A Biblical Theology of Vocation, Part I

Before you start...

- Do pre-reading for this week (see Unit Guide) and explore one optional reading on Moodle
- Explore Unit Guide journal topics, getting ready to post to forums (modules 4-12)
- From the reading, come prepared to share a question, challenge, implication & application
- If it’s your turn, come ready to share your “kingdom taster” or “resources show & tell”

1. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to week two of “Integrating Faith and Work”. Over the next two modules, we will consider key passages to construct a biblical/narrative theology of vocation, discerning the purposes and nature of God’s calling across the Biblical acts of Creation, Fall, and Israel (module 2), then Jesus, Church, and the New Creation (module 3). This will prepare you well for assessment requirement one.

This module sits within Section A of the course: “Framing Vocation: Forming a Theology for Missional Work.” In subsequent modules we will explore our vocation in light of historical theology and the contemporary macro-economic context.

OBJECTIVES
The objectives of this module are to:
- Construct and share a biblical/narrative theology of vocation, centred on Creation, Fall, and Israel

OUTCOMES
This module contributes to the following outcomes. On successful completion of this and similarly focused modules, students should be able to:

Know and Understand:
- Construct a narrative theology of vocation and calling, situating their “work” in a missional frame
- Analyse vocational themes from biblical ... perspectives

Skills:
- Appraise their vocation from a biblical, theological ... perspective

SESSION FLOW (lecture runs 6:15-9:00pm, breaks from 7:05-7:10pm, and 7:55-8:05pm)

6:15 Construct a Biblical Theology of Vocation: Creation, Fall and Israel (50 minutes)
7:10 Business Time: Show & Tell, Kingdom Taster, and Small Groups (45 minutes)
8:05 Share a Biblical/Narrative Theology of Vocation: Creation, Fall and Israel (55 minutes)
## Contents

1. INTRODUCTION ........................................................................................................................................ 1

2. CONSTRUCTING A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF VOCATION, PART I ......................................................... 3
   2.1 Reconnecting Our Work to God’s Work ............................................................................................ 3
   2.2 A Word on Biblical Theology, and How We Journey With God .................................................... 6
   2.3 Creation >> Making Shalom: Cultivate God’s Garden ..................................................................... 9
   2.4 Fall >> Breaking Shalom: Repent over the Tower ........................................................................ 10
   2.5 Israel >> Seeking Shalom: Bless from the Tent ............................................................................ 12
   2.6 Bringing the Old Testament Narrative Together .......................................................................... 14
   2.7 A Summary of Vocational Wisdom from Stevens’ *Work Matters* (2012) ........................................ 15
      2.7.1 Torah: Pt. 1, “God-Given Work” (Stevens 2012, 47-48) ......................................................... 15
      2.7.2 Historical Books: Pt. 2, “Stewardship Work” (Stevens 2012, 80) ........................................ 15
      2.7.4 Prophets: Pt. 4, “Just Work” (Stevens 2012, 131-132) ......................................................... 16

3. BUSINESS TIME ......................................................................................................................................... 17
   3.1 Show & Tell and Kingdom Taster .................................................................................................... 17
   3.2 Small Group Interaction .................................................................................................................. 19

4. SHARING A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF VOCATION, PART I ................................................................. 20
   4.1 Group Presentations of Your Vocational Theology ....................................................................... 21
   4.2 Implications for Your Frontline ..................................................................................................... 21

5. CLOSING PRAYER AND PREPARATION FOR NEXT CLASS .......................................................... 23

6. REFERENCES ............................................................................................................................................... 25
2. CONSTRUCTING A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF VOCATION, PART I

Resources Module 2.1

If you skip to §6 below, you’ll find a truck load of helpful references all focused on a theology of vocation. Many are in the Malyon library, so skim the list and choose a few to delve into as part of your research for assessment requirement 1. In what follows, I will simply highlight a couple of key sources you shouldn’t miss:

- Stevens (2012) book Work Matters is fantastic. It’s one of the few biblical (i.e., narrative, rather than systematic) theologies on the list. I’ve uploaded to module 3 and 4 the introduction and summary sections for each division in the Bible, alongside a couple of great case studies: (Ch. 12 on Prov. 31 Entrepreneurial Work; Ch. 13 on Ecclesiastes and Enigmatic Work; ch. 15 on Daniel with Exilic Work ... If you’re an artist, read Ch. 5 on “Spirit Work”. Then, in the New Testament, I’ve included Ch. 17 on Martha with Contemplative Work; Ch. 19 on Paul with Lasting Work; Ch. 20 on John with Heavenly Work). I’ve also uploaded a couple of other chapters he has written over the years, on how our work can be participation with God, and thus “doing the Lord’s work”

- If you’re after overview theology articles on vocation, and work-oriented exposition of various passages, then trawl through the Theology of Work Project website. Amazing resources.

- Van Duzer and others (2007) offer perhaps your best exemplar of a theology of work—“Towards a Statement on the Biblical Purposes of Business”—focused on business, but built around the creation, fall, restoration narrative. This three-fold narrative fits MCE41 assessment requirement

- I’ve uploaded Chapter 5 of my PhD work—“Benson2015_Ch5.SacredTexts+Education’sEnd. ABiblicalStory”—building a theology of education (extended version here). While this is far more detailed than you need, it does give a feel for the MCE61 task, which requires a theology for your vocation built around all 6 acts of the biblical narrative. Below the Module notes for this week you’ll find a video and notes/ppnt for both my talk, and Paul Williams’ talk, framing our work

- For MCE61 students, you may be interested in particular vocational theologies emerging from different traditions. See the references at the end of this module, and look for the various titles published by Christian’s Library Press, all with the subtitle starting “A … Primer”. For instance, Brand, Chad. Flourishing Faith: A Baptist Primer on Work, Economics, and Civic Stewardship. Grand Rapids, MI: Christian’s Library Press, 2012. See also Darrow Miller’s “Lifework” here.


- Last but not least, if you feel like all this theological framing is messing with your head, then this is for you. Check out N. T. Wright’s (2006) Simply Christian, particularly the early chapters, as he sets a broad frame of what we’re working toward, in beauty, justice and truth.

