *summum bonum* was not to be found ultimately in being successful at one's calling but in the things of religion.[35]

"His Heart is not in his Master's Goods:" Wisdom from Joshua Thomas

An interesting reflection on a vocation in the world can be found in the archives of Bristol Baptist College in an unpublished manuscript that records the precious friendship of two Welsh pastors, Benjamin Francis, mentioned above, and Joshua Thomas (1719–1797), who for forty-three years was

the pastor of the Baptist cause in Leominster. The manuscript is actually a transcript, drawn up by Thomas, of letters that passed between him and Francis from 1758 to 1770.[36] The practice of Francis and Thomas appears to have been for one of them to mail two or three queries periodically to the other. Then, some months later the recipient mailed back his answers, together with fresh questions of his own. These answers were commented on, the new questions answered and both the comments and answers mailed back along with new queries, and so forth. All in all, there are sixty-eight questions and answers in two volumes—fifty-eight in the first volume, the remaining ten in Volume II. On only one occasion during these years from 1758 to 1770 was there a noticeable gap in correspondence. That was in 1765 when Francis lost his wife and his three youngest children. It is noteworthy that at the beginning of the correspondence the two friends sign their letters simply with their names or initials. However, as time passes, their mutual confidence and intimacy deepens, and they begin to write "yours endearingly" or "yours unfeignedly" and even "yours indefatigably" or "yours inexpressibly." It was in October, 1762, that Thomas first signed himself "your cordial Brother Jonathan," and the following February Francis replied with "your most affectionate David." From this point on this is the way the two friends refer to each other.

The questions and their answers are extremely instructive as to the areas of personal theological interest among mid-eighteenth century Calvinistic Baptists. For example, there are queries about spiritual vitality, the eternal state of those who die in infancy, how best to understand the remarks in Revelation 20 about the millennium, and whether or not inoculation against that dreaded killer of the eighteenth century, smallpox, was right or wrong. And there is this question about vocation, asked by Francis in July of 1762 and answered by Thomas the following October:

> Quer[y]: What is the difference between a lawful diligence in the world, and a criminal love of the world? Or wherein does the difference lie?
> Sol[ution]: Ever since man became a living soul, it is his very nature to be active. Activity conduces much to his health etc. Before sin entered Adam was to dress the Garden, when then was all delight. After the fall, man is to eat his bread by labour, sweat etc. …I would note, that the persons who love the world sinfully, differ in many particulars from those who are conscientiously diligent in it. I dare

say you can split the differences better than I am able to do it, but I must attempt. The good man considers often how he may adorn the gospel, glorify God, and serve his generation; and in order to do this, he finds it very necessary to read the Word often, to pray earnestly and frequently, and to attend on sanctuary seasons. He may, and often does, labour hard; but meditation upon the state of his soul, the nature of religion and salvation, the Saviour, the glory above etc., etc. is the meals to maintain his strength, cordials to keep up his spirits, salve to heal his sores &c. This being the case, religion will be kept up, in the soul, in the closet, in the family, and in the Church; all conducing … to help him through the world.

…But he that sinfully loves the world contrives how to be rich in this life: he does not want to serve his generation, but himself. His heart is so much upon what he calls lawful, that he cannot meditate as above noted. He has no time often for private prayer: and that in the family suits him but very indifferent; he is often hindered to meetings on weekdays, the excuse is at hand. He thinks it no great sin to contrive a good deal of the world in his mind, some in word, etc. on the Lord's Day. The greatest part of religion is a dead weight to him; a little of it will, and must do.

…Again, the piously diligent delights in his labour from a principle as so very different from the other, viz. because he knows it to be his duty, and that in his daily calling he serves Christ, Col. 3:22 etc. and he that rightly considers himself as a servant of Christ is excited and animated by the most excellent and noble motives. A servant may be very diligent, frugal etc. from a sense of duty, and the love he bears to his master, when his heart is not in his master's goods. The faithful servant will manage his affairs so as to keep his set hours and seasons to sit down and converse with his master, give account, receive further instructions and money to bear expenses, relate difficulties, and be honoured with a fresh testimony of his Lord's approbation etc. etc. But the criminal lover of the world is a kind of a proprietor; he is not fond of coming to his master; he pretends he is always busy for his master, he cannot ever have time; but he has time to go elsewhere. He seldom waits for instruction, looking upon himself to be wise enough. Let the difficulties be ever so many, he does not care to come to his master, he learns to love the master's possessions more than the owner. He looks upon his own approbation to be sufficient, and supposes, perhaps, that the master will pass by all this effrontery.

…What a world this! What confusion sin hath made! Yet all the confusion by sin, or order by grace here, is as nothing to that which will be hereafter. Vile sin! but glorious grace! Precious blood! Happy people![37]

Thomas agreed with Gill that in the primeval state Adam was created for work, and that the first man would have found this labour "all delight." Since the Fall, however, a deep disorder has entered into the human heart. There is now a sinful passion regnant that loves the world and the wealth that work creates more than the Master of this earth. And yet, due to God's "glorious grace," there are those who are learning to use this world and its goods aright. They seek to be diligent in their labours, but know the vital importance of spiritual disciplines to keep the heart in tune with God. They thus know that their work is a means of service to Christ and their generation, and will be used by God for his glory. The latter, Thomas deemed, to be truly "happy people."

A "Heart Brim-Full of Joy:" Introducing Anne Dutton

Yet another significant reflection on vocation in this era is from the pen of Anne Dutton (1692–1765), who was born Anne Williams to Congregationalist parents in Northampton in the East Midlands.[38] Her conversion had come at the age of thirteen after a serious illness.[39] Two years later, in 1707, she joined the Congregationalist church, although she wrestled with doubt and various fears as a young believer. Subsequently, though, she experienced a significant encounter with the Holy Spirit that she interpreted as the sealing of the Spirit—a phrase derived from such Pauline texts as Ephesians 1:13 and 4:30. As she later recalled the experience, the Holy Spirit used Philippians 4:4 ("Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say rejoice," KJV) in his sealing of her heart:

> [This] word brake in … upon my heart, with such a ray of glorious light, that directed my soul to the true and proper object of its joy, even the Lord himself. I was pointed thereto, as with a finger: In the Lord, not in your frames. In the Lord, not in what you enjoy from him, but in what you are in him. And the Lord seal'd my instruction, and fill'd my heart brim-full of joy, in the faith of my eternal interest, and unchangeable standing in him; and of his being an infinite fountain of blessedness, for me to rejoice in alway; even when the streams of sensible enjoyments fail'd. Thus the Blessed Spirit took me by the arms, and taught me to go.
>
> …the Lord the Spirit went on to reveal Christ more and more to me, as the great foundation of my faith and joy. He shew'd me my everlasting standing

> in his person, grace and righteousness: and gave me to see my security in his unchangeableness, under all the changes which pass'd over me. And then I began to rejoice in my dear Lord Jesus, as always the same, even when my frames alter'd.[40]

In other words, Dutton learned to put her faith in Christ alone, and not in her experience of him. Her beliefs about the sealing of the Spirit were probably derived from reading the works of the Puritan Thomas Goodwin (1600–1679).[41]

In 1710, she transferred her church affiliation to an open-membership Baptist church in Northampton, pastored at the time by John Moore (1662–1726).[42] There, in her words, she found "fat, green pastures," for, as she went on to explain, "Mr. Moore was a great doctrinal preacher: and the special advantage I receiv'd under his ministry, was the establishment of my judgment in the doctrines of the gospel."[43] It was in this congregation that she was baptized as a believer around 1713.[44] Two years later, when she was twenty-two, she married a Thomas Cattell and moved with her husband to London. While there she worshipped with the Calvinistic Baptist church that met at premises on Wood Street in the Cripplegate region.[45] Her pastor was John Skepp (d.1721), a one-time member of the Cambridge Congregationalist church of Joseph Hussey (1659–1726), who had been called as the pastor of this congregation in 1714.

Hussey is often seen as the father of Hyper-Calvinism, insomuch as he argued in his book *God's Operations of Grace: But no Offers of Grace* (1707) that offering Christ indiscriminately to sinners is something that smacks of "creature-co-operation and creature-concurrence" in the work of salvation.[46] Skepp published but one book, and that posthumously, which was entitled *Divine Energy: or The Efficacious Operations of the Spirit of God upon the Soul of Man* (1722). In it he appears to have followed Hussey's approach to evangelism. It is sometimes argued that Anne Dutton's exposure to Hyper-Calvinism at a young age shaped her thinking for the rest of her life. If so, it is curious to find her rejoicing in the ministry of free-offer preachers like George Whitefield (1714–1770) in later years. Dutton found Skepp to be an impressive preacher, owing in part to what Dutton called his "quickness of thought, aptness of expression, suitable affection, and a most agreeable delivery."[47] Despite his refusal to freely offer the gospel to all and sundry, the overall trend in the church during his ministry was one of growth.

There were 179 members when he came as pastor in 1714. When he died in 1721, the church's membership had grown to 212.[48]

In the early months of 1719, Dutton's life underwent a deep trial as her husband of but five or six years died.[49] She returned to her family in Northampton, and found herself wrestling with spiritual depression. In her words, Dutton sought God "in his ordinances, in one place and another; but alas! I found him not."[50] She was not long single, however. A second marriage in the middle months of 1720 was to Benjamin Dutton (1691–1747), a clothier who had studied for vocational ministry in various places, among them Glasgow University. Anne and Benjamin had met in the final months of 1719 and within a year they were wed.[51]

Ministry took the couple to such towns as Whittlesey and Wisbech in Cambridgeshire, before leading them finally in 1731 to a Calvinistic Baptist congregation in Great Gransden, Huntingdonshire, in 1733.[52] It is noteworthy that prior to this call to Great Gransden, Benjamin Dutton had wrestled with alcoholism. But Benjamin found deliverance from this crippling addiction around the time of the move to Great Gransden. In his own words, he said that he now "stood not in need of wine, or strong drink. The Lord also, of his great goodness, took away my *inclination* thereto; so that I had no more inclination to it, or desire after it, than if I had never tasted any in my whole life."[53]

Under Benjamin Dutton's preaching the church flourished so that on any given Sunday the congregation numbered anywhere between 250 and 350, of whom roughly 50 were members. This growth led to the building of a new meeting-house, which can still be seen in the village. Benjamin decided to go to America to help raise funds to pay off the debt incurred in the building of the meeting-house but the ship on which he was returning foundered not far from the British coast in 1747, and Dutton was drowned. Thankfully, he had sent the money he had raised by means of another ship, so that at least was not lost.

"A Talent of Writing": Anne Dutton's Vocation

Widowed now for the second time, Anne Dutton was to live another eighteen years. During that time "the fame of her … piety," as Baptist historian Joseph Ivimey (1773–1834) once referred to her spirituality,[54] became known in Evangelical circles on both sides of the Atlantic and that through various

literary publications. Dutton had been writing for a number of years before her second husband's demise. After his death a steady stream of tracts and treatises, collections of selected correspondence, and poems poured forth from her pen.

Among her numerous correspondents were a number of key figures in the eighteenth-century Evangelical Revival: the Welsh preacher Howel Harris (1714–1773), the redoubtable Selina Hastings, the Countess of Huntingdon (1707–1791), and George Whitefield.[55] Harris was convinced that the Lord had entrusted her "with a talent of writing for him."[56] When William Seward (1711–1740), an early Methodist preacher who was killed by a mob in Wales, read a letter she had written to him in May, 1739, he found it "full of such comforts and direct answers to what I had been writing that it filled my eyes with tears of joy."[57] And Whitefield, who helped promote and publish Dutton's writings, once said after a meeting with her: "her conversation is as weighty as her letters."[58] By 1740 she had written seven books. Another fourteen followed between 1741 and 1743, and fourteen more by 1750.[59] And there were yet more, for she continued to write up until her death in 1765. She was clearly the most prolific female Baptist author of the eighteenth century. Her writings reveal eighteenth-century Calvinistic Baptist piety at its best—solidly Christ-centered and robustly crucicentric.

Consider, for example, her eucharistic treatise *Thoughts on the Lord's Supper* (1748). "Not a dram of new covenant-favour", she wrote, "was to flow to the heirs of promise, but thro' the death of Jesus." As she went on to exclaim: "O what a wondrous draught, what a life-giving draught, in his own most precious blood, doth God our Saviour, the Lord our lover, give to dying sinners, to his beloved ones in this glorious ordinance."[60] Dutton devoted the first section of this sixty-page treatise on the Lord's Supper to outlining its nature. Dutton argued that the Supper has three essential purposes: as a "representation," it is a powerful reminder of Christ's saving work; as a "confirmation," it gives a sense of assurance; and as a "communication," it is a vehicle for making the Risen Christ present with his people. With regard to the latter, Dutton noted: "As our Lord is spiritually present in his own ordinance, so he therein and thereby doth actually communicate, or give himself, his body broken, and his blood shed, with all the benefits of his death, to the worthy receivers."[61] In line with John Calvin's (1509–1564) view of the spiritual presence of Christ at the Table, Dutton affirmed that

the Lord Jesus is indeed present at the celebration of his supper and makes it a means of grace for those who partake of it with faith. As she stated later in the treatise: in the Lord's Supper "the King is pleas'd to sit with us, at his table."[62] In fact, so highly did she prize this means of grace that she declared, with what other Calvinistic Baptists of this era would describe probably as some exaggeration, that the celebration of the Lord's Supper "admits" believers "into the nearest approach to his [i.e. Christ's] glorious self, that we can make in an ordinance-way on the earth, on this side the presence of his glory in heaven."[63]

Wrestling with her Vocation: Anne Dutton on Women's Writing

Although affirmed in her vocation as an author by such Christians as George Whitefield and Howel Harris, Dutton clearly wrestled with whether or not it was biblical for her to publish her works. In a tract entitled *A Letter To such of the Servants of Christ, who May have any Scruples about the Lawfulness of Printing any Thing written by a Woman* (1743), she noted that she had been criticized for going into print.[64] Her critics appear to have regarded her writings as a violation of two specific texts, 1 Timothy 2:12 and 1 Corinthians 14:34–35.[65] She also mentioned that some considered women "unfit" for the vocation of writing, even "unworthy of it," and that it made them "arrogant and affirming."[66]

Dutton pointed out that the Pauline verses mentioned above specifically forbade women to engage in "public authoritative teaching in the Church." Publishing was of quite a different order. Though books were public media, they were read in private and not in the assembly of the congregation. In this way, books were akin to private letters sent to a friend or having a "private conference" with him or her.[67] The Scriptures clearly did not forbid such a means of communication. Moreover, as Dutton pondered Romans 14:19 ("Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another," KJV), she noted that it was addressed to all believers, male and female, and that it was therefore "the duty of women to seek the edification of their brethren and sisters." When Dutton applied this text specifically with regard to writing books, it led her to conclude that "any believer, male or female, that is gifted for, and inclin'd

to publish their thoughts in print, about any truth of Christ, for the private instruction and edification of the saints," is not only free to do so, but is "commanded so to do."[68] She thus generalized later in the tract regarding the way individuals need to follow their respective vocations: "If any person is fully persuaded in his own mind, from the Word and Spirit of Christ, that it is his duty to engage in any piece of service for God; it is sufficient warrant for him so to do."[69]

Dutton appealed to the example of Priscilla in Acts 18:26, who, with her husband Aquila, taught Apollos in private. "Communicating one's mind in print, is as private" a means of teaching as what Priscilla did in this case.[70] Dutton also had to answer critics who argued that other female authors had used the press for "trifles." Dutton pressed home her case with some vehemence: "shall none of that sex be suffer'd to appear on Christ's side, to tell of the wonders of his love, to seek the good of souls, and the advancement of the Redeemer's interest?"[71] Dutton believed it quite possible that this opposition to female Christian authors was a stratagem of Satan to hinder their "usefulness." But to anyone acquainted with the biblical record, such opposition was not surprising. The Apostle Peter, for instance, had to be rebuked when he sought to dissuade Christ from his "great work of redemption" and told by Jesus in no uncertain terms, "Get thee behind me Satan" (Matt 16:23).[72] The disciples' opposition to the woman who anointed Christ's head at Bethany was yet another illustration to Dutton that Christians, "under the influence of sin and Satan" may disparage "those good works, which the Lord himself will own and honour."[73]

Dutton emphasized that she wrote not for fame, but for "only the glory of God, and the good of souls." It was her "earnest desire, some way or other, to serve him, his interest and people."[74] She thus asked those who objected to her writing to imagine that "when my books come to your house, that I am come to give you a visit" and have "communion … in this way." Although she might be but "so weak a worm," it is "all one to Omnipotence to work by worms, as by angels."[75] Anne thus viewed her books as a means of carrying on important conversations and thus a vehicle for furthering fellowship within the Church. And in this way, she was serving her generation with diligence, which her contemporary Joshua Thomas had noted was one mark of true piety.

