

A PRACTICAL THEOLOGY OF WORK AND LEADERSHIP

by

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A dissertation submitted to  
the Faculty of McMaster Divinity College  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Practical Theology

McMaster Divinity College  
Hamilton, Ontario  
2020

DOCTOR OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

McMaster Divinity College  
Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: A Practical Theology of Work and Leadership

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NUMBER OF PAGES: viii + 296



## McMASTER DIVINITY COLLEGE

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## DOCTOR OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

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## ABSTRACT

“A Practical Theology of Work and Leadership”

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This dissertation seeks to comprehend and respond to deterioration in what is considered to be a very significant foundation of human flourishing—a sense of vigour, vitality, purpose and meaningfulness at work. The term flourishing in the workplace is offered both in the sense that work satisfies a person’s economic needs (fair pay and job security) and in the sense that it satisfies a person’s deeper sense of vocation, of Spirit-led calling.

This dissertation responds to the concern that the postmodern workplace, for a number of reasons, inhibits a person’s ability to flourish. Yet, this dissertation will argue, there is a deep thirst for meaningfulness in our daily endeavour. We are settling for less. From the research conducted, this dissertation develops an approach to practices of leadership that bring about deep purpose to be derived from our work. Further, this dissertation develops an approach for ministry that might facilitate these Spirit-led practices. The premise is that leadership that is self-centred must be transformed into leadership that is other-centered. Leadership is conceived as critical to the nurturing of human flourishing, ultimately affecting our behaviours beyond the workplace.

There are two dimensions to the qualitative research designed for this dissertation, as described by the questionnaires completed by research respondents. The first is to seek an unaided broad response to questions regarding peoples' sense of purpose, self-esteem, value, and self-actualization. The second is to seek an understanding of the degree to which such responses are shaped by a person's sense of faith. Beyond these dimensions, the research explores the extent to which respondents engage with a minister or spiritual counsellor.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With my deep thanks to Dr. Phil Zylla, Dr. Michael Knowles, and all my colleagues in the academy, in business, in public service, and in ministry.

My thanks also to my colleague, Reverend Sue-Ann Ward, for her careful reading of this dissertation, together with her thoughtful comments.

With special thanks to Sally, my partner in life.

This dissertation has been enriched immeasurably by men and women from Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom, each of whom has contributed their time and treasure by responding to my invitation to participate in the research study which is at the core of this dissertation. These responses, from people in all walks of life—workers, supervisors, entrepreneurs, farmers and retirees—have guided my analysis. I am indebted to them.

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my grandchildren. May you find God's purpose for all your endeavours.

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## INTRODUCTION

For most people, work presents us with mixed emotions. In terms of flourishing and in finding true purpose, work is a struggle. While people take pride in their chosen endeavours, they also experience dissonance at work, to a lesser or greater extent. This study will explore the quality of leadership actions that might enhance, or inhibit, the opportunity for true flourishing. Further, this dissertation will argue that the Church appears to be largely missing a significant discourse on workplace spirituality in general, and on Spirit-led leadership in particular. Support for this inquiry will employ grounded theory derived from qualitative research, analyzed through the lens of critical literature on these themes.

Jesus said, “I came that they might have life, and have it abundantly.”<sup>1</sup>

Abundance implies plentiful-ness, more than sufficiency. Our expectation of work—our daily contribution to our chosen field of endeavour—should hold for us the hope that while we contribute to the abundance of the enterprise that we are part of, we too will experience life abundantly. This should be the cultural aspiration for every enterprise, faith-based or secular.

Practical theology offers a theological interpretation of situations, resulting in a constructive analysis which offers new insights for Christian faith. This dissertation provides a grounded theory which emerges from rich, first-hand narratives that describe

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<sup>1</sup> John 10:10b.

the situations and lived experiences of the research respondents. The result of this research, when combined with a critical review of the relevant literature together with reflection drawn from the researcher's own experience, results in a revitalized view of the workplace in the postmodern era.