2.1 Reconnecting Our Work to God’s Work

Last module, in §3 “Business Time”, I briefly introduced you to Banks (1999, 22-26; see the first optional reading under Moodle Module 1). In his book, Faith Goes to Work, he reminds us that any good work we do ultimately traces back to God’s original and ongoing work in the world. In this sense we can participate in the work of God—a theme picked up in R. Paul Stevens’ 1999 and 2001 chapters on Moodle this module.

As we begin to form a biblical theology of vocation, starting with Creation, it’s crucial that the focus is on God. Anything less is anthropocentric (“man-centred”). It exalts our own activity and constructs idolatrous towers worshipping the work of our hands, as you’ll see in the Fall, coming to a head at Babel.

Following, then, is Sherman’s summary of Banks, helping us see six main types of work God is about in the world (2011, 103).
Class Activity 2.1 – 10 minutes

Read Sherman’s (2011, 103) summary of Banks (1999, 22-26) below this activity box.

► Which of God’s six types of labour most aligns with your own work? Circle this function, and write a couple of sentences explaining and/or illustrating the connection.

► Jot one way your work gives you the opportunity to join with God in the remaining five types.

#1. REDEMPTIVE WORK: God’s saving and reconciling actions
“Humans participate in this kind of work, for example, as evangelists, pastors, counselors and peacemakers. So do writers, artists, producers, songwriters, poets and actors who incorporate redemptive elements in their stories, novels, songs, films, performances and other works.”

► How I participate with God in this type of labour, through my work: ____________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

#2. CREATIVE WORK: God’s fashioning of the physical and human world
“God gives humans creativity. People in the arts (sculptors, actors, painters, musicians, poets and so on) display this, as do a wide range of craftspeople such as potters, weavers and seamstresses, as well as interior designers, metalworkers, carpenters, builders, fashion designers, architects, novelists and urban planners (and more).”

► How I participate with God in this type of labour, through my work: ____________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

#3. PROVIDENTIAL WORK: God’s provision for and sustaining of humans and the creation
“‘The work of divine providence includes all that God does to maintain the universe and human life in an orderly and beneficial fashion,’ Banks writes. ‘This includes conserving, sustaining, and replenishing, in addition to creating and redeeming the world.’ [Banks 1999, 24] Thus, innumerable individuals—bureaucrats, public utility workers, public policymakers, shopkeepers, career counselors, shipbuilders, farmers, firemen, repairmen, printers, transport workers, IT specialists, entre-preneurs, bankers and brokers, meteorologists, research technicians, civil servants, business school professors, mechanics, engineers, building inspectors, machinists, statisticians, plumbers, welders, janitors—and all who help keep the economic and political order working smoothly—reflect this aspect of God’s labor.”

► How I participate with God in this type of labour, through my work: ____________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

#4. JUSTICE WORK: God’s maintenance of justice
“Judges, lawyers, paralegals, government regulators, legal secretaries, city managers, prison wardens and guards, policy researchers and advocates, law professors, diplomats, supervisors, administrators and law enforcement personnel participate in God’s work of maintaining justice.”

► How I participate with God in this type of labour, through my work: ____________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
#5. COMPASSIONATE WORK: God’s involvement in comforting, healing, guiding & shepherding
“Doctors, nurses, paramedics, psychologists, therapists, social workers, pharmacists, community workers, nonprofit directors, emergency medical technicians, counselors and welfare agents all reflect this aspect of God’s labor.”

► How I participate with God in this type of labour, through my work: ____________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________

#6. REVELATORY WORK: God’s work to enlighten with truth
“Preachers, scientists, educators, journalists, scholars and writers are all involved in this sort of work.”

► How I participate with God in this type of labour, through my work: ____________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________________

“In all these various ways, God the Father continues his creative, sustaining and redeeming work through our human labor. This gives our work great dignity and purpose. Vocational stewardship starts with celebrating the work itself and recognizing that God cares about it and is accomplishing his purposes through it” (Sherman 2011, 104).

Reflection Activity 2.1 – Distance Students

Journal at least 30 (meaningful!) words in response the following question, and tick off the related boxes of the unit guide.

#2.1 Work through class activity 2.1 above, writing out your answers to the two discussion questions.

True thinking about God emerges from, and results in, worship. In J. I. Packer’s words, “theology begets doxology”. So, as we move to thinking about a theology of vocation, let’s pause as God did on the seventh day, and step back to appreciate his creative work in the world.

Take the time to sing together Chris Tomlin’s “Indescribable,” online here.
2.2 A Word on Biblical Theology, and How We Journey With God

At its most basic, Anselm would tell us that theologising is about “faith seeking understanding.” As we explore in Module 1 of Malyon’s course “Theology for Everyday Life”, a full blooded definition might go something like this:

“Christian theology is reflecting on and articulating the God-centred life and beliefs that we share as followers of Jesus Christ, and it is done that God might be glorified in all we are and do.”1

As I cover in this module, however, there are a number of different types of theology (p21). Philosophical Theology is foundational, dealing with first principles and the nature of reason and truth. Systematic Theology attempts to create a statement of faith explaining the leading doctrines of the Christian Bible. (We touched on this in module 1, forming a systematic theology of vocation.) Historical Theology draws on Christian thinking across the ages, shaping how we think about God and our world in the present. (We’ll do some of this in module 4). Finally, Strategic Theology is concerned with the connection of our present practices, reflected on via dialogue between diverse religious and secular perspectives, before returning to more faithful action in the world. (This is our key concern in modules 8 through 13.)

What, then, is Biblical Theology? As Theopedia puts it, Biblical Theology “seeks to discover what the biblical writers, under divine guidance, believed, described, and taught in the context of their own times. It is based first and foremost on the Bible itself, and takes the Scriptures as they are given to us to be the inspired, authoritative word of God.”

Biblical Theology, then, begins with the Scriptures rather than an overarching theological frame, whether Reformed, Catholic, Orthodox, or otherwise. As Stevens (2012) explains in the introduction to his own explorations in Work Matters,

“This book is an approach to a comprehensive biblical theology of work. It constitutes a theology of work because it explains what work means. It is biblical because it draws on the entire Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, by telling the stories of people—people like Adam and Eve, Ruth, David, Jesus, Paul, and John. In the process we see work illustrated in a variety of contexts within biblical history. At the same time we uphold the fundamental unity of Scripture.

What I’m pressing for, though, moves beyond exegesis of the “raw data” of the Scriptures. As Stevens (2012, 5) suggests, it requires a sense of drama—of tension and resolution ... of characters in context acting across time. We are best to read the Bible backwards as aiming at our final destination in a recreated world where our work comes to full fruition for the glory of God (Sherman 2011, 21-22, 27-28).