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2 C. H. Spurgeon, *The Burden of the Word of the Lord* in his *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* (Pasadena, TX: Pilgrim Publications, 1975), 35:614.

3 For studies of Felix Carey, see D. G. E. Hall, "Felix Carey," *The Journal of Religion*, 12:4 (October, 1932): 473–492; M. Siddiq Khan, "Felix Carey: A Prisoner of Hope," *Libri*, 16:4 (1966): 237–268; Sunil Kumar Chatterjee, *Felix Carey (A Tiger Tamed)* (Hooghly, West Bengal: Sunil Kumar Chatterjee, 1991).

4 Chatterjee, *Felix Carey*, 114. For the remarkable problems surrounding Felix being the Burmese ambassador, see Hall, "Felix Carey," 484–491.

5 See the classic study by Karl Holl, "The History of the Word Vocation (*Beruf*)," trans. Heber F. Peacock, *The Review and Expositor*, 55:2 (April 1958): 126–154.

6 John Gill, *An Exposition of the Old Testament* (London, 1763–1765), 4:450, commenting on Prov 22:29. This four-volume work, as well as Gill's five-volume NT commentary (see following note), will be cited henceforth by the relevant volume and page number, as well as the specific biblical text upon which Gill is commenting.

7 John Gill, *An Exposition of the New Testament, Both Doctrinal and Practical* (London: George Keith, 1774–1776), 3:78, commenting on Acts 6:4. As Gill maintained in his comments on 1 Tim 5:18: "such who labour in the preaching of the Gospel, ought to have a sufficient and competent maintenance" (*Exposition of the New Testament*, 4:556).

8 John Gill and Samuel Wilson, *The Mutual Duty of Pastor and People, Represented in Two Discourses Preached at the Ordination Of the Reverend George Braithwaite, M. A.* (London: Aaron Ward, 1734), 9.

9 Faith and Brian Bowers, "After the Benediction: Eighteenth-century Baptist Laity" in Stephen L. Copson and Peter J. Morden, ed., *Challenge and Change: English Baptist life in the Eighteenth Century* (Didcot, Oxfordshire: The Baptist Historical Society, 2017), 234.

10 Anonymous, "James Jones' Coffee House," *The Baptist Quarterly*, 6 (1932–1933): 324–326.

11 Robert Halley, *Lancashire: Its Puritanism and Nonconformity* (Manchester: Tobbs and Brook/London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1869), 2:326–327; Robert Dawbarn, "The 'Johnsonian Baptists'," *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society*, 3:1 (May 1912): 54–55.

12 James Hargreaves, *The Life and Memoir of the Late Rev. John Hirst, Forty Two Years Pastor of the Baptist Church Bacup* (Rochdale: Joseph Littlewood, 1816), 45, 88–89.

13 Hargreaves, *Life and Memoir of the Late Rev. John Hirst*, 115, 118–119, 120–121.

14 For a brief account of the early history of the Horsley church, see Albion M. Urdank, *Religion and Society in a Cotswold Vale. Nailsworth, Gloucestershire, 1780–1865* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 90–93.

15 Cited Urdank, *Religion and Society*, 95; Geoffrey F. Nuttall, "Letters by Benjamin Francis," *Trafodion* (1983): 6. In one of the circular letters that Francis drew up for the Western Association, he mentions that some of his readers are "sorely distressed with pressing indigence" (Circular Letter of the Western Association, 1772, 3).

16 Gwyn Davies, "A Welsh Exile: Benjamin Francis (1734–99)" (Unpublished ms., 1999; in the possession of the author), 2. On Francis' financial problems, see also Thomas Flint, "A Brief Narrative of the Life and Death of the Rev. Benjamin Francis, A. M.," annexed to John Ryland, Jr., *The Presence of Christ the Source of eternal Bliss. A Funeral Discourse,… occasioned by the Death of the Rev. Benjamin Francis, A. M.* (Bristol, 1800), 49.

17 Bowers, "After the Benediction," 233–236.

18 J. H. Y. Briggs, "Baptists and the Wider Community" in Copson and Morden, ed., *Challenge and Change*, 135.

19 K. R. Manley, "Robert Bowyer (1758–1834): Artist, Publisher and Preacher," *The Baptist Quarterly*, 23 (1969–1970): 32–46.

20 Ernest A. Payne, *The Excellent Mr. Burls: First London Member of the Committee and Third Treasurer of the Baptist Missionary Society; First Treasurer of the Baptist Irish Society* (London: Carey Press, [1943]).

21 In the year of Gill's death, Gill's magnum opus, *A Body of Doctrinal Divinity*, was described as "incomparable" by the Northamptonshire Association. See *The Circular Letter from the Ministers and Messengers, Assembled at Oulney, in Buckinghamshire, June 4 and 5, 1771* (Circular Letter of the Northamptonshire Association, 1771),

4. During his lifetime, it was a saying among some English Baptists that "'Tis safe to believe any thing, if Mr. G[ill] believes it" (Anonymous, *Unity among Christian Ministers and People. Recommended in a Letter to Mr. John Gill* [London, 1746], 3).

22 Gill, *Exposition of the New Testament*, 4:507, commenting on 2 Thess 3:11.

23 Gill, *Exposition of the Old Testament*, 1:30, commenting on Gen 4:2.

24 Gill, *Exposition of the Old Testament*, 4:479, commenting on Prov 27:23.

25 Ibid., 1:17, commenting on Gen 2:15.

26 Gill, *Exposition of the New Testament*, 4:359, commenting on Phil 4:6. See also Gill's comments on Prov 12:11; 20:13; 26:13; 27:24, 27; 29:17; Matt 5:21; Rom 12:11; 2 Thess 3:13. The emphasis on diligence in these various comments is part of Gill's indebtedness to Puritanism. See Leland Ryken, *Worldly Saints: The Puritans As They Really Were* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1986), 34.

27 Ibid., 2:667, commenting on John 21:3.

28 Gill, *Exposition of the Old Testament*, 3:336, commenting on Ps 37:5. See also Gill's comments on Eccl 9:11 and 1 Peter 5:7.

29 See Gill's comments on Prov 14:23; 20:13; Eccl 3:22; 9:10; 1 Cor 7:33; Gal 6:8; Phil 4:6; 2 Thess 3:8, 12–13.

30 Gill, *Exposition of the Old Testament*, 4:567, commenting on Eccl 9:10, and *idem*, *Exposition of the New Testament*, 4:637, commenting on Titus 3:14. See also Gill's comments on Ezek 44:11; 46:1; Acts 13:5; Rom 12:11; Phil 4:6; 2 Thess 3:12–13.

31 Gill, *Exposition of the New Testament*, 4:637, commenting on Titus 3:14.

32 Ibid., 4:470, commenting on 1 Thess 5:6.

33 Ibid., 4:359, commenting on Phil 4:6.

34 Lactantius, *Divine Institutions* 3.10.1 in L. Caeli Firmiani Lactanti, *Opera Omnia. Pars I*, ed. Samuel Brandt (Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum, vol.19; Prague and Vienna: F. Tempsky/Leipzig: G. Freytag, 1890), 202.

35 Gill, *Exposition of the Old Testament*, 587, commenting on Eccl 12:13.

36 "Queries and Solutions of Joshua Thomas and Benjamin Francis of Horsley 1758–70, being the answers of one to questions posed by the other on matters of theology, church government, preaching," 2 vols. (MS G.98.5 in the Archives of Bristol Baptist College, Bristol, UK).

37 "Queries and Solutions," I, 156–161, *passim*.

38 For Dutton's life and thought, see especially J. C. Whitebrook, "The Life and Works of Mrs. Ann Dutton," *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society*, 7:3–4 (1921): 129–146; Stephen J. Stein, "A Note on Anne Dutton, Eighteenth-Century Evangelical," *Church History*, 44 (1975): 485–491; Michael D. Sciretti, Jr., " 'Feed My Lambs': The Spiritual Direction Ministry of Calvinistic British Baptist Anne Dutton During the Early Years of the Evangelical Revival" (PhD thesis, Baylor University, 2009). Most of Dutton's works have survived in only a few copies. Thankfully many of her works are currently available in a series of volumes compiled by JoAnn Ford Watson, *Selected Spiritual Writings of Anne Dutton: Eighteenth-Century, British-Baptist, Woman Theologian* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2003–2015), 7 vols.

The sketch of her life that follows is dependent in part on Sciretti, "Feed My Lambs," 48–115. For her own account of her conversion, which she detailed in her *A Brief Account of the Gracious Dealings of God, with a Poor, Sinful, Unworthy Creature* (1743), see Watson, comp., *Spiritual Writings of Anne Dutton*, 3:8–27.

39 Sciretti, "Feed My Lambs," 51–53.

40 Dutton, *Gracious Dealings of God* in Watson, comp., *Spiritual Writings of Anne Dutton*, 3:27–28. Dutton's capitalization of words in her writings, as well as some of the italicization, all of which Watson's editions retained, has been modernized.

41 On Goodwin's influence on Dutton, see Sciretti, "Feed My Lambs," 62.

42 On Moore, see Sciretti, "Feed My Lambs," 59–60, n.42.

43 Dutton, *Gracious Dealings of God* in Watson, comp., *Spiritual Writings of Anne Dutton*, 3:47, 50.

44 Sciretti, "Feed My Lambs," 64–65.

45 On this church's history during this period, see Murdina D. MacDonald, "London Calvinistic Baptists 1689–1727: Tensions within a Dissenting Community under Toleration" (DPhil thesis, Regent's Park College, Oxford, 1982), 109–131.

46 *God's Operations of Grace: But no Offers of Grace* (London: D. Bridge, 1707),

47 Dutton, *Gracious Dealings of God* in Watson, comp., *Spiritual Writings of Anne Dutton*, 3:51.

48 MacDonald, "London Calvinistic Baptists 1689–1727," 124.

49 Dutton, *Gracious Dealings of God* in Watson, comp., *Spiritual Writings of Anne Dutton*, 3:63–64.

50 Ibid., 3:70.
51 Sciretti, "Feed My Lambs," 76–77.
52 For a brief history of the church, see Joseph Ivimey, *A History of the English Baptists* (London: Isaac Taylor Hinston and Holdsworth & Ball, 1830), 4:509–510.
53 Cited Sciretti, "Feed My Lambs," 91–92.
54 Ivimey, *History of the English Baptists*, 4:510.
55 See the discussion of these links by Stein, "Note on Anne Dutton," 485–490, and Sciretti, "Feed My Lambs," 198–280.
56 Cited Stein, "Note on Anne Dutton," 487–488.
57 Cited ibid., 488.
58 George Whitefield, Letter to Mr. [Jonathan] B[ryan], July 24, 1741 in *Letters of George Whitefield For the period 1734–1742* (1771 ed.; repr. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1976), 280.
59 Sciretti, "Feed My Lambs," 100–101.
60 Anne Dutton, *Thoughts on the Lord's Supper, Relating to the Nature, Subjects, and right Partaking of this Solemn Ordinance* (London: J. Hart, 1748), 7. Quotes from this work have been modernized with regard to capitalization.
61 Ibid., 3–4.
62 Ibid., 21.
63 Ibid., 25.
64 Anne Dutton, *A Letter To such of the Servants of Christ, who May have any Scruples about the Lawfulness of Printing any Thing written by a Woman* (London: J. Hart, 1743), 3. It is reprinted by Watson, comp., *Spiritual Writings of Anne Dutton*, 3:253–258.
65 Dutton, *Printing any Thing written by a Woman*, 4. On the employment of these Pauline texts in the Calvinistic Baptist community, see Michael R. Watts, Watts, *The Dissenters: From the Reformation to the French Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 1:319–320. More generally, on other female authors in the English Calvinistic Baptist community, see Timothy Whelan, " 'No sanctuary for Philistines': Baptists and Culture in the Eighteenth Century" in Copson and Morden, ed., *Challenge and Change*, 214–217.
66 Dutton, *Printing any Thing written by a Woman*, 8.
67 Ibid., 4–5, 6–7.
68 Ibid., 5.
69 Ibid., 10.
70 Ibid., 6–7. Gill also argued on the basis of Priscilla's example in Acts 18 that "women of grace, knowledge, and experience, though they are not allowed to teach in public, yet they may, and ought to communicate in private what they know of divine things for the use of others" (*Exposition of the New Testament*, 3:259, commenting on Acts 18:26). Compare his comments on Romans 16:3, 12; 1 Corinthians 14:34–35; 1 Timothy 2:12.
71 Ibid., 7.
72 Ibid., 8–9.
73 Ibid., 9.
74 Ibid., 3, 11–12. See also Dutton's comments in her *Thoughts on the Lord's Supper*, A3 recto, where she stated that she wrote this particular work on the Lord's Table out of "love to Christ's honour and the good of souls."
75 Ibid., 11. Catherine A. Brekus has argued that Anne's use of the term "weak" to describe herself and likening her printed words to "the lispings of a babe" (Dutton, *Printing any Thing written by a Woman*, 11) was a strategy to find a degree of credibility in the eyes of her male readers. See Catherine A. Brekus, "Writing Religious Experience: Women's Authorship in Early America," *The Journal of Religion*, 92 (2012): 489. See also Dutton, *Thoughts on the Lord's Supper*, A2 recto, where she noted her "weakness and insufficiency" to write about the Lord's Table.