A specific, qualitative, enquiry at the heart of this dissertation seeks to understand the degree of perceived flourishing in the workplace. With the assumption that the actions of leadership have a direct effect on human flourishing at work. Mary Shideler writes:

To be a person is to act, to work. In working we become our true selves and know ourselves and each other truly. Therefore work which is essentially trivial or shoddy, or consists of making things that are not worth making at all, diminishes the persons who engage in it at every level of production, exchange and use. In contrast, those who love their work, and love to do it well, grow into the full measure of personhood.<sup>2</sup>

Our philosophies change in terms of the way we see work intersecting with other aspects of life. We move from modern to postmodern epistemologies around faith, spirituality, and religion. Our organizational structures change and our societies change. *But with God all things are possible.* Karl Barth writes:

When revelation takes place, it never does so by means of our insight and skill, but in the freedom of God to be free for us and to free us from ourselves, that is to say, to let His light shine in our darkness, which does not comprehend His light. In this miracle, which we can only acknowledge as having occurred, which can receive from the hand of God as it takes place by His hand. His Kingdom comes for us, and this world passes for us. It is in this coming and passing that there takes place for us the movement which Holy Scripture calls revelation.<sup>3</sup>

For those who are called to leadership and to ministry, this dissertation argues that there is a divine requirement to be stewards and to be shepherds. This means doing our best to

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<sup>2</sup> Shideler, "Introduction," 14–15.

<sup>3</sup> Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, 67.

respond to God's call and to come alongside those we engage with as co-workers. We are called to be people who bring faith to God's workplace as God's revelation unfolds, broken as we are. Charles Winqvist writes, "Practical theology is a theology specially grounded in theory and practice and it is needed to bring self-consciousness to ministry."<sup>4</sup> That is the focus of this dissertation. Bartholomew and O'Dowd assert, "The secular humanist project has not succeeded as hoped, yet our culture bids us to press on, trusting that we just need to tinker with our knowledge and technology until we are finally happy with ourselves."<sup>5</sup> This dissertation argues that leadership is most correctly viewed as a theological practice, in that leadership may be grounded in theological values. Winqvist also asserts that, "Ministry needs to be reconceptualised so that it attends to what is real and important at the heart of religious experience even as it attends to everyday problems in parish life."<sup>6</sup> Arguably, workplace challenges are indeed everyday problems.

With the foundational argument that culture and ethos are driven, for better or worse, by leadership, this dissertation is a study in practice-led research, leading to research-led practice. The practice in view here is leadership. Practice-led research is concerned with the nature of a practice, leading to new knowledge that has operational significance for that practice. Specifically, this dissertation will propose that Spirit-led leadership is a critical practice if people are to achieve a workplace environment conducive to human flourishing, whether the workplace is faith-centred or secular. This research will show that when we acknowledge the spiritual dimension of our labour, we

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<sup>4</sup> Winqvist, "Revisioning Ministry," 27.

<sup>5</sup> Bartholomew and O'Dowd, *Old Testament*, 185.

<sup>6</sup> Winqvist, "Revisioning Ministry," 27.

are likely to have a greater sense of meaningfulness and purpose than those who do not. Leadership strategies that foster spiritual awareness may facilitate community and human flourishing in the workplace and beyond. Kimberley Bell asserts that “Individuals today are wanting more out of their work because work has become an integral part of individual’s lives.”<sup>7</sup>

Leadership may be defined as showing the way, both in the sense of organizing work processes, and in terms of securing the ethos of the workplace. John Stott writes, “*Leadership* is a word shared by Christians and non-Christians alike, but this does not mean that their concept is the same.”<sup>8</sup> Stott offered these words to a community that, in its time (2002), was comprised largely of individuals who generally had a relatively robust relationship with their faith and their faith traditions. However, an increasing number were turning away from faith, choosing to fashion their ideals and habits in secular terms. Much has changed as the modern era has given way to the postmodern era. Joel Thiessen writes, “Religious nones are the fastest growing ‘religious’ group in Canada, the United States, and many other Western Countries.”<sup>9</sup> While an increasing number may eschew the term religious, a significant number describe themselves as spiritual. Bell confirms that, “Spirituality . . . may be more of an inward reflection that allows individuals to experience inner feelings, personal experiences, a desire to care for others and having a relationship with them.”<sup>10</sup>

This dissertation constructs a ‘warp and woof’: a structure for a theological practice of leadership that emerges from the weaving together of a qualitative study and

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<sup>7</sup> Bell, *Spirituality in the Workplace*, 12.