This type of Biblical Theology is more precisely termed Narrative Theology. It takes seriously that what God has given us is framed as a story.2 Given that we understand our own lives as a story,3 the Biblical story is the perfect vehicle for helping us make sense of our work in the world.4 (See Module 2 of the Malyon course, A Christian Worldview for more on “Living the Biblical Story”.)

Simply put, in the Bible we discover through creation that work is good, through corruption that work is broken, through the cross that work is redeemed, and through consummation that work has eternal value.

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2 See, for instance, the work of N. T. Wright on this, Hans Frei’s The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative (1973), and Stanley Hauerwas and L. Gregory Jones’s Why Narrative? (1989).
This is good, but perhaps too simple for our purposes here. You see, this story comes to us as a sort of travelogue. It’s a six stage journey of God calling us from immaturity in the garden of Eden, to grown-up image bearers in the garden-city. In the New Jerusalem all creation will rejoice (cf. Romans 8) as humanity is revealed as fully redeemed co-workers functioning in the power of the Spirit under the consummated reign of God, for the flourishing/shalom of all.

(For Bartholomew and Goheen’s, The Drama of Scripture, see book here, and summaries of their six act play here, here, and a two part review here and here.)

Paul Williams’ 2015 address, “The Workplace and Authentic Christianity”—as part of Australia’s City to City “Renewing My Workplace” conference: video here with slides uploaded to Moodle—is a great example. This biblical/narrative theology also understirdRegent College’s Re-Frame course, helping us locate our labour within God’s purposes for the world as a whole.

Drawing on Choung (2008) and many others, I have been working at a popular and academic level to think through the telling of this story, and its ramifications for how we understand our mission in the world.

My emphasis of late has been on a theology of education—in particular, a theology of curriculum writing, exploring what this means for the place of Scriptures in secular schools. Hopefully it will help as you put together a theology for your own vocation, whatever that may be. However, I think my work may be more relevant to you than initially seems. For, in my framing, education is for life.

By paying close attention to how God educates humanity, leading us from immaturity to maturity, we discover the broadest frame for our mission in the world. We discover what God would have us learn about, and how he would have us participate with him, in his creative and redemptive work in the world.

(I brought this together in a more popular form at the 2016 Malion “Transforming Work” Conference, in an address entitled “One Caller, Many Callings” [video here; manuscript/slides uploaded to Moodle]. This integrates Robert Banks’s six primary ways God is at work in the world, covered in §2.1 above.)

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5 See my articles on the blog “Wondering Fair” here, including “What’s So Good About the Gospel?”, “The Epic Story” (part I and II), alongside my work on Traverse.com on the Epic Story here and my work with the Bible Society on the project “The Journey” here.

In broad brush strokes, here’s what we discover at each stage and location of the six leg journey:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Plot</th>
<th>What we Learn About</th>
<th>Our Action to Work with God</th>
<th>Vocational Equivalent: Work Should Serve …</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creation</td>
<td>Designed for good …</td>
<td>Work</td>
<td>Cultivate</td>
<td>Flourishing (God, people, planet, self)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cultivate God’s Garden</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Providential work</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Damaged by evil …</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Repent</td>
<td>Humility, Trust and Truth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Repent over the Tower</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Revelatory work</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>Chosen to bless …</td>
<td>Wisdom</td>
<td>Bless</td>
<td>Wisdom, Generosity, Mercy and Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bless from the Tent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Justice work</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus</td>
<td>Restored for better …</td>
<td>Reciprocity</td>
<td>Love</td>
<td>Freedom (Salvation) and Care (Love)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Love on the Mountain</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Redemptive work</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Sent to heal …</td>
<td>Holiness</td>
<td>Reconcile</td>
<td>Character and Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reconcile in the House</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Compassionate work</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Creation</td>
<td>God sets it right …</td>
<td>Hope</td>
<td>Worship</td>
<td>Integration and Gratitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Worship in the City</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Creative work</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Over the next two modules, then, we will be critically reflecting on our beliefs about God and what he has revealed about our vocation in the world. This will be spurred on by passages to explore, and a brief narrative I supply. Then, we will creatively construct and articulate a unified and coherent account capable of guiding our particular work in the world.

This is the heart of **assessment requirement 1** in your Unit Guide.

► **Does this narrative form of Biblical Theology make sense to you? Any qns about the assessment task?**

► **At first glance, how does your work serve/promote each of the ends listed in the table’s right column?**

**Class Activity 2.2 – 40 minutes**

For the remainder of this module, we will work in **three groups: Creation, Fall, and Israel**.

1. In these groups, read together the initial narrative for your section.
2. Discuss what implications this story has for the purpose of your work today, and how we participate as co-workers with our Triune God. (Draw on pre-reading of Sherman, and optional reading also.)
3. Divvy up the Scriptures and consider additional themes and purposes that emerge. Are there any **characters** in the Biblical story who powerfully illustrate vocation in this stage of the journey?
4. Sketch out some of these key themes and purposes for work on an A3 sheet, ready to share.
5. What does this biblical/narrative theology of work look like for **your particular vocation**?
Reflection Activity 2.2 – Distance Students

Journal at least 30 (meaningful) words in response to the following question, and tick off the related boxes of the unit guide.

#2.2 Work through class activity 2.2 above for at least one of the legs in the biblical journey. Summarise what you’ve found, and the implications for a specific theology of your vocation.