Milkmaids No More: Revisiting Luther's Doctrine of Vocation from the Perspective of a "Gig" Economy

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Looking back over 500 years, Protestants can be grateful that the Reformation reclaimed for the church three essential truths: justification by grace through faith, the authority of scriptures and the doctrine of vocation.[1] The first two have been well-explored by scholars over the centuries, while the doctrine of vocation has gained prominence only in the past few decades. In addition to breaking down any hierarchy between clergy and laity, this focus on vocation has brought dignity to daily employment and encouragement in non-remunerative occupations like motherhood.

Nevertheless, as Dan Doriani noted, "Luther's view of calling better fits a static society. In his day, economies were simpler and work fell into lines that seem to follow a natural or created order, filled with farmers and carpenters.

But these ideas fit less easily in societies with more flux and innovation."[2] In other words, Luther's doctrine of vocation comfortably presupposed each individual occupied a certain position in society with a specific type of job, however, many of these jobs no longer exist. For example, almost three quarters of workers in the heart of Europe at the time of the Reformation were farmers, but fewer than three in 100 worked in agriculture in 2016.[3] Luther declared in his sermons that God milked cows through milkmaids, but it is unclear how this idea might still apply to the two technicians in a computer-mechanized dairy overseeing a machine capable of milking 72 cows simultaneously.[4] Even "tent-making" missionaries rarely make tents as a business anymore. For this reason, the church needs to re-examine the Reformation doctrine of vocation and biblically reevaluate the very essence of a "job" in light of revolutionary changes in the workplace.

This paper will consider some of the jobs used as examples in Luther's development of the doctrine of vocation and compare them to the existing occupations in the post-industrial revolution economy. The goal is to utilize interdisciplinary tools of economics to retain principles that remain useful while making observations (and exhortations) in areas of this doctrine that need further refinement and reformation. The ongoing task of theologians in every generation is to apply eternal biblical truths to an ever-changing cultural situation. The outcome will be to suggest five key areas of the doctrine of vocation that need further development in light of the changing conceptions of a job, especially in the new "gig" economy. In essence, the goal is to understand what Luther would say to Christians through his sermons if his context were the economy of the early 21st century.

Fundamentals of Luther's Doctrine of Vocation

For the sake of brevity, this section can only familiarize the reader with the broad outlines of Luther's understanding of the doctrine of vocation.[5] First, as is widely known, Luther understood that vocation extended to everyone—every Christian has a calling—and this stood in sharp contrast to the dogma of the Roman Catholic Church. At that time, *vocatio* was reserved for the calling to the priesthood and was to be singularly preferred to every other walk of life outside of the church. As Max Weber has (somewhat controversially) observed, Luther translated this Latin term as *beruf* in German

which showed that everyone everyday had a calling from God.[6] This calling from God, from Luther's perspective, was relatively easily identified. For example, marriage was a calling from God to everyone who had a spouse, as was fatherhood or motherhood for everyone responsible for children. Similarly, Luther implicitly recognized three stations in the life of Germans of his day including the nobility of lords and ladies, the clergy of priests, monks and nuns, and all the rest of the peasants.[7] An individual's specific station was understood to be given by God with little or no opportunity to change. In this context, Luther's doctrine depended heavily on 1 Corinthians 7:17, "Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him. This is my rule in all the churches." This understanding extended to specific jobs as vocations, such as milking cows, cobbling shoes and serving as a soldier.

Second, Luther viewed vocation as being horizontal in human relationships and functioned as a way of serving others in love. One result of being in a right relationship to God through the gospel and hearing from God through the Scripture, was that people were able to serve each other more effectively. Since vocations were assigned by God, this actually was a description of how God continued to work in the world through his people. Indeed, Luther called individual vocations a "mask" for God as he continued to subdue his creation and care for his people.[8] In describing the namesake task of this paper, Luther said, "God is milking the cows through the vocation of the milkmaids." Similarly, Luther stated, "God gives the wool, but not without our labor. If it is on the sheep, it makes no garment. God gives the wool, but it must be sheared, carded, spun, etc."[9] This understanding extended beyond the bucolic occupations of farming, and in fact reached into every legitimate occupation in society. In Luther's treatise to the Christian Nobility, he said, "If you see there is a lack of hangmen, constables, judges … and you find you are qualified, you should offer your services."[10] In his essay on "Whether Soldiers, Too, Can be Saved," he pressed this doctrine to its logical (and potentially disturbing conclusion) when he wrote, "The hand that wields the sword and kills with it is not man's hand, but God's; and it is not man, but God, who hangs, tortures, beheads, kills, and fights. All these are God's works and judgements."[11] In summary, Luther contended that every legitimate action that takes place in the economy is God acting through other people to serve others, answer prayers, and continue to subdue creation.

Third, Luther presumed that vocations or specific callings from God to assume a specific role in society were readily identifiable and generally stable. To have a wife was to be called by God to be a husband. To have a son was to be called by God to be a father. To have a father as a cobbler likely indicated a calling to be a cobbler because such specialized tools and training represented a rare opportunity. Similarly having access to land suggested a calling to farm. To cross from being a peasant to being nobility was so far-fetched as to be unthinkable as an option. To join the Roman Catholic clergy or take vows as a monk or nun was no longer necessary. The economy of his day, especially as constrained by the Peasant War was indeed quite static or stable so Paul's admonition to the Corinthians seemed to apply without any apparent need to move onward from 1 Corinthians 7:17 to verses 20 and 21, "Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called. Were you a bondservant when called? Do not be concerned about it. (But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity)." This is not necessarily to imply that Luther was expressly opposed to mobility, just that it was a rarity in his economic context and does not seem to have been considered as an option.

Fourth, Luther thought that since vocations were assigned by God, individuals should not only remain in them, but also be content no matter how low or mean the task. While Luther earthily addressed changing of diapers in the calling to parenting, he often reached to the lowest of the low to show that every vocation was legitimate and valuable and that every person could be content. Luther professed that for a farmer even lifting a single straw would bring glory to God along with mucking out an entire stable.

What is interesting, however, is that many of the vocations that Luther lifted up in his sermons as examples for contentment no longer are in existence, or at least not in any form that would have been recognizable to Luther. In other words, even if a Christian were content in a vocation, the occupation may no longer be available to provide the contentment. For this reason, Luther's doctrine of vocation needs to be revisited to keep the applicable principles, but to move forward nonetheless in light of an economy replete with Schumpeterian creative destruction.

What is Happening in the 21st century?

At this point, it would be useful to consider a few representative occupations to determine what has irreversibly changed and what fundamentally has stayed the same over the past 500 years. Accordingly, in the economy of the United States, which is representative of more and more countries around the world, the occupation of "milkmaid" has become exceedingly rare or non-existent. Certainly physically milking is no longer recognized as a common occupation in every village with cows and instead has become a boutique industry or even hobby business. Hand milking cows twice a day has been superseded by milking by machines. Even the individual milking machines have been increasingly replaced by the amazing "Milking Merry-go-round."[12]

A modern dairy farm has a carousel capable of holding 72 cows simultaneously for milking and each cow takes a ride of about 10 minutes around the circuit until milking is complete. Cows learn voluntarily to climb onto the machine as a stall becomes available, and a computer chip tagged in one ear identifies the cow and brings up the database of past milking times, average milk production, and other variables that could indicate a sickness or other stressor in a specific cow's life. No pushing or shoving takes place in the loading because the naturally hierarchical nature of cows acknowledge that the dominant alpha cow climbs on first while others wait patiently. All the rest of the cow's day is devoted to eating and drinking in a controlled climate environment with low stress or exertion (though the ethical considerations of this might be the subject of a separate article). Incidentally, the average farm processed 50 tons of manure each day into fertilizer, much of which is used to accelerate the growth of feed for the cows in the future.[13]

For comparison, individual milking machines could milk 750 cows twice a day in 22 hours. The monstrous "Milking Merry-go-round" can milk 1,400 cows three times each day in 15 hours. During this time, only one person per shift needs to enable the operation of the machine by making the connection to the cows's udders. Instead of hundreds of milkmaids, it appears that God now milks the cows for his people through one milker, one machine operator, and a network of engineers and machine design specialists.

Second, economic historians estimate that 75% of the workforce was devoted to non-automated farming during Luther's time.[14] About 70% of the workforce was still devoted to farming about four centuries later, based

on better data from the Census Bureau of the United States in 1900. In 2016, under 2% of the workforce was engaged in farming. Further, it goes without stating that the quality of life of a 2016 farmer with computerized mechanization and diesel-powered equipment are orders of magnitude better than his 16th century counterpart. Over a shorter period, manufacturing jobs constituted 50% of the labor force in the United States in 1940, but dropped to 20% by 2016 and is unlikely ever climb back to the former level. Even so, manufacturing output (measured both in physical quantities of goods and constant-dollar amounts of value) has more than tripled over this 75 year time period. This increasing output and standard of living has lifted millions out of poverty, but to the point of this discussion, has also eliminated almost all the jobs for milkmaids, farmers, and even most of the jobs for craftspeople or manufacturing workers.

Even specialty workers from Luther's day, such as executioners, have disappeared or changed radically in form. For example, what Luther described as a calling to be a hangman was at the time an enduring occupation with a regular stream of executions in addition to the occasional burning of heretical books and related tasks as assigned.[15] In 2018 in the United States, capital punishment has been outlawed in many states and is increasingly rare in others.

To extend this analysis, even jobs (or vocations?) created since the time of Luther likely will not exist much longer. Specifically, though many are enamored of the idea of self-driving cars, artificial intelligence and improving sensor technology likely will first eliminate the occupation of driving trucks. Most trucks trace the same industrial route every day, making the mapping and programming task much easier. Even cross-country trucks which use varying routes feel a greater pressure to replace drivers (who must sleep) with automation (which does not stop). After the legal hurdles are overcome, four million workers are likely to be replaced with machines that will result in lower costs for faster transits and fewer accidents. While society in general will benefit, one must ponder what happens when truck drivers join the milkmaids. What will happen when taxi drivers and Uber/Lyft drivers join the milkmaids? What happens when airports no longer need parking lots for thousands of cars when passengers can simply send them home to wait several days before the return flight, or for auto workers when these airline passengers decide that an individually-owned car is no longer a necessity?

These trends, which reach back to Luther's time but have increased tenfold since the industrial revolution, almost assuredly will extend beyond the manual disciplines through artificial intelligence to radiologists, lawyers, and other service jobs. Granted, there are offsets that slow this trend somewhat. Though retail jobs at malls are declining, jobs at Amazon fulfillment centers and internet distribution warehouses are skyrocketing. In addition, since these newer jobs tend to be more productive because automation augments human skillsets, workers enjoy higher paychecks and consumers appreciate lower prices. Nevertheless, it is far from clear that the net effect of these changes is good for the milkmaids, for all the rest of society, or for any individual local church.

How are People Responding to These Changes (Inside and Outside the Church)?

Though few people take a comprehensive economic, theological, and historical perspective, most are aware of the personal or "pocketbook" effects of these trends. Using broad categories, people tend to react in four different ways: despair, sloth, anxiety, and idolatry.[16]

On the negative side, some people observe the dramatic losses of jobs—more than 90% of farmers, 60% of factory workers, and so forth—and despair of ever finding meaningful employment. This can make choosing a major in college an overwhelming task. A dystopian future comes to mind where people with jobs enjoy increasing luxury produced by robotics while masses of people starve when their jobs are replaced.

Some also drift beyond despair into sloth and laziness. In reality, most people no longer need to work in order to eat (contra 2 Thess 3:10) and can subsist for a long time couch surfing or in the basement of a parent. Epic video games grow in attraction as they often provide the semblance of productivity and meaningful accomplishment. Whatever the cause, the labor force participation rate in the United States has been drifting downward for more than a decade.

On the other hand, some people focus on the new industries that arise to displace the old ways of working and yet are overwhelmed by the mind-boggling potential being unleashed in the world. Such people are often afraid of making decisions that close the door on future options. For undergraduates,

this can feel like the agony of opportunities that have never before been experienced by a single generation, especially for educated young women. In Luther's time, whether one was content or not in an occupation, there was little opportunity to ever expect a change.

Along these lines, such amazing opportunities can tempt people to idolize a job as the most important part of life, often leading to the neglect of other clear parts of their calling from God to be a father or mother, son or daughter, church member and so forth. Labor in the 16th century could be so exhausting and mind-numbingly dull that family and leisure were always a better alternative, even a luxury good. Today many can be consumed even with an otherwise enjoyable job to the extent that it crowds out time for family and rest.

What Should the Church Do?

This article is intended to challenge the church, and theologians particularly, to study anew and advance the doctrine of vocation with the same intensity that has been devoted to the doctrines of the gospel and the Scripture since the Reformation. Specifically, such an investigation would begin with keeping the foundational elements from Luther on vocation that were both biblical and timeless. An appropriate analysis would mean going beyond Luther's doctrine of vocation, not because he was completely wrong or because the Bible can be changed, but because the culture and surround the church has changed by orders of magnitude. Specifically, the church should think biblically along five trajectories as follows.

First, believers must maintain Luther's high view of vocation and a broad perspective of life. A task, job, or occupation is a calling from God, but each individual calling includes much more permanent callings from God to be a spouse, parent, and church member. What one does for money in the marketplace is only a subset of a calling from God. It would be helpful to refine the specific aspects of the changing concept of a "job" (a relatively new idea in history that often includes cubicles, health and retirement benefits, and regular pay in cash rather than goods) to understand the essential elements of a calling. Is it the skill set (i.e., college degree), the opportunity (access and an open door), the specific firm or industry, the type of work (free lancers), a personal passion, a high salary, or another factor that indicates a

calling from God to a particular job. Further, do these change over time as a person ages and the economy matures, or might certain elements stay as constant as the callings of marriage and family?

Second, the church also needs to develop a biblical understanding of leisure, especially updating the writings of the Puritans. The economist Lord Maynard Keynes appears increasingly prescient in his prediction before World War II that in the next century people would only need and choose to work about 15 hours a week to maintain a high standard of living. His prediction seems to be trending toward fulfillment as the average workweek in the United States has decreased to 34 hours, or about four days a week in a trajectory toward Keynes' two days. As Christians are able to enjoy more and more leisure time, the importance of a biblical understanding of rest is multiplied. Further, the church needs to develop a better understanding of the value of avocational time as well as volunteer and other important work without remuneration.[17]

Third, churches need to teach beyond the *instrumental* value of work to better understand the *intrinsic* value of work. During the 16th century, most people labored primarily because the *instrumental* value of work was necessary to earn a living or even survive. The doctrine of vocation of the Reformers highlighted the *intrinsic* value of work related to the image of God in human beings and obedience to the Creation Mandate. In contrast, Aristotle had previously taught that work had no intrinsic value relative to contemplative thought and the pursuits of the mind, and only the instrumental value of work for producing food and goods was needed to be performed by slaves. As current economic trends continue at the outset of the 21st century, the *instrumental* value of work is dwindling such that the *intrinsic* value of "serving one another in love" must grow in importance (Gal 5:13-14). Therefore the church should turn the perspective of Aristotle along with the common understanding of work on his head. God's command to the Israelites was clear: Six days you shall labor and do all of your work and on the seventh day you shall rest (Exod 20:8-10). While many Sabbatarian discussions have explored what work should not be done on the Sabbath, the focus should also be on the broad command of what working means for the other six days. This speaks to people who despair of finding a job because God through his grace will always provide the means to obey his direct commands.