<sup>8</sup> Stott, *Basic Christian Leadership*, 11 [emphasis original].

<sup>9</sup> Thiessen, *Meaning of Sunday*, 94.

<sup>10</sup> Bell, *Spirituality in the Workplace*, 5.

a critical literature review integrated with impressions drawn from five decades of personal lived experiences in corporate, government and academic leadership, while also experiencing a faith conversion. There is an interdisciplinary interpretation that emerges in this work which drives the focus of this dissertation.

Drawing from the research conducted for this dissertation, viewed through the lens of experience, the fundamental threads to the argument are as follows:

- There is a deep thirst for meaningfulness in work, evidenced frequently by an expression of caring for others.
- Dissonance, mild to severe, is pervasive.
- Human beings are generally settling for less in terms of achieving a state of flourishing in their work.
- Leadership that is self-centred must be replaced by leadership that is other-centered.
- Practices of leadership must reflect and respond to postmodern societal views of success and the impact of organizational structures.
- Paracletic ministry can provide critical guidance and encouragement in the leadership practices espoused in this dissertation.

A respondent to the dissertation research questionnaire writes:

[I feel] that I have been put in a position of being taken advantage of, reducing my drive and loyalty. But I am blessed to continually receive what I need. Many events have placed a sense of doubt in my job security. E.g. others not being supported, not being assigned to a position that I felt qualified to do; being assigned a role that suited the company, but which impeded my development.<sup>11</sup>

When a senior person puts together a schedule for tasks to be completed and, accordingly, assigns and communicates those tasks, these are acts of management.

When the concerns of the persons assigned to the tasks are ignored or disrespected, that is a leadership issue. Peter Drucker writes that a manager “sets objectives, organizes, motivates and communicates, measures, and develops people.”<sup>12</sup> Henry Mintzberg states, “The overriding purpose of managing is to ensure that the unit serves its basic

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<sup>11</sup> Verbatim respondent 22.

<sup>12</sup> Drucker, *Management*, 8.

purpose.”<sup>13</sup> These activities are generally transactional in nature. In other words, something is done in return for reward—they are extrinsic. Warren Bennis turns to intrinsic factors. He writes:

All leaders have four essential competencies. First they are able to engage others by creating shared meaning . . . Second all authentic leaders have a distinctive voice; something we now call emotional intelligence . . . The third quality that all true leaders have is integrity. The fourth and key competence is adaptive capacity.<sup>14</sup>

Biblical stories of leadership are frequently of such a nature. Using the story of Nehemiah, Matthew Carter writes:

Leadership is providential. God raised up Nehemiah to accomplish an important mission. God is the active agent leading and directing. Leadership is spiritual hard work. Nehemiah exemplifies the interplay between prayer, planning, and hard work . . . Leaders persevere. Nehemiah faced adversity and conflict.<sup>15</sup>

The story of Nehemiah encompasses both the organizational and the ethical elements of leadership. Aubrey Malphurs adds a dimension to the distinction between management and leadership. He writes, “The basic difference between leadership and management is that the former strives to accomplish change, while the latter seeks to control complexity.”<sup>16</sup> In the context of this dissertation, management is viewed as essentially about the organization of work. Leadership is viewed as being about the ethos of the organization. This dissertation is about leadership founded in fidelity. It is about the creation of an ethos that nurtures human flourishing in the workplace, while attending to the organization of work for optimum productivity and output.

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<sup>13</sup> Mintzberg, *Managing*, 49.

<sup>14</sup> Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader*, xxv–xxvi.

<sup>15</sup> Carter, “4 Leadership Lessons from Nehemiah,” para. 4.

<sup>16</sup> Malphurs, *Developing a Vision*, 191.