2.3 Creation >> Making Shalom: Cultivate God’s Garden

Key Passages to Explore: Gn 1-2, Ps 8, Prv 8, Isa 45, Jn 1, Rom 1 & 8

Relevant Sections of Sherman’s “Kingdom Calling” (2011) [cf. Edgar 2017, and Bock with Thigpen 2016 ]:
- 33-43 on the four aspects of shalom (holistic flourishing, fleshed out in Table 1.2 p34), especially 42-43 on cultivating creation in economic flourishing and sustainability … all of this is realised in the coming kingdom, but the plan and potential is awaiting development in Eden … so we are called to Spirit-inspired creativity as our work now is a taster, or a trailer [movies] for what is to come … see Sherman’s nuancing on 43-44 to avoid both extremes of triumphalism/pelagianism and hopelessness in the face of so large a vision … our work participates with God in the now but not yet Kingdom of God;
- Appendix A 235-241: §4 (Our General Vocation/Cultural Mandate); §5 (A Proper View of Human Nature); §9 (A Biblical Understanding of Stewardship—and Ownership); §11 (Common Grace)

Table 1.2. Marks of the Consummated Kingdom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peace with God</th>
<th>Peace with Self</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intimacy with God</td>
<td>Health/Wholeness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauty</td>
<td>Hope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comfort</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peace with Others</th>
<th>Peace with the Creation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unity</td>
<td>Economic flourishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security/Lack of Violence</td>
<td>Sustainability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Plot</th>
<th>What we Learn About</th>
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<tr>
<td>Creation</td>
<td>making shalom</td>
<td>Designed for good … Cultivate God’s Garden</td>
<td>Work Cultivate</td>
<td>Flourishing (God, people, planet, self) <strong>Providential work</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Telling the Story, slanted toward a theology of education...

The first leg of our transformational journey is Creation. In the opening chapters of Genesis we read how humanity and the whole world were designed for good. This passionate and relational Creator paints an Oasis and plants us there. And in this garden of delight, Adam (the man) and Eve (the life-giver) are told to multiply and cultivate the world. And from cultivation comes culture, so God’s plan was always for us to spread out and construct a God-centred city. This is the quintessential human task: making shalom. We are to employ ourselves toward creational fullness, peace, and flourishing. So God designed us to love Him, love each other, and lovingly garden the planet as the Creator’s collective image-bearer.

This simple narrative, familiar to evangelicals, is profuse in meaning as one considers the purpose of education. It speaks of the goodness of the material world: our physicality is not something to escape, but rather something to nurture as we celebrate our embodiment. It points to interpersonal knowing—even “love”, understood as an unconditional commitment to seek the good of all Creation—as our primary mode of being in the world. It depicts God’s delight over all that is made in its diversity, and our call to imitate this superabundant artistry through the community he has inspired. At the centre of God’s explicit curriculum, though, is a task. We join this educational journey as we cultivate God’s garden.

(N.b. of all the narrative sections in this chapter, this section is most relevant to work ... worth a read if you want to delve deeper.)

2.4 Fall >> Breaking Shalom: Repent over the Tower

Key Passages to Explore: Gn 3-11, Ex 1, 2 & 5, Ecc 2-3, Isa 59, Jer 10, Rom 1-5 (cf. Benson 2011)

Relevant Sections of Sherman’s “Kingdom Calling” (2011):
- While this isn’t pre-reading for this week, we learn a lot from Chapter 3 of Sherman (2011, 64-76) on “Why We Aren’t the Tsaddiqim”. That is, what sins of the community of God have meant that those who were supposed to be righteous and prosper the city have instead turned inwards to bless themselves?

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Stage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>damaged by evil …</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
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<td>Humility, Trust and Truth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>breaking shalom</td>
<td>Repent over the Tower</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Revelationary work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Moodle Module 2, under Extra Resources, for the footnotes/references that accompany this narrative.

Cf. Gn 1-2; Dt 32:4; Pss 8; 19; 90:2; 139; 144:3-4; Prv 8; Is 40:28; 45:18; Jb 7:17-18; Mt 22:37-40; Rv 4:11.
Telling the Story, slanted toward a theology of education ...⁹

The second leg of our transformational journey is commonly labelled the Fall.¹⁰ The story left off with God’s holistic invitation to his icons in Eden: cultivate my garden planet. However, just as love is only real when it is not forced, the true King of the universe gave humanity options. They could choose to reflect God’s image and trust his provision (eating from the tree of life), or they could grasp for what was not theirs (consuming from the tree of knowledge of good and evil). With our forebears, we have each opted for the latter, falling into idolatry: building life around ourselves, something, or someone other than God. In Genesis 3-11 we read how humanity went astray by trying to displace the Creator and build a name for ourselves. In the process everything has been damaged by evil. We have rejected God, abused each other, and vandalized God’s world, which the Bible calls sin. It is nothing short of culpably breaking shalom. We swallowed the serpent’s lies that we could possess power over death, and an omniscient angle on life. Instead, we became a kingdom of slaves held through fear of death for all the rules we have trespassed, fallen from grace and exiled from delight. “Fall” implies an infantile accident. Rather, it was a wilful and childish tantrum growing in intensity across time.

Our rebellious journey came to a head at the Tower of Babel. In Genesis 11, the people have constructed a city. And yet, it is the godless city of man, built around a giant edifice to assert human autonomy. They have abandoned spreading out to cultivate the earth, and have settled for security among artificial confines. Following the confused scripts of progress, control, and fame, the powerful few lord it over the many, driven by a univocal vision to scale the heavens. At this low point, God descends to diversify their language and scatter the nations. Despite this mixed blessing, we are left wondering from whence will come new grace sufficient to address a cosmic catastrophe.

How might this narrative inform an evangelical theology of education? This ancient tale of Babel reads like a modern reconstructionist allegory courtesy of Michael Apple. It addresses themes of freedom and autonomy, diversity and oppression, knowledge and power. It places the common good in tension with ethno-centric visions of political ideology expressed through common curriculum. It invites a critical perspective of contemporary consumerism and visions of economic progress that fragment society and leave the powerless calling to the heavens for justice. And from the antediluvian revolt onwards, we learn to question those in authority over us, whether powers and principalities, or human lords with grandiose building projects.

Such insights may sound heretical to a conservative Christian teacher. And yet, perhaps this reflects insufficient attention to the Biblical story? As Nicholas Wolterstorff wonders, perhaps this loss of radicalism results from an overemphasis upon creation and the cultural mandate (“freedom by mastery”), and an underemphasis upon the fall and the liberation mandate (“freedom by self-determination”). We shall return to questions of justice in the next leg of the journey.

Presently, however, I will argue that at the heart of God’s curriculum is the deconstruction of human idolatry manifested through techniques of control. We join this educational journey as we repent over the tower of ill-conceived autonomy, and embrace our creational limits.

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⁹ See Moodle Module 2, under Extra Resources, for the footnotes/references that accompany this narrative.