The Bible also speaks to those who despair to the point of abandoning

work and succumbing to laziness. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, "For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: 'The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat.' We hear that some among you are idle and disruptive. They are not busy; they are busybodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the food they eat" (2 Thess 3:10-12). Paul was able to implicitly rely on the instrumental requirement of work to motivate people, while the church in the future will need to rely more on the motivation of the intrinsic value of work.

Fourth, the church can emphasize Luther's horizontal aspect of vocation; our work is God's way of acting in the world to feed, clothe and serve his people. Indeed, it is appropriate to utilize eyes of faith to see that God indeed gives milk to little children through the vocation of the one milker, the machine designer, and the collection of engineers and support people. As Paul wrote to the Galatians, "You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love" (Gal 5:13). To this end, understanding the tools of economics helps people to see and appreciate the network of relationships behind even the simplest of everyday goods. The price signal generated by the forces of supply and demand is increasingly essential as a means to seeing such truth, as for example, lower pay for milkmaids was an indication that the entire occupation was fading in importance over the last century.

Fifth, the church can practically help people in transition through the traditional mercy ministries of the body of Christ. The economic disruption of losing a job was much less when the primary attribute needed for work was a strong back and a willing spirit. When work on the non-automated farm decreased, working to lay railroad tracks was an alternative requiring little retraining, digging and mining were also close substitutes. Unfortunately today, if a truck driver (a skilled and certified occupation) is displaced by artificial intelligence software and advanced sensors, generally the driver cannot immediately take up a position as a software programmer or a sensor design engineer. Even if aptitude would allow, such retraining often takes several years and a concurrent period with limited income. Accordingly, the church can step in with career encouragement and even coaching, as well as financial help for those working toward self-sufficiency in a new occupation and in a more complex economy.

Summary and Conclusions

We can be grateful to Luther for the Reformation's retrieval of the gospel, scripture and vocation. The church needs to take the lead in thinking biblically about vocation utilizing the tools of economics for insights to serve Christians in an exponentially changing economic environment. Through future research, the church needs to biblically define the very concept of a "job" because the ongoing task of theologians in every generation is to apply eternal biblical truths to an ever-changing cultural situation.

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3 Roberty C. Allen, "Economic structure and agricultural productivity in Europe, 1300-1800," *European Review of Economic History*, 4:1 (2000): 6-7.

4 For a brief overview of this new dairy technology, see the "Out & About" report from Chuck Rhodes of ABC27 News found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EC_FMhLD-io.

5 For a deeper analysis, the reader is directed to the classic work on this topic by Gustaf Wingren, *Luther on Vocation* (trans. Carl C. Rasmussen; Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2004), previously published by Muhlenberg Press, 1957.

6 Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the "Spirit" of Capitalism and Other Writings* (trans. Peter Baehr and Gordon C. Wells; New York: Penguin Group, 2002) 24-25, 67-202, originally published *Protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus*, 1905.

7 Wingren, *Luther on Vocation*, 2-5.

8 *Exposition of Psalm 147*, quoted in Gustaf Wingren, *Luther on Vocation, 138.*

9 Wingren, *Luther on Vocation, 8-9.*

10 Martin Luther, *Temporal Authority: To What Extent it Should Be Obeyed*, ISN Primary Resources in International Affairs, 3, http://www.socalsynod.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/606.pdf.

11 Martin Luther, *Whether Soldiers, Too, Can be Saved*, trans. Charles M. Jacobs, 3, http://www.rockrohr.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Luther-whether-soldiers-too-can-be-saved.pdf.

12 The data and description in the following paragraphs are based on the author's personal observations at Fair Oakes Farms at 856 N 600 E near Fair Oaks, IN. The website for this dairy farming operation is www.fofarms.com.

13 For the sake of brevity, this interdisciplinary analysis is unable to elaborate on the system that cools the 100 degree milk down to 33 degrees Fahrenheit in under ten minutes to inhibit the growth of microbes and to improve the flavor. In other words, the machine is not only faster than the milkmaids, it produces a higher quality milk that is both safer and tastier to drink.

14 Allen, "Economic structure and agricultural productivity," 6-7.

15 For a deeper look at this vocation in medieval Germany, see Joel F. Harrington *The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2013).

16 For example, these data are based on an observational sample of undergraduate students at a growing Christian university in the Rocky Mountain region.

17 For example, economists are consistently amazed at the enormous (but not academically acceptable) project of assembling the information contained at Wikipedia, which was accomplished primarily through the voluntary efforts of thousands of people.

The Work and Faith of Theological Scholars: Converging Lessons from James 2 and Luther's Doctrine of Vocation

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The second chapter of James and Martin Luther's doctrine of vocation have much in common that is relevant to work, vocation and human flourishing in the Christian tradition. James and Luther address ethical issues concerning the theology of Christian life; both expect good works will flow from one's faith to one's neighbors. Theologians, however, who by vocation write and talk about faith, are often judged by others and themselves as duplicitously lacking the requisite ethical action as called for in James 2 as if their work is tantamount to a "verbal exercise."[1] This article examines the vocation of the theological scholar and the ethical call for good works as an extension of faith in both James 2 and Luther's doctrine of vocation. While theological scholars may doubt if scholarly work alone satisfies the good works required by James to enliven faith, Luther's doctrine of vocation, embracing diverse and unique vocational skills among believers, implicitly affirms the good works of theological scholarship creatively designed by God to serve unique neighbors.

The Demise of Theologians or Theology?

Why might theologians need another perspective from which to examine their faith? Kevin Vanhoozer writes, "[t]theologians [do not] get much respect these days, whether in the academy, society or the church."[2] In the next sentence, he switches from the topic of theologians to the topic of theology, and queries, "Why are people saying awful things about theology?"[3] He implies that theologians do not get much respect because of theology itself, reasoning that the major factor is "the demise of doctrine." He clarifies that the problem is not with doctrine but with its picture in contemporary society, which has unnecessarily marginalized and diminished it.[4] Nevertheless, he argues, "Christian doctrine is a vital necessity for doing church, but also for human flourishing."[5]

If society has marginalized doctrine, it is understandable why theologians may harbor doubts about the usefulness of their work, and wonder what exactly they *do* that is necessary and vital for human flourishing? Andrew Wilson reflects, "Few scholars, at least in theological circles, are motivated by the question, "what shall we *do* [emphasis added]?" reasoning that research generates questions, which generate further research, and that "pragmatic concerns are ancillary at best."[6] More derisively, John Gunson describes academic theologians as those "not required to convince anyone of the validity of their views, only to be able to argue persuasively for them in an academic setting and in academically acceptable terms."[7]

These opinions reflect a broad concern that even theological research, falling short of some necessary but ambiguous pragmatic standard, leaves theologians holding mere words and theories. If theologians do not *do* doctrine, must legitimate scholarly work integrate theology and practice? Accordingly, Millard Erickson notes that the Association of Theological Schools has concluded "the number one problem in theological education [is] lack of integration between the theoretical and practical disciplines."[8] In response, Erickson, as seminary dean, instituted a school requirement out of his conviction that theoreticians of theology must practice skills in mentoring others:

> To receive tenure, full-time faculty members whose own educational preparation did not include all of the areas their students were required to study would have

> to acquire such competencies themselves, and that those who had never engaged in full-time ministry must obtain ministry experience, on a concurrent basis.[9]

The assumption is that theoreticians must do more than doctrine; they should have ministry experience gaining practical skills mentoring others, and that mentoring students is not sufficient. However, mindful that the practical tasks of seminary should not be abandoned, A. J. Conyers views the purpose of seminary to help "people think about life in view of the end."[10] He fears that rather than a loss of pragmatism, academia, including seminary, is gradually losing the vocabulary and syntax necessary for speaking meaningfully "about nonmaterial values, and non-pragmatic affection."[11] Thus, he encourages more theoretical contemplation of the world in academia and among seminarians, not less.[12]

Duplicitous Concerns of James: Work and Faith of Theologians

As noted above, there is an underlying expectation that theologians must do more than theology or theoretical contemplation to be useful and practical to anyone. The Epistle of James speaks to these concerns, and ironically, the letter that scholars have criticized as lacking theology causes concern for theologians.[13] James's argument in 2:14-26 is derived from the Abrahamic narratives which teach that faith and works belong together.[14] Compared to any other NT book, James is more concerned with Christian ethics and doing good works for our neighbors.[15] For James, good works and faith are inseparable. Regarding James 2, Lorin Cranford states, "believing most ultimately affects one's lips and hands."[16]

James is troubled by duplicity; people "who claim to have faith but have no deeds to back it up."[17] He is concerned with speech more "than any other single topic in his letter."[18] James specifically mentions the vocation of teachers, and professional speakers who, as one commentator describes, are in a rather "hazardous profession," and will be judged more harshly.[19] James is concerned with speech that takes the form of pious claims without accompanying pious deeds. This kind of faith is dead if it claims to believe one thing but has no actions to substantiate one's commitment. James addresses two opposing false theologies regarding whether faith can be separated from works, or whether faith is a creedal confession.[20] Writing on James 2, John

Hart warns, "There is one group of Christians who are most susceptible to the self-deception of talking our faith and not *doing* [emphasis added] it. Teachers of biblical truth!"[21]

Hart, internalizing James 2, writes, "the irony of this is that evangelical teachers and preachers who need to learn this truth most desperately are the very ones who have obscured it the most. By reducing James to a theological treatment on the nature of faith, it is easier for us to avoid the real unsettling challenges of James to help others like the poor."[22] Hart continues with increasing self-disclosure: "Even my own writing on the obligation to move beyond merely talking our faith does not go beyond talking my faith. While I may find a sense of fulfillment from the Lord in exhorting others to do good works, I am not by that writing and teaching released from the obligation to be engaged in good deeds myself."[23] He disassociates theoretical contemplation, writing and teaching, the tasks of his vocation, with good works. His comment illustrates how a theological scholar devalues and minimizes his own professional tasks as lacking the ethical action required of James by more narrowly defining good works such as helping the poor.

One might, however, dismiss James 2:14–18 as exegetically problematic. Commentators agree there are problems with every interpretative solution.[24] On the surface, James seems to contradict Paul with a works-based salvation, given the negative answer expected, according to the rules of Greek grammar,[25] to the question in 2:14, "Can that faith save him?" (μὴ δύναται ἡ πίστις σῶσαι αὐτόν;).[26] This is especially relevant if "save" is interpreted to mean eternal life, and "faith" is interpreted to mean something beyond mere intellectual assent such as true faith minus works. One commentator queries, "[i]s it merely 'right belief' expressed in a confession of doctrine or is it essentially practical, requiring 'deeds' to authenticate its genuineness?"[27] There are issues involving textual variants, lack of Greek punctuation obscuring who and for how many verses someone is speaking, making interpretation difficult. Some say it is easier to decipher what the passage does not mean.[28] Most agree that Christian faith will bear fruit, and apart from James's soteriology, James, in effect, is still saying, if you do not show me your good deeds, I cannot see your faith. You can have your theology, but what else are you *doing*?

James 2:18–19: Doctrine of Demons and Theologians

Verse 19 distinguishes faith and works by referring to the belief of demons, and has been regarded as the "preeminent argument that true faith comprises more than a superficial, intellectual 'faith.'"[29] Hart says, "the appeal is so widespread that it is difficult to find an author holding to the viewpoint who does not employ 2:19 in this way."[30] For some, this passage also conjures the vocation of theologian. Either theologians are perceived as lacking integration of theology and practice, faith and practice, or they are compared to the demons in 2:19 who claim to believe in God as monotheists but do nothing else. For example, Douglas Moo writes that demons are regarded as "among the most 'orthodox' of theologians," and that they "perfectly illustrate the poverty of verbal profession."[31] Moo, easing into a personal admission, first quotes Mitton who says, "it is a good thing to possess an accurate theology, but it is unsatisfactory unless the good theology also possesses us."[32] Then Moo admits, "[t]he warning applies especially to people like me who study and teach theology day in and day out. Those of us in ministry must beware the danger that our theology––accurate and well stated as it might be––degenerates likewise into a verbal exercise."[33] Here a commentator on James 2 casts doubt on his routine scholarly work. J. I. Packer admits that doctrinal study can become a danger to spiritual life unless one's motive is to know God better.[34] It is unusual to find self-reflection in a commentary; however, Moo's comments are one way to ensure academic theologians are focused on "knowing God" better via their work.

While not referring to James 2, but as if speaking to theologians about the poverty of verbal expression, it is rather disconcerting to read Gerald Hiestand's words when presenting before the Society for the Advancement of Ecclesial Theology in 2009. He says pointedly, "it does not take one long to note the difference between the earnest, pastoral tone of a Calvin or Luther, and the more 'disinterested' tone one often finds in a contemporary evangelical journal of theology."[35] Similarly, in seminary there is an underlying belief that scholarship creates the danger of being prideful, emotionally disconnected from biblical mandates, and disinterested in actually living out biblical commands. For example, while writing this paper, one professor, intending encouraging sentiment, benignly emailed me, "I hope that your paper can reflect the best of academics and the passion of the practitioner."

"The 'passion of the practitioner'"? I queried. What about the passion of the academic? Why the dichotomy? Has theory and doctrine so annihilated passionate faith from scholars that it must be borrowed from others? Who counts as a practitioner, or is that simply a different attitude toward the same work? The same semester in a systematic theology class discussing the attributes of God, a classmate argued that one succumbed to sinful desires by discussing God in an "overly academic" manner, believing such speech distorted God's gift of human language. I responded that "his notion of overly academic was subjective, and agreed that intentionally creating the aura of intellectual sophistication is sinful pride. However, equating sinful desires with 'overly academic' is insulting to scholars, and widens the gap between practical ministry and scholarship." This particular discussion, along with the confessions of guilt by scholars writing on James 2, prompted a search for a benevolent perspective to understand the faith and work of theologians.

The faith of scholars cannot be assessed by academic tone, or associated with James's orthodox demons in 2:19 who believe "God is one" but do nothing more, or equated to a mere verbal exercise without devaluing scholarly work and academic traditions, which have no bearing on the validity of one's faith. Genuinely faithful theologians who are pondering, writing and teaching doctrine are not intellectualizing creed at the expense of works done in faith. Rather intellectual work can sufficiently encompass both faith and action, a position which is clarified by Luther's doctrine of vocation.