A culture of flourishing should be central to pastoral development. David Miller and Wambura Ngunjiri write:

Workplace spirituality is a framework of organizational values evidenced in the culture that promotes employees' transcendence through work processes, facilitating their sense of being connected to others in a way that provides feelings of completeness and joy.<sup>17</sup>

As will be seen, this drive for completeness and joy, for meaning and flourishing, is pervasive in the responses to the questionnaire supporting this dissertation. Many echo this drive. Victor Frankl writes, "Man's [sic] search for meaning is the primary motivation in his [sic] life and not a 'secondary rationalization' of instinctual drives."<sup>18</sup>

Spirituality, as a factor in the achievement of purpose at work, is a complex topic. Scott Quatro writes that the topic of workplace spirituality, "is perhaps one of the most compelling and least understood forces driving organizational practice today."<sup>19</sup> While we can find considerable literature on workplace spirituality, this dissertation draws together responses to a questionnaire developed to explore actual lived experiences as they reflect the respondents' sense of purpose.

Denise Ackerman and Riet Bons-Storm define practical theology as "the theological discipline which is essentially involved with living, communicating and practising the life of faith."<sup>20</sup> This life of faith *must* pervade the workplace experience. Work simply occupies too great a component of our existence not to. Research respondents who identify as people of faith frequently express their values. John Swinton and Harriet Mowat define practical theology as follows: "Practical theology is

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<sup>17</sup> Miller and Ngunjiri, "Leadership View," 130.

<sup>18</sup> Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*, 99.

<sup>19</sup> Quatro, "New Age," 228.

<sup>20</sup> Ackerman and Bons-Storm, *Liberating Faith Practices*, 1.

critical, theological reflection on the practices of the Church as they interact with the practices of the world, with a view to ensuring and enabling faithful participation in God's redemptive practices in, to, and for the world."<sup>21</sup>

Practising a life of faith, for many, means finding spiritual meaning in the great number of hours to which we devote our working lives. This dissertation reflects a deep commitment to the assurance that every human being might flourish—in this context defined as to grow vigorously, succeed, thrive, and prosper. This dissertation argues that true human flourishing can only be achieved when, as Elizabeth Liebert writes, it is through discernment that we, “come to know ourselves in the light of God, thereby coming to know God.”<sup>22</sup> Work experience should lead to this deeper knowledge of God. We should accept nothing less.

Key assumptions that are made in approaching this research include the perspective that, with the exception of a very small minority, people wish to make a meaningful contribution through their workplace efforts. However, this dissertation is grounded in the view that few people fully achieve a deep sense of purpose, even though we give the greater part of our lives to our work. This shortcoming is explored and confirmed by the qualitative research conducted.

This dissertation concentrates its effort on the confluence of a deep sense of purpose and meaningfulness at work, in the sense that work satisfies a person's economic needs (fair pay and job security), and that it satisfies a person's sense of spiritual vocation in a workplace that has become largely secularized, i.e. transformed from close identification with religious values to an environment with essentially no

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<sup>21</sup> Swinton and Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, 6.

<sup>22</sup> Liebert, *The Way of Discernment*, 5.



such basis.<sup>23</sup> This dissertation seeks to explore the ways in which persons of faith express a deeper sense of vocation and purpose versus those who do not identify as persons of faith. By inference, the practice of leadership is failing to create and maintain an environment in which a state of flourishing is achieved.<sup>24</sup>

Reflexivity is defined as attending to the context of knowledge construction, especially to the effect of the researcher. John Swinton and Harriet Mowat write, “Reality is open to a variety of different interpretations and can never be accessed in pure, un-interpreted forms.”<sup>25</sup> The coding process involved several iterations of review and reflection. While this dissertation has followed a discipline of being informed by qualitative research and a critical literature review, there are areas which are sufficiently poignant in terms of personal reflection that I have added anecdotal comments, although these are always presented in footnotes.

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<sup>23</sup> As of the time of writing this dissertation, we are witnessing legislation in Quebec that asserts a total secularization of the workplace.

<sup>24</sup> I wish to add here a comment of personal reflection. I have worked for fifty-plus years, the first forty involved being at the direction of leaders, ultimately being in leadership roles. The last ten years involved being in leadership roles, consulting to leaders, as well as ordained ministry.

<sup>25</sup> Swinton and Mowat, *Qualitative Research*, vii.