2.5  Israel >> Seeking Shalom: Bless from the Tent

Key Passages to Explore: Gn 12, Ex 3-4, 6-14, 19-20, 2 Sm 7:1-16, 2 Chr 34, Pss 67, 90, 105-106, Jer 31, Ez 36

Relevant Sections of Sherman’s “Kingdom Calling” (2011):
- While it wasn’t set as pre-reading for this week, the Introduction (15-25, especially 16-20) has powerful reflections on the Tsaddiqim (“the righteous”). This effectively captures Israel’s calling: that they were blessed to be a blessing, prospered to work for the common good. As Proverbs 11:10 says, “When the righteous prosper, the city rejoices; when the wicked perish, there are shouts of joy.” This theme is further unpacked in the pre-reading for next module, Chapter 2 (45-63) on “What Do the Righteous Look Like?”
- From this module’s pre-reading, see especially the section on JUSTICE (28-33), unpacking the three key dimensions of rescue, equity, and restoration.
- Appendix A 235-241: §7 (We Are Alien and Strangers in This World and Are to Live Accordingly); §8 (A Biblical Understanding of Power—and of Blessing); §10 (God’s Heart for the Poor, the Aliens, the Widow, the Oppressed, and the Orphan)

| Stage     | Plot             | What we Learn About | Our Action to Work with God | Vocational Equivalent: Work Should Serve ...
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<td>Chosen to bless ...</td>
<td>Wisdom</td>
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<td>Bless from the Tent</td>
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Telling the Story, slanted toward a theology of education ...¹¹

The third leg of our transformational journey concerns Israel.¹² From the garden to the tower, humanity has risen in rebellion and fallen from grace. The call to cultivate creation remains, but its faithless gardeners are fashioning a wasteland. Humanity’s pilgrimage grinds to a halt. How will the divine pedagogue draw his pupils toward maturity and holistic flourishing? At this point the Teacher risks all on what we may anachronistically identify as “border pedagogy”. The story focuses in on one middle-eastern man and his barren wife, occupying a humble and portable tent. Genesis 12 through Revelation 22 captures the mission of God to redeem a broken world and set everything right. God does so, however, in paradoxical fashion, moving from the particular to the universal. He “educates” the home-less one to teach the sheltered many, and emancipates the powerless to re-form the powerful. Abraham and his descendants were thus chosen to bless, elected on behalf of the world—a vocation balancing radical separation from, and loving identification with, captive humanity. As a royal priesthood, they are to mediate YHWH’s grace, so that all nations may play their part in realising our common cultural mandate. God selects this particular family and makes a community of pilgrims the means of dealing with sin. Costly covenants are forged with this people so that they will demonstrate the flourishing that results when we walk the way of the one true God. Israel must travel light and remain mobile as a model of seeking shalom.

¹¹ See Moodle Module 2, under Extra Resources, for the footnotes/references that accompany this narrative.

¹² Cf. Gn 12:1-4; Ex 19:4-6; 20:1-17; Lv 26:11-13; Dt 6; 2 Sm 7:1-16; Pss 67; 105-106; Prv 1:7; 8-9; Is 55:3-5; Jer 3:1-18; 31:31-34; Ez 36:17-38; Mal 1:11; 3:1-2; Rom 15:4; 1 Cor 10:1-11; Gal 3:8-9, Heb 11:8-10.
From the election of Abraham, through liberation from Egypt in exodus under Moses, to subduing the Promised Land as a new Eden awaiting cultivation under Joshua, we see God forming this community of slaves into an exemplar of righteousness and justice. Under King David they receive godly leadership, and it only remains to build the Temple as a symbol of God once again camping with humanity in the cosmic garden. Israel’s narrative arc peaks with the King of Peace welcoming the presence of God into the City of Peace, thus drawing and blessing the nations by the light of divine wisdom embodied in its Torah-keeping citizens. And yet, as with Babel, Solomon prematurely “settles” in Jerusalem, abusing his servants and falling into idolatry. He abandons fear of YHWH as the beginning of wisdom. He breaks covenant, and thus begins the elect’s descent at the world’s expense. Israel was no better than its neighbours. Torah illuminated the way to life, but they lacked godly leadership and the power to stay the course. They turned inwards and reserved God’s blessing for themselves, hurting and being hurt by the surrounding nations. Prophets arose from the margins to unveil self-interested readings of the Torah, and call them forward to freedom. They sought wisdom to faithfully respond to their present predicament. Nevertheless, Israel fractured and fell under the power of other Empires. Like Adam and Eve expelled from the garden, the chosen ones were now in exile—a shameful state awaiting divine intervention even after Second Temple Judaism, despite partial resettling in the land. This was a tragic tale for Abraham’s heirs. Their impotence epitomised and intensified humanity’s captivity, endangering all creation. Israel awaited a new leader, a new heart, and a new exodus.

This highly compressed narrative is familiar to evangelicals. Furthermore, as Chris Wright explains, “The great actions of God in the history of Israel were not merely cosmic theatre. They constituted an education. Because of what they had experienced, Israel now knew the identity of the living God.” It is thus a rich source for educational reflection, suggesting that teaching for transformation requires the fusion of believing, trusting, and doing, together understood as faithful praxis that is responsive to God’s intentions for the world. The Sacred Text from which it derives demonstrates the necessary integration of diverse ways of speaking and knowing—myth, poetry, history, prophecy, proverbs, and so forth—in facing up to life’s intractable questions amidst suffering and unrealised hopes for a better world. At the heart of God’s curriculum, however, is wisdom. As we discern the path to flourishing and walk obediently within its bounds, we may tabernacle with the Teacher. In turn, we may participate in God’s desire to bless from the tent, embracing every person and all creation. That is, we are called to seek the shalom of the secular city.

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13 Wright, Mission of God, 262.
2.6 Bringing the Old Testament Narrative Together

In this narrative theology I have argued that “education” and “religion” are twin pursuits. Both endeavours are framed within a larger story of who we are, where we came from, what went wrong, and how to lead humanity to flourishing. As such, the sharing of stories, particularly those considered revelatory by contemporary communities of belief, is a powerful process by which these trans-disciplinary perspectives may cross-pollinate. As we dialogue, we must recognise curriculum as the course we follow (what we “learn about”), and currere as the transformative communal journey (which we are “called to”). This accords with my particular concern, to construct an evangelical narrative theology of education and the place of Sacred Texts therein, built on the metaphor of pilgrimage.