Another Perspective: Luther's Doctrine of Vocation

What actions are proper for theologians who speak and write about God as a vocation? Luther's doctrine of vocation sidesteps the problems of theory versus practice. It views one's unique talents as gifts from God designed providentially for a person's life which are directed outward, not toward God, but toward neighbors on earth.[36] Gustaf Wingren notes how Luther found special support in his oath when appointed doctor of theology, believing that although we are all alike before God in faith, the tasks of our vocations fit unique circumstances ordained by God, and as such, all work will differ greatly.[37] An underlying assumption of Luther's doctrine is that vocation does not constitute good works for the glory of God, but for the good of one's neighbor.[38] Thus, faith is directed toward a heavenly realm, whereas

vocation is focused in the present.[39] However, it is through a believer's faith that love is focused on one's neighbor,[40] bearing the cross for the sake of others out of love for Christ.[41] For Luther, Christ is present in the works of vocation and allows faith to emerge as one carries the cross of vocation. Faith and works are inseparable; if a person works for others, he needs God's help which drives him to faith.[42] However, Luther is clear that all works in vocation are not equated with a relationship with God, through which good works flow to neighbors. Indeed, he believes one should not be anxious that one's works are not sufficiently righteous.[43]

Wingren interprets Luther to mean that faith does not require specific work because faith is demonstrated by doing work best suited for each moment and occasion."[44] If one good work is as good as another, believers should not compare their works to others. Ethical work lies behind the ordinary tasks of vocational life, and right ethics is not found in specific outward behavior imposed on all.[45] Luther's doctrine demonstrates how good works fit practically into the life of the justified believer, not as works of the law (Gal 2:16) but as an inevitable extension of an acting living faith relatively consistent with James. If someone has been called, for example, to be a theologian, God's purpose is providentially fulfilled in them particularly when the good works of theologians are for the good of one's neighbors.[46]

The Theologian's Neighbors

Who are the neighbors of theologians? This constituency includes other theologians, colleagues, administrators, editors, publishers, assistants, pastors, students, lay people reading theological works, and the church at large. While the theologian may prefer abstract ideas, Gene Veith explains that good works and moral actions are located in "the real, messy world of everyday life, in the conflicts and responsibilities of the world."[47] Yet, is the espousal of doctrine messy enough? As if to legitimize the work of theological scholars, Veith adds, "I write books and articles and teach college students."[48] Certainly, conflicts and responsibilities are part of teaching and writing. Given the focus on individual differences, the doctrine of vocation validates the theoretical work of the theologian within their own academic social location.

Thus, when theologian Hart laments earlier, "[e]ven my own writing on the obligation to move beyond merely talking our faith does not go beyond

talking my faith,"[49] in light of Luther's doctrine, Hart *is* doing good deeds by the activities of his own vocation through theoretical contemplation, writing, teaching and presenting papers. The doctrine of vocation frees him from the guilt that he is not doing good works, and allows him to view his unique contribution in the way God works through him. Similarly, when the previously mentioned classmate argues that one gives into sinful desires by discussing God in an "overly academic" manner, academic language can be viewed as a unique gift allowing communication with other colleagues and students, rather than distorting God's gift of human language, as relevant neighbors are served.

Vocation and Sin: A Theologian of Glory vs. A Theologian of the Cross

For Luther, both good works, as well as sin, are done in vocation. As Veith notes, sin can be viewed as "a violation of one's calling," and "every vocation has its unique temptations and capacity for sin."[50] Accordingly, Luther discusses two ways of being a theologian: "a theologian of glory," leading toward sin, and "a theologian of the cross, leading toward Christ."[51] Luther explains, "A theologian of glory calls good evil and evil good."[52] When Luther first introduced this concept, he named it *theologia illusoria* meaning "to make believe, play at, or self-amusement" belittling the Aristotelian scholastics.[53] Vanhoozer further explains how the theologian of glory "relies on his own capabilities," "succumbs to pride, the ultimate intellectual vice," and is consequently "less likely to arrive at truth."[54] Timothy Wengert, referring to the theologian of glory, adds "this make-believe theology turns everything upside down by refusing to connect suffering or the cross to God and God's will."[55]

Luther's theologian of glory relies on the theologian's own abilities or genius, building theology on their expectations of God, rather than God's revelation of himself on the cross. Luther is aligned with Paul in 1 Corinthians 1 who contrasts between the wisdom of humanity and the wisdom of God. Wengert asserts, "however often theologians agree that they are dealing with second-order discourse in theology, the temptation still lurks to make that discourse worth something before God."[56] Wengert eloquently explains, "[i]n the theological enterprise, there is no greater temptation to sin than this. Evil lurks, not in that we think and speak about God, but, rather, in

that we imagine that our thoughts and words determine to some degree the outcome of our encounter with God."[57] He continues "[o]ur temptation is always to have faith in theology or, even worse, faith in faith," adding that "any claim that theology brings a blessing surely glitters with glory."[58]

In contrast to a theologian of glory, Luther explains how a theologian of the cross calls "the thing which it actually is," referring to those who look to the cross for the revelation of Christ, and build their theology in light of God's revelation of himself on the cross.[59] Thus, theologians of the cross exist as God intends, understanding life and righteousness in terms of the cross as revealed by Christ, and not by man's image of God. Nevertheless, even though a theologian of the cross brings good news about God's desire to save the suffering, the theologian usually does not offer solutions.[60] Wengert cautions that the "elitist" advice of theologians seeking to help at a practical level is often contextually misguided potentially causing greater harm. [61]

Helmut Thielicke illustrates a theologian operating within his own glory, and a kingdom of Satan ruled by sinful self-promotion exemplifying how a theologian should not help his neighbor. He imagines a young theologian answering questions of a shy layman using technical terms like "synoptic tradition," "hermeneutical principle," "realized eschatology," and "presupposition," which he describes as a form of shock therapy.[62] As an alternative to shock therapy, Vanhoozer portrays theologians as doctors and farmers growing healthy disciples.[63] As doctors of the church, he compares doctrine to a health-giving tonic—in fact the "only reliable tonic to the toxins of worldliness, meaningless and hopelessness."[64] "Doctors of the church," declares Vanhoozer, "prescribe doctrine to awaken those who are sleepwalking their way through life to what is really going on."[65] He compares the theologian or teacher of doctrine as the church's primary care physician.[66] Vanhoozer argues that the prime constituency for the theologian is not the academy but the church.[67] As doctors of the church, he argues that theologians serve the church by helping pastors understand truth, and the goodness and beauty of Christ, and in turn, "the sermon is lifesaving surgery on the body of Christ."[68] Thus, Vanhoozer's metaphors illustrate how theologians might conceptualize the integration of faithful doctrine and good works addressed by both James and Luther. However, even the goal to help pastors faithfully integrate doctrine suggests that academic traditions are secondary at best. If the primary audience of theologians is not a member of the academic

community, what values lies in addressing fellow academics? Regardless of whether academics directly address pastors or laity, they serve the ultimate goal of integrating faithful doctrine through peer review and standards for evidence that contribute to scholarly debates, which as a body, shape doctrines taught by the church.

Kelly Kapic, specifically addressing theologians, also integrates the spirit of both James and Luther by the term "anthroposensitive theology" meaning "a refusal to divorce theological considerations from practical human application, since theological reflections are always interwoven with anthropological concerns."[69] Citing James 1:27, Kapic affirms, "theology must reflect God's compassion and care for our neighbors" particularly "the most vulnerable and in need,"[70] warning "theology that lacks compassion and action is no theology at all."[71] He continues, "[s]uch compassion is not just an important civic virtue."[72] It "protects against a false worship" reflecting "divided hearts and divided minds" which concern both James and Luther."[73] Although theologians of the cross are preferable to theologians of glory, Wengert nevertheless cautions that the "cross has often functioned in theology as a sneaky way to excuse social structures that oppress the poor and weak."[74] Kapic would agree, affirming, "neglect of love for our neighbor confines theology to a pursuit of personal peace, self-improvement and a detached spirituality" that "God equates with adultery(Is 1:21)."[75] Thus, whatever actions theologians chose for their vocation, taking care of the needy is still a responsibility in which everyone shares regardless of specific vocation.

Conclusion

Both James and Luther encourage believers to serve others. While Luther prefers the notion that one is not working for God, but rather for others as his instruments,[76] his concept of vocation offers theological scholars a unique perspective regarding good works also demanded by James. In effect, Luther's doctrine of vocation assuages the guilt theological scholars might experience reading James, fearing their specific work fails to demonstrate a living faith (Jas 2:17). Under Luther's doctrine, mundane and unique vocational tasks of believers qualify as good works, not necessarily for God's sake, but more importantly, for the good of unique earthly neighbors providentially placed by God. In a sense, Luther's doctrine clarifies the sanctification process at

a practical level for believers through the good works of unique vocational tasks regardless of how one interprets James's notion of works and faith. One is obliged to help their neighbor whether one interprets James 2 to mean works justify, or works sanctify; or whether one defines faith as mere creed, or active, justifying and saving. Accordingly, theological scholars, called by God, do good works by serving others through intellectual tasks defined by the academy which ideally reflect the spirit and actions of a faithful Christian life and imitate Christ.[77]

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[52] *LW* 31:225-26.
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[54] Kevin J. Vanhoozer, "The Wisdom of Angels: Brokenness and Wholeness in the Academy and Church," *Pictures at a Theological Exhibition: Scenes of the Church's Worship, Witness and Wisdom* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2016), 291.
[55] Wengert, "Peace, Peace...Cross, Cross," 201.
[56] Ibid., 192.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.
[59] *LW* 31:129-30, 212, 227.
[60] Wengert, "Peace, Peace...Cross, Cross," 203.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Helmut Thielicke, *A Little Exercise for Young Theologians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1962), 13-14.
[63] Vanhoozer, "What are Theologians For?" 69-71.
[64] Ibid., 67.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid., 68-69.
[67] Ibid., 69.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Kapic, *A Little Book for New Theologians*, 47. See also Kelly M. Kapic, *Communication with God: The Divine and the Human in the Theology of John Owen* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 33-44, quoted in Kapic, *A Little Book for New Theologians*, 47.
[70] Ibid., 82.

71 Ibid., 83-84.
72 Ibid., 86.
73 Ibid., 86-87.
74 Wengert, "Peace, Peace...Cross, Cross," 192.
75 Kapic, *A Little Book for New Theologians*, 89.
76 Veith, *God at* Work, 151.
77 Special thanks to Myron Kauk, Thomas Breimaier, Gary Colledge, Ryan Heinsch, David Hudson, Isaac Johnson, and Carl Sanders for reviewing a draft of this article and making numerous suggestions.

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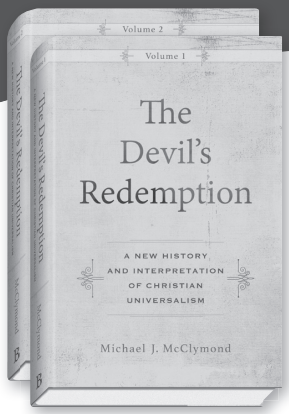

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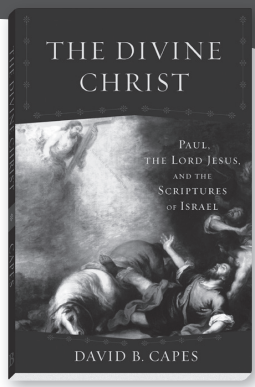

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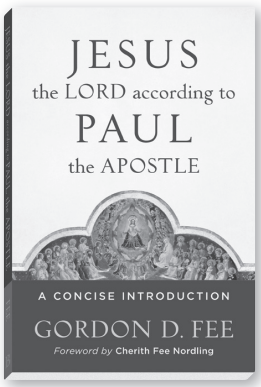

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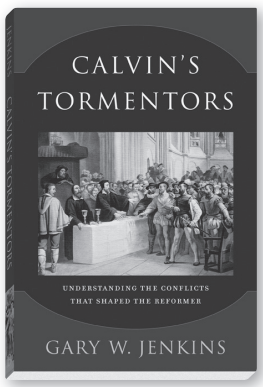

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Do Not Love the World: Breaking the Evil Enchantment of Worldliness (A Sermon on 1 John 2:15–17)[1]

Andrew David Naselli

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In C. S. Lewis's brilliant address "The Weight of Glory," he talks about our "desire for our own far-off country." Then he asks,

> Do you think I am trying to weave a spell? Perhaps I am; but remember your fairy tales. Spells are used for breaking enchantments as well as for inducing them. And you and I have need of the strongest spell that can be found to wake

> us from the evil enchantment of worldliness which has been laid upon us for nearly a hundred years.[2]

This sermon is about breaking "the evil enchantment of worldliness."[3] The text is 1 John 2:15–17:

> 15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. 17 And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.[4]

That text is familiar to many Christians, but let's see if we can ask some probing questions about it that will help us understand and apply it better. Let's ask and briefly answer twelve questions.

1. How does this passage fit in the letter's argument?

This is what I think the theological message of 1 John is: *You can know that you have eternal life in three interlocked ways: (1) believing in Jesus, (2) living righteously, and (3) loving believers*. The burden of the letter is that you can have assurance of salvation. And the way you can have assurance is by a threefold test:

1) Faith is the doctrinal test. God's children believe orthodox teachings about Christ.
2) Righteousness is the moral test. God's children live righteously.
3) Love is the social test. God's children love one another.

Those are three ways you can know that you have eternal life, and they appear over and over throughout the letter. They are inseparable: right doctrine goes with right living.

First John 2:15–17 focuses on the moral test. God's children live righteously. God's children live in a way that shows they love the Father and not the world. They do God's will.

2. What is this passage's main idea?

The first sentence is the main idea: "Do not love the world or the things in the world." Everything else supports that main command. But you can't obey that command unless you know what it means to love the world. How do you know if you are loving the world? We need to probe what the words *love* and *world* mean.

3. What does "love" mean? (v. 15)

The premier dictionary for Greek words of the NT time is BDAG, and it lists three senses for this Greek verb for *love*—ἀγαπάω:

1) to have a warm regard for and interest in another, *cherish, have affection for, love*
2) to have high esteem for or satisfaction with someth., *take pleasure in*
3) to practice/express love, *prove one's love*

Mark Ward wrote his PhD dissertation on "Paul's Positive Religious Affections," and he devotes a chapter to the Greek words for love with a focus on ἀγαπάω. He evaluates BDAG's three senses for ἀγαπάω and concludes, "BDAG would do better to have a single composite sense for ἀγαπάω: 'To have a warm regard for and interest in, a high esteem for or satisfaction with, *cherish, have affection for, take pleasure in, love*.'"[5] That makes sense to me because whatever love means in 1 John 2:15, it seems to mean the same thing whether the object is a person ("the Father") or a thing ("the world or the things in the world").

John—in his typical black-and-white style—asserts that loving the Father and loving the world are mutually exclusive. You can't love both simultaneously.

So what does "love" mean in v. 15? It means to cherish or have affection for or take pleasure in. Do not *cherish* the world. Do not *have affection for* the world. Do not *take pleasure in* the world.

And that leads to our next question:

4. What does "world" mean? (v. 15)

BDAG lists eight senses for the Greek word for *world*—κόσμος.[6] *World* in 1 John 2:15 fits sense #7: "the system of human existence in its many aspects." BDAG elaborates with an excellent sub-definition: "*the world,* and everything that belongs to it, appears as that which is hostile to God, i.e. lost in sin, wholly at odds w. anything divine, ruined and depraved."

We know *world* means that in this passage because v. 16 specifies what "all that is in the world" is—"the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life." This world is hostile to God. It is anti-God.

As John says at the end of this letter, "the whole world lies in the power of the evil one" (1 John 5:19). As John Frame puts it, "*World* is the bad part of culture."[7] So the command "Do not love the world" means "Do not take pleasure in the anti-God culture that permeates this fallen world. Do not take pleasure in worldly ways of thinking and acting. Do not take pleasure in the bad part of culture."