## CHAPTER 1: MEANING IN THE WORKPLACE: A RESEARCH FRAMEWORK.

In 2005 Eric Dent et al. asserted that, “The theory of workplace spirituality and its relationship to leadership is in its infancy.”<sup>1</sup> This dissertation intends to add to this growing field of research. Although secular culture defines remunerated labour in economic terms, this dissertation contends that work is best understood as spiritual in nature. Work activities (at their best) serve to express personal vocation (an internal and personal good). Work is (at its best) meaningful and purposeful in that it contributes to human flourishing (an external and communal good). Vocation and human flourishing are, in turn, both anthropological, i.e. cultural/social, and spiritual characteristics, invoking and expressing the divine-human relationship. This dissertation puts forward the argument that nowhere, perhaps, is the divine-human endeavour more critical than in the exercise of leadership.

### **The Problem**

Yishuang Meng writes:

Modern theories of leadership such as strategic leadership theory emerged as early as the 1980s when outdated theories of behavioral contingency were questioned, resulting in the beginning of a shift in focus, leading to the emergence of modern theories hypothesizing the importance of vision, motivation and value-based control of clan and culture.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Dent et al., “Spirituality and Leadership,” 626.

<sup>2</sup> Meng, “Spiritual Leadership at the Workplace,” 408.

Marguerite Rigoglioso adds, “By engaging more of workers’ total selves, organizations hope to develop staff who are more satisfied, productive and innovative.”<sup>3</sup> While this shift in focus may be underway, research suggests that the human search for meaning and coherence continues to be frustrated by the work environment. As will be seen, employees risk being reduced to factors of production as organizations prioritize profit and output over human flourishing. There is a further risk to human flourishing wrought by increased urbanization, post-modernism, marginalization of the church, and social change in general. For example, cultural transmutation being brought about by rapid advancement of multiculturalism.<sup>4</sup> The working lives that are the central concern of this dissertation may well be described by Swinton and Mowat when they state, “Most of us tend to live within situations in ways which are unreflective and uncomplicated.”<sup>5</sup> In other words, we simply accept an ‘it is what it is’ approach to work. We become resigned to our situation, perhaps in order to keep it uncomplicated. We keep our heads down. We accept minimal affirmation of our work. We bend to the mores of the environment—sometimes at the suppression of our true values. We accept and tolerate weak leadership. We brush aside value-less ‘performance’ feedback from a supervisor who has little real awareness of our work, and we settle into a state where we seldom ask, ‘is this all there is?’

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<sup>3</sup> Rigoglioso, “Spirit at Work,” para. 1.

<sup>4</sup> As will be explored later in this dissertation, multiculturalism ultimately brings societal benefits. It is the rate of change that brings potential challenges.

<sup>5</sup> Swinton and Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, 16.

### **Broad Research Needed**

This dissertation contributes to a growing field of enquiry. Meng writes, “Spiritual leadership and workplace spirituality are in their infancy, and consequently, theoretical knowledge related to this subject in Western religious theology and practiced leadership ethics is limited.”<sup>6</sup> A number of business schools have undertaken to incorporate, in their curricula, the deeper spiritual dimension of human flourishing at work, moving beyond a focus which is primarily on strategies that enhance productivity and profitability which eschew the spiritual dimension of work. The church, also is broadening its discourse on the search for deep spiritual contentment at work.

*Gravitas* for this dissertation’s focus is drawn from the vocational perspective that work is important in the full sense of *transformatio mundi* over *annihilatio mundi*, in that our work may be a contribution to the new kingdom. Work may be viewed within a framework of the doctrine of last things, implying a divine-human cooperation empowered and enabled by the Spirit. Thus, we must recognize the practice, and deep human value of embracing spirituality in the workplace. Miroslav Volf states, “The picture changes radically with the assumption that the world will not end in apocalyptic destruction, but in eschatological transformation.”<sup>7</sup>

The goal of this dissertation is to develop a ‘research-informed practice,’ leading primarily to a deeper understanding of, and more effective approach to, the practices of organizational leadership and, secondarily, implications for leadership-related ministry. Thus, there are two audiences for the product of this endeavour. One audience is the community of leaders who seek spiritual depth to their endeavours. The other is the

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<sup>6</sup> Meng, “Spiritual Leadership at the Workplace,” 408.