Thus, I re-told the Biblical story of our collective journey in six stages. In this travelogue, we considered God’s Curriculum by which humanity comes of age and discovers life abundant, that all of creation may flourish under the dominion of its stewards. We were infants in Eden, making shalom as we learned about the duty and delight of work, called to cultivate God’s garden. And yet, as toddlers throwing a tantrum at Babel, breaking shalom, we learned about the promise and peril of knowledge, called to repent over the tower. The divine pedagogue then focused in on the few as a medium to rescue the many. The children of Abraham, as wanderers seeking shalom, learned about obedience to the way of wisdom, called to bless from the tent. Despite glimpses of the Promised Land, the elect also went awry, retaliating against rather than blessing the nations.

*In module 3 we will explore how God works to resolve this tension, calling us to join him in the process.*
2.7 A Summary of Vocational Wisdom from Stevens’ Work Matters (2012)

My narrative theology of vocation has stressed the six legs of God working with us, across Creation, Fall, Israel, Jesus, Church, and the New Creation.

In Work Matters, however, Paul Stevens (2012) has stuck close to the canonical structure of the Scriptures:
- Torah: Pt. 1, “God-Given Work”
- Prophets: Pt. 4, “Just Work”

What follows is taken directly from Stevens, crystallising vocational wisdom across each section. This book is a very rich source in forming your own Biblical Theology, whether in MCE41 or MCE61.

2.7.1 Torah: Pt. 1, “God-Given Work” (Stevens 2012, 47-48)

What do we learn from the first five books of the Bible?
First, work is part of our God-imaging dignity. We are made to work. Work is mandated by God and is both intrinsically good (good in itself) and extrinsically good (good for what it produces).
Second, work has been corrupted and degraded by human sin, as seen in Genesis chapter 3. This has led to predatory competition, blaming, toiling, and frustration, symbolized by “thorns, thistles and sweat.”
Third, work is to be undertaken with integrity and justice. This includes caring for creation, paying wages promptly, offering reasonable credit to others, and providing for the poor (Deut. 15-25).
Fourth, work is limited by Sabbath (Exod. 20:8; Deut. 5:12). Work is not good if it is all-consuming, permitting no rest and reflection.
Finally, work can be virtuous when undertaken with faith, hope, and love and is an expression of God’s call for all human beings. Thankfully, it is the Holy Spirit—and not we ourselves—who brings creativity and beauty to our daily work.

2.7.2 Historical Books: Pt. 2, “Stewardship Work” (Stevens 2012, 80)

What are some of the things we learn from the historical books?
First, leadership is work. Hard but good work.
Second, leadership is critical in order for a group of people to grow to maturity and to thrive.
Third, leaders are stewards, not masters of the people or their resources. They are called to exercise care and responsibility as they develop their people’s potential for mission and productive work.
Essentially, therefore, leaders are servants of the people.
Fourth, integrity and maturity are critical for leadership work since leaders not only exercise influence but also have a symbolic role. The primary factor that makes someone suited for leadership is his or her character.
Fifth, whether of small or large influence, leaders are providentially placed by God to make a difference.

What are some of the important lessons we learn in these books?
First, we learn that work is intrinsically good. For that reason, it is something we should “get into” with our whole heart and not be like the sluggard in the book of Proverbs.
Second, work is an opportunity for immense creativity and entrepreneurship. It captivates us in a way that play does not, as exemplified by the entrepreneurial woman in Proverbs 31.
Third, work in this life is nonetheless enigmatic. It is a gift, a blessing, and something in which we can find satisfaction, as the Professor in Ecclesiastes shows. At the same time, it often feels futile and empty. It is at this point, therefore, just because it is so hard and fraught with problems, that work becomes a kind of evangelist—taking us back to God who alone can fill the God-shaped vacuum of our souls.
Fourth, work can occasionally be playful in itself. But God’s intended counterpoise to work is a combination of play, rest, and Sabbath. These activities do not merely get us rested for the next day but are in themselves intrinsically good, bringing us a renewed perspective on the world and ourselves. While the full restoration of work and play must await the new heaven and new earth, some experience of this anticipated joy is possible even now.
Fifth, we should direct our actual work experience to God in prayer. By doing this we will discover, just as David did, that work can lead to spiritual growth and enriched ministry.
Sixth, our work, however exciting, can never be as wild, untamable, or awesome as God’s work. Like Job, we discover that we are not in absolute control of the world. It follows that a full theology of work can come about only as we contemplate the incredible creativity of God.

2.7.4  **Prophets: Pt. 4, “Just Work” (Stevens 2012, 131-132)**

What are some of the things we learn from the prophetic books?
First, we learn that God is passionately concerned about how we work and the effect of human work on other people, societies, and the environment. The same passion that gripped the hearts of the prophets can grip all workers who line themselves up with God’s interests.
Second, good work is characterized by justice, giving what is due to the worker and the neighbor. The opposite of just work is any form of enterprise that exploits, abuses, manipulates, and harms people and places. Such work is to be avoided at all costs.
Third, work must be understood not only in terms of its outward results but also in relation to the imagination from which those results flow. Good work comes from a good inner life.
Fourth, most Christians today work in a pluralistic and frequently compromising culture. Rather than keeping faith and work in separate compartments, or simply conforming to the surrounding secularism, the example of Daniel invites us to a thoroughgoing integration of faith and work.
While some form of compromise in nonessentials is inevitable in such “exilic” situations, it is nonetheless possible, albeit with attendant risks and challenges, to work with integrity.
Fifth, while some people are specifically called to cross major cultural frontiers to share the gospel of the kingdom of God, all believers are providentially sent by God into workplaces as missionaries. In these workplaces, we bear witness both by deed and word. Moreover, the work we do should not be regarded simply as a means for gaining access to the universal “mission field” of the workplace; rather, the work itself is part of God’s mission on earth, in which we participate. This will become even more clear in the next few studies.

*(In module 3 we will finish Stevens’ summary of vocational themes with New Testament “Kingdom Work”.*
3. BUSINESS TIME

Each module, we will use the middle session for business time. This centres on student contributions and interaction. Let’s start by drawing names for which student will share in “Show and Tell” or “Kingdom Taster” next module, before forming into groups to pray for our workmates and debrief the readings.

DRAWING FROM THE POOL OF NAMES, NEXT MODULE’S CONTRIBUTOR WILL BE …

SHOW & TELL: ______________________  or  KINGDOM TASTER: ______________________

3.1 Show & Tell and Kingdom Taster

Class Activity 2.3 … Show & Tell (5 mins)

Across this unit you will discover countless links and inspiring illustrations.