5. If it is sinful for us to love the world, then why isn't it sinful for God to love the world? (v. 15)

John 3:16 says, "God so loved the world …." That is beautiful grace. Yet it is not beautiful for us to love the world. If we love the world, then we don't love God. So how can God love the world without sinning?

The answer is that the word *world* means something different in those two statements:

1) In John 3:16, "God so loved the world" means that God had affection for *humanity in general*. (In John's Gospel, *world* typically refers to humans who are rebelling against the Creator.) When God loves the world, he unselfishly has affection for humanity in general. He has an unselfish saving stance toward humanity in general—people who are rebelling against their Creator.[8] That is praiseworthy.
2) In 1 John 2:15, "Do not love the world" means that we must not have affection for *the anti-God culture that permeates this fallen world*. We must not take pleasure in *worldly ways of thinking and acting*. When we love the world, we selfishly have affection for the anti-God culture that permeates this fallen world. We sinfully take pleasure in the bad

part of culture. That is not praiseworthy; that is damnable.

6. What are "the things in the world"? (v. 15)

My colleague Joe Rigney wrote a book with the title *The Things of Earth*.[9] He argues that we should love the things in the world. The subtitle of his book is *Treasuring God by Enjoying His Gifts*—or you could say, *Treasuring God by Loving the Things in the World*. Does that harmonize with the second half of v. 15? John commands, "Do not love … the things in the world." Rigney says we should love the things in the world.

I agree with both the apostle John and Professor Rigney. They are not contradicting each other because what John means by "the things in the world" is not what Rigney means by "the things of earth." Verse 16 specifies what "the things in the world" are. The phrase "the things in the world" in v. 15 points forward to what immediately follows.[10] So in this context, "the things in the world" = "all that is in the world" = "the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life." "The things in the world" here does not refer to what Rigney says we should love: the good things God created for us to enjoy as gifts from our brilliant and kind Creator.

7. How does the second half of v. 15 relate to the first half?

It gives a reason you should not love the world. Here's the logic:

- Command (first half of v. 15): "Do not love the world or the things in the world."
- Why not? Reason (second half of v. 15): "If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." And if "the love of the Father" in not in you, what does that imply? It implies that you are not one of the Father's children.

8. Does "the love of the Father" mean (a) the Father's love for us or (b) our love for the Father? (v. 15)

The Greek grammar is ambiguous, but I think the context indicates that "the love of the Father" means our love for the Father. The reason is that it

seems to parallel not only the first sentence but the previous clause in its own sentence.

- Previous sentence: "Do not love the world or the things in the world." The object of love is "the world or the things in the world."
- Previous clause: "If anyone loves the world." The object of love is "the world."
- So it makes sense that the object of love in this sentence is the Father: "the love of the Father" = "our love for the Father."

You can't have it both ways—you can't love the world and love the Father.

9. How does v. 16 relate to v. 15?

The next sentence (v. 16) begins with the word "For." This sentence explains the previous sentence: "If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." How can that be? Would you explain that, John? Why can't I simultaneously love the world and love the Father? Answer: "All that is in the world … is not from the Father but is from the world."

10. What are "the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and pride of life"? (v. 16)

The easy answer is that they specify what "all that is in the world" is. But it's much harder to specify exactly what each phrase means.

Some exegetes connect 1 John 2:16 with two other passages:[11]

Figure 1. Comparing Gen 3:6 and Luke 4:1–13 with 1 John 2:16

Gen 3:6: **The woman saw that …**	**Luke 4:1–13** **(cf. Matt 4:1–11)**	**1 John 2:16**
the tree was good for food	Command this stone to become bread.	The desires of the flesh

it was a delight to the eyes	If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.	The desires of the eyes
the tree was to be desired to make one wise	If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here.	Pride of life

I think there is something to that. I'm not certain that the three phrases in 1 John 2:16 line up exactly with Genesis 3 and Luke 4 or that John had these parallels in mind. But the three phrases seem to line up at least roughly with Genesis 3 and Luke 4, so the parallel seems legit to me.

I'm also not sure that the three phrases are three separate, parallel, comprehensive categories for all sin. Some exegetes think "the desires of the flesh" is a general category and that the next two phrases are subcategories. But it seems more likely that the three phrases are simply broad and overlapping ways to describe "all that is in the world."

Here's what I think each phrase means:

1) "The desires of the flesh" = what your body sinfully craves.[12] E.g., craving immoral sex or pornography or security in an idolatrous relationship or excessive food or drink. Our fundamental problem is not what is "out there" but what is "in here." It's not external but internal.
2) "The desires of the eyes" = what you sinfully crave when you see it. Basically, this is coveting—idolatrously wanting what you don't have.[13]
3) "Pride of life" = arrogance that your material possessions produce.

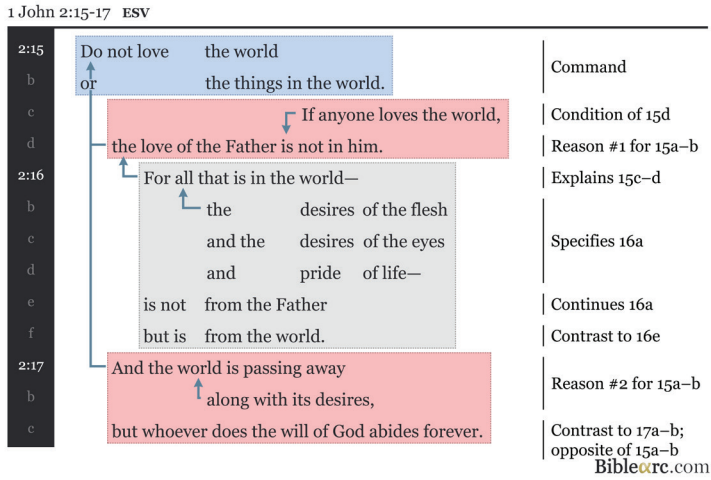
Consequently, you may strut around like a peacock, proudly displaying your fashionable clothes or latest gadget or your social status. Or you may not be a peacock, yet you still find your security in your raw talents or academic accomplishments or your savings account. You are proudly independent; you don't need God.

One Johannine scholar says of these three phrases, "Translating this as 'sex, money, and power' may not miss the mark by much."[14]

11. How does v. 17 relate to vv. 15–16?

I think v. 17 is a second reason for the main command in v. 15: "Do not love the world or the things in the world." Here is how I trace the argument of this passage (see Fig. 2):[15]

Figure 2. Phrase 1 John 2:15–17



Why shouldn't you love the world? Two reasons:

Reason 1: "If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (v. 15c–d).

Reason 2: "The world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever" (v. 17). The ungodly world seems so dazzling and flashy, but it's just a flash. It's short-lived. It's already passing away now and will fully pass away in the future. It won't last. It's already expiring. That's why you shouldn't love the world but should rather do the will of God. Doing God's will is the exact opposite of loving the world. Contrast how long the world will live on with how long you will live on if you do God's will: "The world is passing away," but "whoever does the will of God abides forever."

12. How should we apply this passage to how we live today?

Of the twelve questions we have asked about this passage, this one is the hardest for me to answer. I feel much more confident about understanding what the text means than I do about specifically applying it to how we live

today. Sometimes the simple question "So what?" is the hardest to answer.

One reason applying this passage feels so challenging to me is that from about age twelve to twenty-six I lived in evangelical cultures that self-identified as fundamentalist. Such cultures have a reputation for being preoccupied with strict rules about music, clothes, and entertainment. My family moved a lot while I was growing up, so I was in a lot of different fundamentalist cultures, and some of those cultures were relatively healthy and didn't fit the fundamentalist stereotype. But I have heard plenty of sermons that dogmatically applied "Do not love the world" to issues like why a rock beat in music is sinfully sensual at all times and in all cultures or why women should not wear pants or why Christians shouldn't go to movie theaters. So now I tend to react negatively when people dogmatically and specifically apply what "Do not love the world" must mean for all Christians.

But I need to be careful that I don't overreact. While I want to be sensitive to avoid legalism and to celebrate God's grace in Christ, I also want to be careful to avoid lawlessness that celebrates so-called grace in a selfish way.[16] So instead of dogmatically and specifically applying what "Do not love the world" must mean for you, I'm going to ask a series of questions that I hope will make you think.

I should acknowledge that three sources served me as I compiled this list of questions:

1) My graduate students. I enlisted the help of the seminary students at Bethlehem College & Seminary. I asked them to reply individually to this question: What are some specific ways you are tempted to love the world? About 25% of the graduate students thoughtfully answered that question for me.
2) R. Kent Hughes, *Set Apart: Calling a Worldly Church to a Godly Life* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2003).
3) C. J. Mahaney, ed., *Worldliness: Resisting the Seduction of a Fallen World* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008), with a foreword by John Piper.

One more thing: I wrestled with how to organize these questions. I thought about grouping them under three main headings that correspond to the three phrases in v. 16—"the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and pride of life"—perhaps under the broad headings of sex, money, and power. But those three phrases in v. 16 seem to overlap, especially "the desires of the flesh" and "the desires of the eyes." So instead of grouping my questions

under those three main headings, I'm grouping them under nine headings that I think are particularly relevant for us in our culture.

What are specific ways we are tempted to love the world? Here are some questions to consider.

1. Thinking about Sex

- Do you love the world when you think about sex?
- Do you think of sex as something beautiful and sacred that God created exclusively for a husband and wife, or have you conformed to how the world thinks about sex?
- Do you think that marriage and sex would be better if you or your spouse looked sexier according to the world's standards?
- How do you respond to the ubiquitous sexually explicit images that the world celebrates?
- Do you seek out such images?
- Do you take second and third looks when you suddenly encounter such images while going about your business?

2. Thinking about Sexuality and Gender

- There is a worldly revolution in our culture regarding sexuality and gender.17 The issues include the role of men and women in the home, abortion, contraceptives that cause abortions, sex outside of marriage, same-sex marriage, and transgenderism.
- Do you love the world when you think about sexuality and gender?

3. Using Money and Having Stuff

- There is a wise way to earn, spend, save, and invest money that glorifies God. But do you love the world when you earn, spend, save, and invest money?

- Are you letting the world influence what you think you need in order to be happy?
- Do you prioritize being comfortable and having "nice" things, or do you have a wartime-lifestyle that prioritizes giving generously and spreading the gospel locally and globally?
- Do you find your treasure in the gold of this world such as new iPhones or whatever the latest gadget is?
- Do you love the world when you plan your future?
- When you envision your future, does it look basically like the typical American dream?

4. Using Social Media

- Do you love the world when you use social media such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter?
- Are you so absorbed with social media that you are lazy in real life and neglect your responsibilities?
- When you see updates on social media, do they awaken the desires of your eyes with the result that you envy people and covet what they have?
- Do you vainly desire to have more "likes" and retweets and followers?
- Do you use social media to feed your ego?
- Do you mindlessly scroll through and absorb social media and thus let the anti-God culture constantly influence how you think about relationships and money and material possessions and social status and celebrities?
- Do you feel the pressure that you must always appear happy and successful on social media and thus create a façade of the real you?
- Do you view immodest pictures or post them of yourself or your spouse? (Immodest means "lacking humility or decency.")

5. Watching Shows, Movies, and Sports

- Do you love the world when you watch shows, movies, and sports?
- Do you watch so much that you don't have time for more important activities?
- When you have some free time, is your habit to spend that time entertaining yourself rather than doing something more edifying?
- Do you allow what you watch to subtly shape your worldview to become more worldly?
- Do you laugh at what God hates?
- Do you view sexually charged nudity and rationalize it as OK?

6. Reading Literature and Listening to Music

- Do you love the world when you read literature or listen to music?
- Do you rationalize evil storytelling or lyrics by calling it art?
- Do you enjoy stories that celebrate immorality—that lead your emotions to root for people to have immoral sex or to murder?

7. Eating and Exercising

- Do you love the world when you eat and exercise?
- What motivates your eating and exercise habits?
- Do you simply want to be healthy so you can look good and feel good and live a long time?
- Do you want to have a body that looks strong or that other people think is "hot"?

8. Relating to Other People

- Do you love the world when you relate to your family, friends, and neighbors?

- Do you buy the world's lie that life is all about you, that what matters most is that you do what's best for you, that you should "follow your heart" and "believe in yourself" as you selfishly pursue your dreams?
- Do you compare yourself to others and ruthlessly compete against them?
- Do you do everything you can to exalt yourself at the expense of others?
- Do you value having a prominent status more than you value serving others?
- Do you care more about what others think about you than you care about what God thinks about you?
- Do you shy away from sharing the good news about Jesus with people because you are afraid of what they will think of you?
- Do you do what you do because you want other people to accept you and think highly of you?
- Do you marginalize people you think are poor or ugly or stupid or socially awkward and give special treatment to people who are rich or good looking or smart or popular?

9. Finding Your Identity

- Do you love the world when you think about who you are?
- Do you find your identity in what other people think about you or how great you are or what you have or what you have accomplished?
- Do you find your identity in being an outstanding student or a model Christian or a powerful preacher or a critical thinker?
- When you realize what the world prizes—being brilliant or rich or beautiful or skilled or witty—do you try to get it, or if you have it, do you take pride in that and prominently display it?

That was a lot of questions. But we could ask so many more. Asking diagnostic questions about whether you are worldly is worth doing because it

can help us fight worldliness. As one preacher wisely exhorted, "We must fight worldliness because it dulls our affections for Christ and distracts our attention from Christ. Worldliness is so serious because Christ is so glorious."[18]

Paul argues that way at the end of Romans 13. As Augustine shared in his *Confessions*, this is the passage he read after he heard a child say, "Take up and read." That was a turning point in Augustine's life.[19]

> The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires. (Rom 13:12–14)

Conclusion

So, brothers and sisters, don't love the world or the things in the world. May God give us what Lewis called "the strongest spell that can be found to wake us from the evil enchantment of worldliness."

> Father, we love you. We love you because you first loved us. Please wake us from the evil enchantment of worldliness. We don't want to love the world, but because we are sinful, we are tempted to love the world in all kinds of ways. Please give us grace not to take pleasure in the world. Instead, help us take pleasure in you and you alone. We ask in the name of Jesus. Amen.

[1] This article lightly revises a sermon the author preached at Bethlehem College & Seminary chapel in Minneapolis on March 1, 2017. Thanks to friends who examined a draft of this manuscript and shared helpful feedback, especially Abigail Dodds, Matt Klem, Joe Tyrpak, and Mark Ward.

[2] C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses* (New York: Macmillan, 1949), 31.

[3] Preachers used to address worldliness more often. I searched Charles Spurgeon's published sermons and discovered that he used the word *worldliness* over 350 times.

[4] Scripture quotations are from the ESV.

[5] Mark L. Ward Jr., "Paul's Positive Religious Affections" (PhD diss., Bob Jones University, 2011), 251.

[6] (1) that which serves to beautify through decoration, *adornment, adorning*. (2) condition of orderliness, *orderly arrangement, order*. (3) the sum total of everything here and now, *the world, the (orderly) universe*. (4) the sum total of all beings above the level of the animals, *the world*. (5) planet earth as a place of inhabitation, *the world*. (6) humanity in general, *the world*. (7) the system of human existence in its many aspects, *the world*. (8) collective aspect of an entity, *totality, sum total*.