<sup>7</sup> Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 91.

fellowship of pastoral ministers and counsellors who seek to deepen their preparedness for dialogue regarding the realities and challenges of the workplace in general and leadership in particular. Both of these audiences are addressed through the lens of practical theology. Swinton and Mowat underscore these goals when they discuss the goal of practical theology as “facilitating faithful participation in God’s practices in, to and for the world.”<sup>8</sup> There may be no single practice more critical to achieving this end than the practice of leadership. Dent et al. write, “Leaders who bring their spirituality to work transform organizations from merely mission-driven activities into places where individual and collective spirituality are encouraged and spiritual development is integrated into the day-to-day work life.”<sup>9</sup> Jeff Woods asserts that “it is in human nature that we find God’s revelation.”<sup>10</sup> Thus Spirit-led leadership<sup>11</sup> will shape the nature of the workplace. This dissertation also holds to the belief that God is revealed in our response to him through our work, and that we are not fully satisfied with our work—we do not experience true flourishing—until we discover this revelation. It may be, however, that consciously or unconsciously, some abandon this search.

In a previous article, “Paracletic Ministry: A Study in Pastoral Encounters with Male Mid-career Spiritual Searchers,” I offered the following:

This article presents a conceptual distinction between silence, stillness and solitude, surrender and divine encounter; all within what is offered as a *paracletic* ministry journey. In addition to Henri Nouwen the work accesses a fairly broad range of practical and pastoral theologians, together with literature regarding spirituality, to support the author’s assertions regarding a *paracletic*

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<sup>8</sup> Swinton and Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, 6.

<sup>9</sup> Dent et al., “Spirituality and Leadership,” 627.

<sup>10</sup> Woods, *Designing Religious Research*, 53.

<sup>11</sup> The term ‘spirit-led’ will be used frequently in this dissertation. It is intended to capture a prayerful leadership, founded in the discernment that comes from prayer.

approach for coming alongside, and encouraging those who are struggling with and searching for faith.<sup>12</sup>

The circumstance presented here is the life situation of a career-driven, but otherwise spiritually adrift, mid-career male figure for whom paraclitic ministry is viewed as critical. For this individual, a spiritually sound view of life and achievement has been lost. C.S. Lewis writes:

There are two ways in which the human machine goes wrong. One is when human individuals drift apart from one another, or else collide with one another and do one another damage, by cheating or bullying. The other is when things go wrong inside the individual—when the different parts of him [sic] (different faculties and desires and so on) either drift apart or interfere with one another.<sup>13</sup>

These circumstances and phenomena are among those that this dissertation seeks to encounter and understand through qualitative research. Sharon Ravitch and Matthew Riggan state:

The process of developing your research questions is primarily one of *excavation*. You disembark onto a vast swath of intellectual terrain, formed by an amalgam of what you care about and are interested in, the field(s) you have been exposed to and are working within, and what is already known about the problems or questions that pique your interest.<sup>14</sup>

This suggests a critical perspective that is reflected in the notion of being spiritually adrift as offered above. This perspective is at the heart of practical theology, and presents the question asked by Swinton and Mowat, i.e. “What appears to be going on; what is actually going on?”<sup>15</sup> This dissertation must, and will, respond to these questions.

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<sup>12</sup> Bates, “Paraclitic Ministry,” 66 [emphasis original].

<sup>13</sup> Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 71.

<sup>14</sup> Ravitch and Riggan, *Reason and Rigour*, 29 [emphasis original].

<sup>15</sup> Swinton and Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, v.

## **Research Methodology**

The fundamental purpose of this dissertation is to arrive at a series of recommendations for leadership practices by which the dissonance between purpose and work might be ameliorated. The ways in which this goal will be accomplished are threefold. Firstly, this dissertation will reflect on changing organizational structure and leadership approaches, examined through the lens of reported perspectives drawn from actual lived experiences. Secondly, coding and analysis of the respondent narratives will be multi-stage, reflexive, and iterative in nature. Finally, each stage will be connected and deepened in understanding through theoretical and theological reflection.

This dissertation is entirely focussed on the human experience at work, considered theologically. As a result, there is a need for an iterative approach, working through multiple domains. These include practical theology, organizational theory, ethics, management/leadership theory and economics.

This dissertation is qualitative in nature—i.e. exploratory research employed to gain an understanding of the underlying perspectives, opinions, and motivations of people at work, particularly the spiritual dimensions of work. The analytical methodologies used in this dissertation rely on the written words of individuals. The research questions draw from the lives of individuals as told through their own stories. Additionally, phenomenology, i.e. the study of structures of consciousness as experienced from the first-person point of view as narrated by the respondents, together with grounded theory enable the conceptualisation of the latent social patterns expressed by the respondents.