So, in this spot, it’s a chance for one student each week to share either:

1) An excellent resource that supports our efforts toward vocational stewardship;
2) An example or story that demonstrates vocational stewardship in action.

Class Activity 2.4 … Kingdom Taster (10 mins)

Sherman (2011, 23) shares the illustration of Baskin-Robbins pink spoons. Before the average ice-cream eater is willing to fork out good cash to eat what you’re selling, they want a taste. It’s not enough to describe the flavour. They need to see it, smell it, and ultimately consume it.

In a similar way, being a workplace witness must extend beyond talking about shalom. Our lives become a sample, with real substance, that invites our peers to taste and see that God is good. To know that the Kingdom/reign of God has come near.

So, if it’s your turn to contribute, here’s what you need to do:

1) Take a photo of you and your pink spoon at your place or work or key vocation. Email this to david.benson@malyon.edu.au, so he can display this while you’re sharing.
2) Tell us a bit about your vocation in its various dimensions: the nature of the work (daily tasks), the context of the work (work environment and relationships), the product of the work (goods and services), and the reward from the work (whether financial, relational, or environmental)? (See the “kingdom gap” activity after this box for more.)
3) How do you offer a foretaste of the kingdom through your vocation? Share a story.
4) How can we pray for you, to better restrain sin and seek shalom? >> We’ll pray for you!
One way of conceptualising your vocation is through “the Kingdom Gap.”

Try this:

1) Imagine your vocation was carried into the New Creation. Imagine that it reflected the fullness of the Kingdom of God, where all the corrupting influences of sin are removed. (Some professions will take more imagination than others.) Think about the following dimensions:
   a. The nature of the work itself (i.e., the day-to-day tasks workers do in producing something—entering data, fitting parts on an assembly line, consulting with clients, and so forth);
   b. The context of the work (i.e., the work environment and community among workers);
   c. The product of the work (i.e., the central goods and/or services your business yields—computer chips, financial advice, transportation, education, and so forth); and
   d. The income/reward from the work (i.e., profits and pay from goods and services rendered)

2) Now, what is the current state of affairs? Again, consider each of the same dimensions: the nature, context, product, and income of the work.

3) In God’s strength and prayerfully following His lead, how can I leverage my power and position to close this Kingdom Gap? That is, how can I participate in healing action by restraining sin and promoting shalom/flourishing? Again, seek God for particular actions you can do in each facet of your vocation: nature, context, product, income.

Three new actions that I can start right now to bridge the Kingdom Gap as a sign of God’s shalom are:

- _______________________________________________________________
- _______________________________________________________________
- _______________________________________________________________

You might find it helpful to map this onto a diagram like the following:
3.2 Small Group Interaction

Class Activity 2.5 ... Group Interaction (30 mins)

Each module we’ll break into the same small groups of ~3-4 people. You can join with who you like, though it may help to find people with a similar type of work to you, aligned with Banks (1999, 22-26) and Sherman (2011, 102-104), i.e., grouping by one of the seven types of God’s own work in the world:

A) REDEMPTIVE WORK: God’s saving and reconciling actions
B) CREATIVE WORK: God’s fashioning of the physical and human world
C) PROVIDENTIAL WORK: God’s provision for and sustaining of humans and the creation
D) JUSTICE WORK: God’s maintenance of justice
E) COMPASSIONATE WORK: God’s involvement in comforting, healing, guiding & shepherding
F) REVELATORY WORK: God’s work to enlighten with truth

Here’s the things you’re to work through:

1) A key stream for living your faith at work is through your kingdom ethics. To keep this in mind, each module you are to read out-loud a portion from the Sermon on the Mount. What comes to mind in your own context? Silently reflect for a minute on how to live this out. [5 minutes]

M1 = Mt 5:1-12   M2 = Mt 5:13-20   M3 = Mt 5:21-25   M4 = Mt 5:27-32
M5 = Mt 5:33-37   M6 = Mt 5:38-48   M7 = Mt 6:1-18   M8 = Mt 6:19-34
M9 = Mt 7:1-11   M10 = Mt 7:12-14  M11 = Mt 7:15-23  M12 = Mt 7:24-29

2) Choose 1-3 non-Christian peers on your occupational frontline.
   Pray for them by name as you feel led. [5 minutes]

3) Which of the pre-readings did you engage? Share a brief summary of the key points, giving most attention to the set-text and readings in the Unit Guide. (You may even find it helpful during this time to divvy up the next module’s readings, so between you they’re all covered.) [5 minutes]

4) From what you read, debrief using these four aspects [10-15 minutes]
   - a question—something you don’t get, or want to clarify
   - a challenge—something you disagree with, or want to nuance
   - an implication—“so what” for your vocational stewardship
   - an application—something useful right now toward fruitfulness on your frontline

(It’s helpful to jot notes using these 4 themes (Q/C/I/A) as you read outside class. This helps you engage what’s said, without getting too hung up on the details as you’re not examined on this. That said, each journal entry you need to engage with the set text, and [MCE61] *one* of the optional readings.)

5) Discuss the related journal question for this module (for modules 4-12) [15 minutes], e.g.

Journal #1 (re: module 4): What “distortion” in your theology most affects how you steward your vocation? Where does it trace back to, and how might you fix it up?

6) On the odd chance you finish all this with time left, then have one group member share a current story where you need “workplace wisdom”. Using the most basic model of theological reflection—see, judge, act—work through these questions:

What is going on and why? What ought to be going on? How might we respond?
In the first session of this module we sought to listen to the Biblical story, constructing a narrative theology of vocation to participate with God’s work as seen in Creation, the Fall and Israel.

In this session, we will share this vision, seeking to imagine how our vocation looks when living out of this story. Finally, in dialogue with each other, we will create new initiatives as an expression of the already but not yet Kingdom of God on our frontline.

Compass is one Christian organisation guiding young adults through this process of listening, imagining and creating. For their framing of this, watch this short video:
4.1 Group Presentations of Your Vocational Theology

Class Activity 2.6 – 20 minutes
Still working in the same groups from class activity 2.2 above, each group will take 5 minutes to present their A3 sheet summarising the implications of Creation, Fall, or Israel for a theology of vocation. Other groups may ask a question or two to further flesh this out.