[7] John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of the Christian Life* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2008), 866.

[8] See D. A. Carson, *The Difficult Doctrine of the Love of God* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2000). Carson unpacks how the Bible speaks about God's love in five ways: (1) The Father loves the Son (John 3:35; 5:20), and the Son loves the Father (14:31). That kind of intra-Trinitarian love is unique. (2) God providentially loves all that he has made (Ps 145:9, 13, 17). (3) God has a saving stance toward the fallen world (John 3:16). (4) God has a particular, effective, selecting love toward his elect (Eph 5:25). (5) God conditionally loves his own people when they obey him (John 15:10).

[9] Joe Rigney, *The Things of Earth: Treasuring God by Enjoying His Gifts* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015).

[10] More specifically, the word *the* in the phrase "*the* things in the world" is what Greek grammarians call a kataphoric article.

[11] E.g., Craig L. Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels: An Introduction and Survey*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: B&H, 2009), 260.

[12] I don't think what John means here by "flesh" is identical to how Paul often uses flesh to refer to our sinful nature.

[13] John Piper, *Future Grace* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 1995), 221: "*Covetousness is desiring something so much that you lose your contentment in God.* … Coveting is desiring anything other than God in a way that betrays a loss of contentment and satisfaction in Him. Covetousness is a heart divided between two gods. So Paul calls it idolatry." Compare the last sentence of 1 John: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols" (1 John 5:21).

[14] D. Moody Smith, *First, Second, and Third John* (IBC; Louisville: John Knox, 1991), 66.

[15] For an introduction to argument diagrams with a focus on phrasing, see ch. 5 in Andrew David Naselli, *How to Understand and Apply the New Testament: Twelve Steps from Exegesis to Theology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2017), 121–61. I prepared the phrase diagram in Fig. 2 using Biblearc.com.

[16] There's a tension here that parallels in some ways a tension in two categories of sermons and books: (a) One emphasizes that you should rest and enjoy the things of earth to the glory of God. For example, see Rigney, *The Things of Earth*; Michael Wittmer, *Becoming Worldly Saints: Can You Serve Jesus and Still Enjoy Your Life?* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015); David Murray, *Reset: Living a Grace-Paced Life in a Burnout Culture* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017). (b) The other emphasizes that you should live radically and not waste your life. For example, see John Piper, *Don't Waste Your Life* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2003); Francis Chan with Danae Yankoski, *Crazy Love: Overwhelmed by a Relentless God* (Colorado Springs, CO: Cook, 2008); David Platt, *Radical: Taking Back Your Faith from the American Dream* (Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah, 2010). I agree with both emphases. Here I'm trying to faithfully apply what it means to obey what God commands in 1 John 2:15: "Do not love the world or the things in the world." So I am emphasizing the "live radically and don't waste your life" message.

[17] See R. Albert Mohler Jr., *We Cannot Be Silent: Speaking Truth to a Culture Redefining Sex, Marriage, and the Very Meaning of Right and Wrong* (Nashville: Nelson, 2015).

[18] C. J. Mahaney, "Is This Verse in Your Bible?," in *Worldliness: Resisting the Seduction of a Fallen World* (ed. C. J. Mahaney; Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008), 35.

[19] *Confessions* 8.12.29.

Book Reviews

The Body of Jesus: A Spatial Analysis of the Kingdom in Matthew. By Patrick Schreiner. New York: Bloomsbury/T&T Clark, 2016, 188 pp, $85.40. hard cover

What is the nature of the kingdom of God? This is a question that has bared the brunt of theological contemplation for thousands of years. While there has been much debate in this regard, a common consensus seems to be that the kingdom represents the concept of God's sovereign rule, and only secondarily, if at all, has any spatial considerations. Even those who do affirm that the kingdom has a spatial aspect, rarely do they specify how or in what way. Patrick Schreiner's, The Body of Jesus: A Spatial Analysis of the Kingdom in Matthew, helpfully pushes back against this common understanding and also provides a way in which to understand the kingdom's spatial aspect as set forth in Matthew's gospel.

Schreiner divided his work into three parts:

Part I: Space: The Final Frontier

Part 2: Jesus vs. Beelzebul

Part 3: Word-building with Words

Part 4: People, Presence, and Place

Schreiner's argument has a clear progression. In part one, he presents an apology for the work, particularly the benefit to be had in a spatial analysis of Matthew. Part one concludes with an explanation of critical spatial theory. Schreiner then proceeds in the remainder of his work to apply critical spatial theory to the gospel of Matthew, focusing on both the deeds of Jesus (the Beelzebul Controversy and the Spirit in Matthew), and the words of Jesus (the five major discourses). Finally, in Part 4 Schreiner brings two major themes of Matthew together (the kingdom and the presence of Jesus) in light of critical spatial theory. In this review, I will give a brief summary and evaluation of each chapter. I will then conclude with some general observations of the work as a whole.

In Chapter 1, Schreiner discusses the "Eclipse of Space" in biblical studies, or more specifically, the general lack of consideration given to the spatial

aspect of the kingdom in Matthew's gospel. For several reasons, including the tendency to emphasize on the kingdom as God's rule, the dominance of time, a dualistic tension within Christianity, and a constricted view of space, the realm aspect of the kingdom has been largely ignored, or pushed into the future eschaton (10). However, according to Schreiner, critical spatial theory provides a way to grasp the kingdom as realm and so bring balance to the study of this important theological concept. Schreiner thus states his thesis in two ways. First, "*Theologically,* Jesus' mission is the reordering of the earth with his body as the nucleus" and second, "In *metaphysical* terms, the spatial aspect of the kingdom is located in the human body, and human bodies create 'imagined' kingdom spaces by social living" (14).

There is no doubt an emphasis on God's sovereign rule in Scripture, as well as the temporal aspect of this rule. Jesus came "in the fullness of time" and in Christ the end of the ages has dawned. However, it is true that, as Schreiner will later discuss, a sovereign reign cannot take place without a place over which to rule. While this has generally been acknowledged, the spatial reality of the kingdom has not been given the attention it deserves. Schreiner's work is an important step in that direction.

In Chapter 2, Schreiner gives his reasoning for choosing Matthew for his spatial analysis. He focuses here on the two themes of the heaven/earth distinction in Matthew, as well as Jesus as Immanuel. Both of these themes seem to be realm oriented, and thus call for a spatial analysis.

What makes Matthew particularly unique in this regard is that it clearly emphasizes the kingdom as the sovereign rule of Christ as well. I would argue that the entire narrative is about Jesus, the promised king, taking back God's rule upon the earth through his obedient life, his death, and his resurrection. In Matthew 4 Satan offers Jesus all the kingdoms of the world because they were his to give. In Matthew 28, Jesus receives all authority in heaven and on earth. The resolution has Jesus on the throne and Satan displaced as the ruler of this world. We find the same idea playing out in the Beelzebul controversy of Matthew 12, a text which holds a central space in Schreiner's argument. What makes his work important is that he demonstrates the importance of space when talking about sovereign rule. Jesus is actually wrenching a realm from the clutches of the Evil One as he gains his sovereign rule over both heaven and earth.

In Chapter 3, Schreiner explains "critical spatial theory." Rather than

understanding space as a merely physical phenomenon, Schreiner argues that space also includes ideological and imaginative aspects. Here we are introduced to the three categories of space which provide a foundation for understanding Matthew's view of space and place. These categories are first space, or the dominant understanding of space as physical; second space, which refers the ideological aspect of space; and third space, or the imaginative aspect of space. Schreiner argues that in expanding our view of space to allow for the second and especially third categories, we perhaps gain new and important insight into Jesus' mission of bringing his kingdom to earth.

It is here that it becomes apparent that in what is perhaps the greatest strength of Schreiner's work could potentially be found a weakness as well. Students of the Bible will likely find critical spatial theory to be uncharted territory in their thinking and especially their understanding of Scripture. In this chapter Schreiner delves into topics such as the definition of space, the metaphysics of space, the history of thought regarding space, etc. If the reader is not careful, they may very well forget they are reading a book on Matthew. However, this chapter is vital to Schreiner's work and it is beneficial to read it carefully in order to grasp what exactly is being argued throughout the book. One important point it contains is that how we understand space (as physical) has not always been the dominant view. The church fathers had a more relational view of space that would fall into the second and third space categories. This is important to note because the reader may be tempted to dismiss the argument as being an imposition of modern categories upon the text of Scripture which the authors never would have considered. While the categories presented are indeed modern ones, the ideas which they represent have been discussed and affirmed throughout history. Whether or not they are impositions on the text is not decided by this fact alone, but it at least provides incentive to hear the argument with an open mind. Therefore, while this chapter can seem tedious at times, it is quite interesting and indeed vital to grasping the Scriptural analysis which comes later.

Chapter 4 then applies critical spatial theory to Jesus' confrontation with the Jewish leaders in the Beelzebul Controversy (Matthew 12). Schreiner draws on the name of Baal as well as the Ugaritic Baal Epic to show that this conflict is not just about the rule of Christ over against Satan, but the realm over which they rule. Critical spatial theory helps interpret this account "by showing that when Jesus speaks of boundaries and space he is reordering

both physical and social space" (71). The "house" of Satan is not just physical, but includes the key elements of oppression and social ostracism, as illustrated clearly by the blindness and muteness of the demon oppressed man. Schreiner states,

> Jesus' household was contesting the seed of the serpent's household in first space and second space terms. By doing so, Jesus was rejecting the household of Satan, and creating his own imagined place (third space). He criticized the system of Satan by attacking Satan's house and imagining new meanings or possibilities for spatial practices (71).

The application of critical spatiality to the Beelzebul Controversy is a unique and helpful way to analyze the passage. Particularly strong is Schreiner's argument that the kingdom advances through the bodies of those whom Jesus frees from demonic possession through the power of the Spirit. The language of Jesus plundering Satan's possessions and of gathering and scattering seem to make this point. I do question the strength of the argument made from the verb φθάνω. Schreiner argues the word should be understood in light of the spatial dimension of the kingdom as "extend, reach, or attain." He then goes on to conclude that the kingdom is extending through bodies possessed by the same Spirit that is at work in Jesus. In light of the overall discussion this is an attractive view. However, I just wonder how the entire phrase ἔφθασεν ἐφ᾽ ὑμᾶς should be read in that regard. It seems more likely that the phrase indicates the arrival of the kingdom in Jesus' ministry, rather than its extension through bodies. Schreiner's reading is not impossible, but I'm not yet persuaded this is what Matthew has in mind. While I didn't see this as a general pattern in Schreiner's work, it may be that here is an example of a tendency in a work like this to squeeze a meaning from a text that fits the argument, but may not likely be what the author intended. I should say Schreiner is not dogmatic here, and only states that this is what Matthew "might be indicating…" (73).

In Chapter 5, Schreiner continues his discussion of the Beelzebul Controversy, focusing on the Spirit. He then expands his discussion to the role of the Spirit in Matthew as a whole. Before discussing the Spirit, Schreiner argues that exorcisms are bodily oriented and spatial. They are body oriented in that they necessarily involve bodies. The demon takes over a human body,

and the exorcism frees that body from demon possession. They are spatial in the sense that the change that takes place in an exorcism involves the heavenly and earthly kingdoms. The status of the citizen is being transferred from one domain to the other.

In arguing for a spatial sense to the Spirit discussion in this text, Schreiner helpfully surveys the role of the Spirit in Matthew, arguing that Matthew ties the Spirit to the new exodus in significant moments in Jesus' life. Schreiner looks at the genealogy, the birth of Jesus, the Baptism/Temptation account, the exorcism (the Beelzebul Controversy), and Jesus' death. Regarding the genealogy, Schreiner argues for an allusion to the Spirit in the words βίβλος γενὲσεως (82-4). It is indeed true that these words likely allude to the creation account in Genesis, and since it is the Spirit who is moving in Genesis 1:2, it is perhaps appropriate to see an allusion to the Spirit's work here at the beginning of Matthew's narrative.

On the other hand, while it seems likely that Matthew wants us to think new creation as we begin reading his story, I'm not yet convinced this text ought to be taken as a connection in Matthew of the Spirit to the new exodus. Similarly, with regard to Jesus' death, Schreiner argues for a reference to the Holy Spirit in 27:50 when Jesus gives up "His spirit." He follows Charette in arguing that Matthew's "unique language" coupled with the "extraordinary phenomena" that take place immediately following indicate at Jesus' death the Spirit is released (86-7). Again, I think Schreiner's argument makes sense and I could be convinced, but it seems more likely to me that Matthew is simply referring to the release of Jesus' own spirit in death. Still, Schreiner's discussion of the Spirit in the birth of Jesus and in his baptism and temptation set solid groundwork for his argument with regard to the spatial nature of the Spirit's work in Jesus' exorcism in the Beelzebul Controversy, which argument I find convincing and helpful in understanding how the kingdom has "come upon" the earth in a spatial sense. Particularly helpful is the spatial progression Schreiner points out with regard to the temptations, with the wilderness representing rejected space, the temple representing sacred space, and the mountain representing sovereign space (88-91).

The wilderness, though ideologically rejected space (second space), become a place of possibility (third space) as Jesus conquers where Israel failed. Similarly, the presence of Satan at the temple indicates its rejection as sacred space. Yet, Jesus' victory over Satan at its pinnacle indicates that

he has taken back authority over God's dwelling place in his own body. He is the new temple. Finally, we see the extent of the Devil's sovereignty over the earth in the third temptation, and yet again Jesus demonstrates his intent to seize all authority when he succeeds in resisting the Devil's temptation by refusing to bow to his authority. So, in the temptation account, Jesus indicates his mission to seize back the space of the entire earth, so that all authority in both heaven and on earth will be his.

In Chapter 6, Schreiner begins discussing the words of Jesus in his first three discourses. Through his words, Jesus is building worlds. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus' words call the disciples to be salt and light upon the earth, and so change their world. In the missions discourse, Jesus sends out his disciples as space changers, bringing peace by healing the sick, casting out demons, and even raising the dead. Finally, in the parables, Matthew tells of enacting the kingdom upon the space of the earth.

Chapter 7 continues analyzing the words of Jesus in light of spatial theory by examining the final two discourses in Matthew. In the community discourse of Matthew 18, Jesus is creating "meek space" by disrupting the natural response to tension and conflict by commanding forgiveness and humility. In contrasting the community of Jesus with the communities of the world, both second space and third space are created, which will in turn impact first space. In the last discourse, Jesus "contests the most important sacred space in the ancient world, the temple" (19). With words, Jesus predicts the destruction of the temple, and in its place "sets himself up as the *axis mundi*, where heaven and earth collide" (121).

In chapters 6 and 7, Schreiner sets forth a fascinating and I think helpful way to read the discourses in Matthew. They are not simply words, rather they are words that create new space. They are vital in our understanding of how Jesus is bringing about his kingdom upon the earth. Jesus' words build worlds as they create imagined space, thus changing minds and actions, which in turn change the physical space in which his people live as they put his words into practice.