Research questionnaire responses were completed by thirty-two men and women between the ages of mid-twenties and mid-seventies. These respondents live in Canada,

the United Kingdom, and the United States. They work in for-profit, not-for-profit, civil service, and faith-based environments. They include people who are, or were, in supervisory roles, in non-supervisory roles, as well as those who are entrepreneurs. The respondents narrate their feelings about work, and their sense of fulfillment, meaning, and purpose in their work. They narrate their *situations* and their *lived experiences* in those situations. Don Browning writes, “The interpretation of situations seldom is thought to include the personal histories that bring people into praxis. This is a significant loss to practical theology and theological education in the church, the seminary, and the university.”<sup>16</sup> By contrast, and as stated earlier, this dissertation is grounded in the narratives of the lived experiences of the respondents to the research questionnaire presented herein. Adele Clarke adds:

Very briefly, grounded theory is an empirical approach to the study of social life through qualitative research and analysis. In this method, the analyst initially codes the data (open coding)—word by word, segment by segment . . . Related codes that have endured are then densified into more enduring and analytically ambitious ‘categories,’ and these are ultimately integrated into a theoretical analysis of the substantive area.<sup>17</sup>

The narratives offered by the respondents are drawn together to create a grounded theory<sup>18</sup> which underpins the balance of this dissertation. A grounded theory will emerge as the conceptualization of the lived experiences of the respondents to the research questionnaire underpinning this dissertation. Grounded theory is both a research method and an outcome.

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<sup>16</sup> Browning, *Fundamental Practical Theology*, 59.

<sup>17</sup> Clarke, *Situational Analysis*, xxxi.

<sup>18</sup> Throughout the balance of this dissertation, the term ‘grounded theory’ will be used to introduce tenets of the grounded theory derived from analysis of the research, particularly in terms of how these tenets result in proposed leadership practices.



Using grounded theory as a research method will provide for a systematic construction of theories through methodical gathering and analysis of the data accrued. Grounded theory is a research methodology which operates inductively, i.e. drawing together the separate facts brought forward by the research in order to construct and prove the resulting theory. J. Morse and P. Field write that qualitative research is “a process of fitting data together, of making the invisible obvious, linking and attributing consequences to antecedents. It is a process of conjecture and verification, of correction and modification, of suggestion and defense.”<sup>19</sup>

This dissertation employs a recursive process of gathering individual responses from research participants, sorting and coding those responses, making early notes, reflecting through the dual lenses of theology and personal experiences, reading again, and drafting again. Ely et al. write:

Revelations won't burst forth from the data. Emphatically said, the rounds of writing, thinking, analyzing and forming will aid the search toward understanding. Our definition of how meaning is produced is essential here. Instead of an attempt to *find or see* meaning 'in the data' it is far more productive to *compose* meaning that the data may lead us to understand. In life, we create our own reality out of persons or situations; it isn't that the person or situation is the *reality*. This is an important distinction that researchers must recognize each time they work with their data; writing about the same subject, over and over again, leads to discoveries—new ways of seeing, saying, and thinking about the writer is trying to understand. We can't stress enough that further clarification comes through exploration. The messages of any data are multiple and multi-layered and blurred at times.<sup>20</sup>

These observations have been of critical importance to the crafting of questions, the sorting and coding of the answers to those questions, and the way in which the resulting data are interpreted and drawn together coherently. Ely et al. also make a relevant

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<sup>19</sup> Morse and Field, *Qualitative Research*, 125–26.

<sup>20</sup> Ely et al., *On Writing Qualitative Research*, 20 [emphasis original].

statement regarding a researcher's stance. They write, "Stance is the various perspectives through which we frame the collection and interpretation of data, or, as we will suggest through the metaphor angles of repose, those that influence how and what we see and the interpretations in writing that arise from that seeing."<sup>21</sup> This is particularly important in terms of the large questions this dissertation seeks to answer.