Remember, as you share, explain the implications of this story has for the purpose of your work today, and how we participate as co-workers with our Triune God. You may like to highlight a character in the biblical story who epitomises (for good or bad) the vocational themes in this stage of the journey.

4.2 Implications for Your Frontline

What, then, does all of this mean for your particular calling. How might this look on your occupational frontline? As you start thinking about assessment requirement 1, this is a good time to dialogue.

Class Activity 2.7 – 25 minutes
Break into groups of 3, with one person from each of the narrative stages: creation, fall, Israel.

In these groups, share freely your response to this module, guided by the following questions:

► What does this biblical/narrative theology of work look like for your particular vocation?

More broadly, how is God @ Work through your vocation?
1. Where do you see the goodness of creation in your vocation?
2. Where do you see the brokenness of the fall in your vocation?
3. Where do you see signs of restoration in what you do?
   ... That is, how do you seek first the kingdom of God as a ____________ (insert profession here)

► Share a story from your own experience that illustrates key themes and principles

► What are the biggest challenges you face in living this out, and what areas need work?

► Brainstorm some creative responses to this theology, to embody God’s work on your frontline

Reflection Activities 2.3-2.4 – Distance Students
Journal at least 30 (meaningful!) words in response to two of the questions in class activity 2.7 above and tick off the related boxes of the unit guide. #2.3 #2.4
As you get into the details of this vocational theology, don’t forget the **big picture from module 1**.

We have a *quadruple bottom line* of economic profitability, social capital, environmental sustainability, and spiritual capital: profit, people, planet, purpose.

And, we participate with God in working for nothing less than *shalom* and *salvation* for the entire cosmos.

The question is, **What is my particular calling within this expansive vocation to follow Christ?**

### Additional Resources Module 2

Not sure what this should look like in an *assessment requirement*? If so, these *exemplars* will help. (Be sure to use the assignment proformas on Moodle also.)

They were for a different though related subject: “A Christian Worldview”. However, their first assessment task was very similar.

For **Haydn Lea** (PE310—similar to MCE41), a Pilot-Officer and Air Force Chaplain, his task was to describe his vocation, and then build a theological frame for his work in which he explores:
1. Where do you see creational intent in this vocation? (Creation)
2. How has cultural idolatry (sin) warped this vocation? (Fall)
3. How might you participate redemptively with healing action as you seek first the Kingdom of God? (Restoration)

For **Adam Powell** (an industrial chemist) and **Rebecca Yin Foo** (an educational and developmental psychologist), both PE510 (graduate level, similar to MCE61, overlapping with assessment requirement 3), they took on the “Kingdom Gap” activity, painting a picture of how they give a taste of God’s reign in the present reality of their work.

See Moodle Module 2, under *Extra Resources*, for their assignments (with my feedback), and the grade criteria sheets (with my comments) to model the kind of work I’m looking for.
5. CLOSING PRAYER AND PREPARATION FOR NEXT CLASS

The Lord’s (or Disciples’) Prayer, based on Matthew 6:9-13, is an important practice that has drifted off the radar for many Christians. And yet, it is a core and sustaining discipline. It is a gift guiding our vocations. So, each module, we’ll finish by praying this together. After this, I will pray a blessing over you, drawn from Garber (2014, 239) or various prayers in Nelson (2011, 31, 48, 61, 98, 118-119, 160, 182-183, 200). Across this course, it is my hope that you will form some unique practices (spiritual habits) that direct your heart and working routine toward your kingdom calling.

Our Father in Heaven,
Holy is your name.
Your Kingdom come,
Your will be done,
On Earth as in Heaven.
Give us today our daily bread,
And forgive us our sins,
As we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For yours is the Kingdom,
The power and the glory,
Now and forever,
Amen.

Prayer for Vocations (Garber 2014, 239):

God of heaven and earth, we pray for your kingdom to come, for your will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. Teach us to see our vocations and occupations as woven into your work in the world this week. For mothers at home who care for children, for those whose labour forms our common life in this city, the nation and the world, for those who serve the marketplace of ideas and commerce, for those whose creative gifts nourish us all, for those whose callings take them into the academy, for those who long for employment that satisfies their souls and serves you, for each one we pray, asking for your great mercy. Give us eyes to see that our work is holy to you, O Lord, even as our worship this day is holy to you. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Avodah. May your work and worship be one in glorifying God this week.\(^{14}\)

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\(^{14}\) See Nelson 2011, 26-27. *Avodah* derives from ‘*abod*, first used Genesis 2:5, 15 where tilling the garden is spiritual service akin to dressing the altar, living all of life before the face of God (*coram Deo*). Cf. *avodah* in Ex 35:21.
Forum Activity

For each of modules 4 through 12 of the course, please submit a 200 word forum post, comprising:

(a) A personal response to the assigned vocational question emerging from the module notes. This response must engage with the set text—and one optional reading for MCE61/D—and centre on a story from your frontline.
(b) Forum interaction with at least one other student that advances the conversation, perhaps through a comment or question.

The 9 posts and forum interactions are together to be submitted as one word.doc online for Assessment Requirements 2a and 2b. (Check the criteria) However, to ensure you are tracking with the material, and that distance and class students journey together, you are required to post these responses to Moodle within the week after the Module is completed.

For each Moodle Module (4-12), I’ve set up a forum bubble.

The next question to which you will respond is:

Journal #1 (re: module 4): What “distortion” in your theology most affects how you steward your vocation? Where does it trace back to, and how might you fix it up?

From module 4 onwards, you should have discussed this forum question in your small group during this module’s middle session (“Business Time”).

All students respond on the Moodle Forum (200 words)

Preparation for Next Week …

- Forum post work (as per the unit guide assessment requirement) both addressing the set question, and interacting with others. Post this to Moodle before next class.
- Pre-reading, as per Unit Guide lecture schedule. The set-text is the minimum. Divvy up the other readings with your small group, and come ready to share on each of the following:
  - a question—something you don’t get, or want to clarify
  - a challenge—something you disagree with, or want to nuance
  - an implication—“so what” for your vocational stewardship
  - an application—something useful right now toward fruitfulness on your frontline
- If it’s your turn, come prepared for show & tell to share a helpful resource or inspirational story that demonstrates vocational stewardship in action.
- If it’s your turn, come prepared to share your kingdom taster, sending your “Pink ice-cream-spoon at Work” photo to david.benson@malyon.edu.au.
6. REFERENCES