In Chapter 8, Schreiner examines Matthew 19:28 and 18:20, arguing that both taken together speak of the New World as having spatial significance connected to communal themes. Jesus' physical presence with his people is accomplished through his communal body. His people have become his family, and their physical presence upon the earth create new spaces and

ultimately will create a new place wherein heaven and earth meet.

Chapter 9 argues for the kingdom of God as third space. Thus, "In Jesus' words and his deeds, he evokes images of the kingdom. They speak not only to the intellect, but to the imagination" (158). Through the imagination, Jesus' words change his people internally, and their words and actions in turn change the world externally, thus creating new space. Those who receive and act upon Jesus' words "critique the social structures of the day with their own expanding world" (159). In Chapter 9, Schreiner also ties the categories of critical spatiality to the temporal concept of an already/not yet kingdom, first and second space being linked to the "already" and third space being linked to the "not yet" (161).

On the whole, I found this work insightful and instructive for the interpretation of Matthew's Gospel. Schreiner has provided a new way to view the expansion of the kingdom in Matthew through the utilization of critical spatiality. My only criticism would apply to anyone endeavoring to read the Biblical texts through a new or unfamiliar grid, and that is the tendency to squeeze texts into that grid that perhaps don't belong. I saw very little of this in Schreiner's work as a whole, and pointed out the few cases where I think it could have been the case.

The spatial understanding of the kingdom has indeed taken a backseat in Biblical studies, and Schreiner has provided a way of brining it to the forefront of the discussion. I would recommend this work to any student of Scripture who has wrestled with questions regarding the kingdom of God, questions which have been asked throughout church history. Schreiner's spatial inquiry into Matthew's story of the kingdom provides new (yet also ancient) answers to these questions which move the conversation forward in a unique and most helpful way.

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The Lost Sermons of C. H. Spurgeon, Volume 1. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2017. By George, Christian, 400 pages. $59.99

Charles Spurgeon once accused a student of plagiarizing one of his own sermons. During the inquisition, the student confessed to using Charles Simeon's outline. In the moment of conflict, Spurgeon recalled that he also had lifted his sermon outline from the great preacher. Similarly, preachers from his day until now have benefitted (and borrowed) from the sermons of Charles Spurgeon. His use of metaphor combined with his ability to coin a phrase leaves few who can stand in his company. But how did the preacher become so masterful at his craft?

In *The Lost Sermons of Charles Spurgeon,* editor Christian George provides valuable answers to this question as he introduces the reader to the young preacher's earliest sermons. As Assistant Professor of Historical Theology and Curator of the Spurgeon Library at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, George is uniquely qualified to spearhead this work of supplying the church with these sermons. George's work is not merely academic, but proof of a deep interest in the life and labor of the famed preacher.

The sourcebook for this work is a handwritten notebook filled with the outlines that Spurgeon used while preaching. In cooperation with Spurgeon College, this series of sermons will survey nine notebooks, amassing a total of 400 sermons and filling 1,127 handwritten journal pages, all with the aim of fueling continued Spurgeon scholarship. The first edition contains seventy-six sermons. The title of the book hints that these sermons were "lost," but they were indeed never lost, simply—unpublished. Spurgeon disclosed in his autobiography his hope to publish these volumes, but other ministry endeavors combined with ailing health did not allow for its completion. This initial collection of sermons is a welcome addition to the renaissance of Spurgeon research as it displays the early ministerial development of the Prince of Preachers.

Part one of the book contains introductory matter, including a supportive timeline overlay of Spurgeon's life along with contextual entries. George offers a colorful description of the Victorian era that provides the necessary historical setting to understand the sermons. Additionally, George addresses the congruencies and disparities between Spurgeon and his time. The section concludes with a detailed analysis of the sermons, surveying word count,

percentages of texts used from specific testaments and books, as well as a word cloud of topical frequency.

Part two of the book consists of the heart of this work: outlines of the first seventy-six sermons preached by Charles Spurgeon. Spurgeon calls these outlines "skeletons," and on the title page of his journal confesses they are "only skeletons without the Holy Spirit" (60). The layout of the book includes a high-resolution facsimile of the original manuscript on the left page, with an exact rendering in type on the facing page. This inclusion of both old and new creates a wonderful presentation that allows the reader to get as close to the writing of Spurgeon as possible, with the benefit of an organized outline also readily available.

This volume's strength is its detailing of Spurgeon's early development as a preacher as well as George's careful examination and commentary on each sermon outline. The sermon outlines show the preacher growing in his grasp of Scripture and his concern for doctrine while consistently maintaining the crux of his preaching: the free grace offered in the gospel of Christ. The manuscripts reveal a young preacher demonstrating strong conviction and intentionality aimed at the glory of God and the joy of the listener. The outlines include reference to the many times Spurgeon "uses the brains of other men" in his homiletical process. George outperforms the role of editor in cross-references to other sermons and presentation of related works to help his reader attain a full understanding of Spurgeon. George shows how Spurgeon consulted the work of John Gill, George Whitefield, and Charles Simeon to help build out sermon content, as well as how his vocabulary grew from the hymnody of John Newton, Isaac Watts, and others. These editorial notes aid readers feeling overwhelmed at the content Spurgeon created.

Some may propose a weakness regarding the source material of the first volume of *The Lost Sermons of Charles Spurgeon*: Spurgeon's methodology of preaching a single disconnected verse at a time. This may appear to uncover a church led by Spurgeon which did not hear the "whole counsel of God." However, analysis of this volume reveals Spurgeon's incredible distribution as forty-four percent of his sermons originated from the OT, and fifty-five percent from the NT. Further analysis shows that twenty-four percent of his OT sermons were from the Psalms, a book dear to his heart as evidenced by his later work, the *Treasury of David*. This specific critique must acknowledge its survey of a brief window of the preacher's tenure; certainly these books

of Scripture were addressed in future sermons.

The Lost Sermons of Charles Spurgeon, Vol. 1, will certainly prove to be a treasure to the church and a help to preachers. While many look at Spurgeon's mountain of published work and sense comparative diminution, this collection of sermons helps preachers and writers see the cumulative effect of the regular discipline of faithfully communicating truth. On some cold Saturday night in the study of the preacher, surely one of these "skeletons" will serve to frame the thoughts and warm the heart of the pastor, thereby completing the joy of the editor, who aims to guide readers not just *to* Spurgeon, but *through* Spurgeon to Jesus Christ (xxiii).

Matthew Boswell

Greek for Everyone: Introductory Greek for Bible Study and Application. By A. Chadwick Thornhill. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2016, 272 pp. $24.99, paperback.

A. Chadwick Thornhill received his PhD from Liberty University. He serves at Liberty's School of Divinity as the chair of theological studies where he is an assistant professor of apologetics and biblical studies. He is the author of *The Chosen People: Election, Paul and Second Temple Judaism* (IVP, 2015), and has taught beginning Greek at Liberty since 2007.

Dr. Thornhill says that his goals in writing *Greek for Everyone* were to lay "a foundation for those who lack formal training in the biblical language to gain insights from the original language of the New Testament," and to provide "an exegetical framework to help guide the way in which those insights are developed" (214–215). The book begins in chapter 1 by teaching the student how to pronounce Greek letters and words (he prefers a reconstructed first century pronunciation rather than Erasmian). In chapter 2 he discusses word meanings and semantic range, as well as how language is structured into levels of meaning such as words, groups of words, sentences, and pericopes, with the highest level being the whole discourse. In chapter 3 he defines grammatical units such as phrases, clauses, and sentences, and then shows the functional meaning of the major conjunctions. Then in chapter 4 he introduces his readers to some of the tools they will need to study the text,

such as interlinear Bibles, lexicons, and parsing tools.

Chapters 5–13 contain the bulk of the book's grammatical information. Chapter 5 explains the grammatical information communicated by verbs and nominals, such as tense, aspect, mood, case, and so on. Chapters 6–7 discuss the main functions of the cases, and chapter 8 discusses the main uses of the article, pronouns, adjectives, and prepositions. Chapters 9–13 deal with verbs and verbals, including indicative mood verbs (chapter 9), imperatives (chapter 10), subjunctives (chapter 11), infinitives (chapter 12), and participles (chapter 13). For each of the chapters dealing with verbal forms, he discusses the main uses of the various tenses (especially highlighting the importance of verbal aspect) and the significance of the verbal form under consideration (e.g., subjunctive mood, participle, etc.).

Chapters 14–18 contain practical information on the use of Greek in Bible study, in addition to addressing other hermeneutical issues. Chapter 14 explains how to trace the flow of thought by attention to matters of coordination and subordination and word order, and introduces the reader to some of the basic concepts related to discourse analysis and how to block diagram passages of Scripture. Chapter 15 explains how to compare English translations, including a very concise introduction to textual criticism and an introduction to the translation issues that often result in differences among the various translations. Chapter 16 discusses various contexts (historical, social, cultural, literary, intertextual, and canonical) that should impact how we interpret Scripture. Chapter 17 provides a discussion of word studies, including an explanation of several common mistakes (e.g., etymological fallacy, word-concept confusion), and a few helpful theoretical categories (e.g., synonymy, synchronic linguistics). It helpfully includes specific instruction on how to do word studies in the form of three basic steps: (1) selecting a significant word, (2) examining the lexical data using critical lexicons, and (3) making a judgment about which possible meaning is most contextually appropriate. The book concludes in chapter 18 with various topics related to the interpretive process such as the proper attitudes that interpreters must have when approaching Scripture, some recommended resources (such as background resources and commentaries), and some guidance in how to apply the biblical text to the modern context.

Thornhill knows that this text will not actually teach people to read Greek. His goals for the reader who completes this book are modest: "We have the

ability to understand some grammatical frameworks and interact with good exegetical commentaries and essays. We even have some ability to evaluate those resources. We have not, however, developed proficiency with the language" (213). In light of these goals, the book does not teach the *forms* of the language, but the *meaning* conveyed by the grammar. So in chapter 7, for example, while he gives examples of words in the genitive and dative cases, he is focused on the most important *meanings* of the genitive and dative cases rather than their morphology. In place of teaching readers the forms of the language, he gives them the following method for identifying grammatical information: (1) "identifying a particular word in our interlinear text," (2) "identifying its meaning though a lexical tool," (3) "finding its grammatical information through an analytical lexicon or parsing tool," and (4) "studying its grammatical force through scholarly works such as commentaries, books, and journal articles" (44). Readers should probably know this up front so that their expectations are framed accordingly.

This approach to teaching Greek certainly has a place. Despite the fact that every Christian or Christian teacher who interacts with the NT in a serious way will encounter issues related to the original language, it is undoubtedly true that not every Christian or Christian teacher will have the opportunity to *learn* Greek. Given this approach, Thornhill's presentation includes a number of beneficial components.

First, the approach is above all practical, and in light of the intended goal of helping the reader use the knowledge to engage the text, it strikes its target. For example, Thornhill shows the reader a clear method for how to study the grammar without knowing the forms (see above), and follows it throughout the book. He also provides instruction on many of the major tasks that students and teachers of Scripture will actually use when sitting in their study with their Greek NT, such as how to do word studies (chapter 17), how to track the main argument and flow of thought (chapter 14), and how to compare English translations (chapter 15). Ironically, this kind of explicit teaching in methods and skills is often lacking in more traditional grammars that are more rigorous in their treatment of issues of syntax and morphology.

Second, he emphasizes the structures larger than the word or clause level. In contrast with many beginning grammars which are almost exclusively focused on grammar at the word and clause level and seem to address the larger structures of the language only in passing, Thornhill makes this a

prominent part of his book. For example, in chapter 2 he frames the study of Greek in terms of all of the levels of meaning, which in this reviewer's opinion is a very helpful move, as it provides a context in which the discussions of verbal and nominal grammar can be placed. Another way that he helpfully pushes the reader above the word and clause level is in teaching the conjunctions based on their function rather than simply providing translational equivalents (25–26). Finally, after the bulk of his grammatical discussion, he caps off his grammatical treatment by instructing readers how to distinguish independent from dependent clauses for the sake of determining the main idea of biblical texts.

However, while the scope of the book and the emphasis on skills and methods are excellently done, the book has a few weaknesses. First of all, some of the grammatical discussions either lack clarity or have inconsistencies. One example of this is his discussion on verbal aspect. On p. 37, where he introduces verbal aspect, he says that imperfective aspect "views the action in progress, or from an up-close perspective." Later, in his chapter on the indicative, he describes imperfective aspect as "an up-close perspective" (74 and 76), but when he puts the tenses and aspects into chart form at the end of the chapter, he describes imperfective as "in progress" (85). This is confusing because it treats "up-close" and "in progress" as synonymous ways of describing aspect, which they are not (though they might complement each other).

This is compounded by his description of "perfective" aspect (which is his name for the aspect that is expressed by the Greek perfect tense). In one place he describes this aspect as expressing "a *completed action* or a *state* that is given additional focus" (81, emphasis his), while in another place he describes it as expressing "up close" action (85). This leaves the reader wondering why perfective aspect is described in different ways in different sections of the book, and whether "up-close" action is indicated by imperfective aspect, perfective aspect, or both. (Should the reader then consult another source to gain clarity regarding what kind of action perfective aspect indicates, they will likely there find that it is the aspect of the aorist tense and give up!)

Another example of inconsistency is how he handles participial clauses. In chapter 3 ("Phrases, Clauses, and Conjunctions"), he defines a clause as "a group of words containing a subject and predicate in which the predicate contains a finite verb" (23). He continues: "Thus the major difference between a clause and a phrase is that clauses contain a verb that can create a complete

thought, while phrases, though they may contain verbals (i.e., participles and infinitives), do not contain a finite verb" (ibid.). However, on p. 121, where he discusses dependent clauses, he says there "are four main kinds of dependent clauses in Greek: *relative*, *infinitival*, *participial*, and *subordinate conjunction*" (emphasis his). Here and elsewhere the reader is left confused over contradictory or unclear definitions of grammatical details.

A final area that could use some improvement (though this is more of a minor criticism) is the focus of the book. Both the title and the subtitle lead the reader to expect that the content of the book will revolve around the topic of Greek language and its use in Bible study and application. However, the author includes some sections that are more properly hermeneutical and not directly connected to Greek. One example is chapter 15 ("Bridging the Contexts"), where the author includes a concise summary of Second Temple history and numerous other details that are important but not related to the use of Greek. The author's stated intention to help readers apply what they have learned in their study of the Greek text could be achieved more effectively by limiting the discussion of hermeneutical issues to those topics that are directly related to the use of the Greek language in interpretation. Other helpful information could be placed in an appendix or dealt with in a separate volume in which they could receive adequate attention.

In sum, Thornhill has given us a handy introduction to Greek for those who have not learned the language. Despite some of its shortcomings, those who are responsible to teach in the church and yet for whatever reason legitimately cannot take an actual course in Greek could have their exegetical skills sharpened through the use of this book. Though, as Thornhill himself acknowledges, readers will not actually have proficiency with the language, nevertheless they will be better equipped to use the resources that are available to them. In addition, it could be profitably used by students who are about to take a course in Greek at the Bible college or seminary level. Having worked through this book in advance, one would have a much better grasp on the concepts involved in the study of Greek and be much less likely to get lost as they work through the details of the language in a college-level course.

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