Ely et al. expand on this perspective. They write:

[S]ymbolic interaction, critical ethnography, phenomenology, action research, hermeneutics, and case study, among others, become alternatives and possibilities rather than rigid corsets . . . We see a complex network of belief systems and positions embedding, superimposing, and undergirding any research project.<sup>22</sup>

Reflection, therefore, is critical to sorting through complex data, ultimately resulting in the grounded theory which underpins the recommendations for praxis as put forward in this dissertation.

### **Fundamental Goals**

There are two goals of this dissertation. Firstly, this dissertation seeks, effectively, to provide an action-oriented lexicon—a purpose-specific vocabulary, in effect—for a dialogue that links a theological interpretation of God's purpose for economic endeavour with those engaged in leading economic and other endeavours in civil society. Secondly, this dissertation seeks to provide guidance for those who seek to offer pastoral care to leaders. Anthony Chittenden reveals an element of the research modelling that will be considered. He writes:

Through the employment of a hybrid research model blending concept mapping and stimulated recall methodologies. This study explored the nature of a Pastoral Care Teacher's theory of action; the relationship between those beliefs and ideals

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<sup>21</sup> Ely et al., *On Writing Qualitative Research*, 33.

<sup>22</sup> Ely et al., *On Writing Qualitative Research*, 41.

and interactive thinking; and specific actions in effectively teaching a Pastoral Care issue.<sup>23</sup>

Chittenden goes on to discuss the value of concept mapping in order to enable the sorting and organization of ideas. He writes, “Pastoral care is considered by teachers as a difficult concept to teach largely because it is so pervasive and multi-disciplinary, involving a myriad of concepts involving complex relations.”<sup>24</sup> This perspective certainly resonates with the many complex layers and dynamics of the workplace and the resulting linkage to Kingdom objectives. Chittenden continues, “[A] concept mapping exercise [will] enable some organization of ideas.”<sup>25</sup> This is implicit in the analysis of, and reflection on, the qualitative data flowing from the research respondents. Christina de Simone adds, “Concept mapping . . . facilitates thinking and learning about the information by condensing, reorganizing, [and] elaborating.”<sup>26</sup> We have experienced monumental changes in the last half century in terms of structure and dynamics at play in the workplace. Many who are caught up in change in the workplace may be oblivious of, let alone able to, articulate the depth of these changes and the resulting impact on their lives. That is to say they are unconsciously incompetent, i.e. they ‘don’t know what they don’t know.’

Stephen Kemmis offers the following:

The point of the ‘philosophical life’ is not theorising about saying, doing and relating – logic, physics and ethics—but actually saying, doing and relating in ways that are both wise and prudent; informed by theoretical knowledge made available in traditions of thought and traditions of living. The philosophical life is a particular way of living . . . To live a ‘philosophical life’ is a matter of:

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<sup>23</sup> Chittenden, “Pastoral Care,” 3.

<sup>24</sup> Chittenden, “Pastoral Care,” 4.

<sup>25</sup> Chittenden, “Pastoral Care,” 5.

<sup>26</sup> de Simone, “Applications of Concept Mapping,” 33.

1. Living a 'logic' by thinking and speaking well and clearly, avoiding irrationality and falsehood;
2. Living a 'physics' by acting well in the world, avoiding harm, waste and excess; and
3. Living an 'ethics' by relating well to others, avoiding injustice and exclusion.<sup>27</sup>

Hazel Smith and Roger Dean introduce the "Iterative Cyclic Web."<sup>28</sup> Of particular interest, the authors point out, "is the concept of iteration, which is fundamental to both creative and research processes. To iterate a process is to repeat it several times (though probably with some variation) before proceeding, setting up a cycle: start—end—start."<sup>29</sup> The coding, interpretation, analysis and reflection efforts in this dissertation follow this iterative approach.

### **Data Collection, Interpretation, and Reflection**

The data gathered in the qualitative research underpinning this dissertation leads to an interpretation, an exposition, of life stories from individuals of broad social and cultural backgrounds, growing up and working through different eras, in different countries, and in vastly different professional environments. Data are then considered through reflection. The following observation from Ely et al. is relevant to this dissertation. They write:

As qualitative researchers we feel obligated to inform our readers of the positions we have taken as we collect, interpret, and write up reports. If such stories of stance can be told, the reader has multiple ways of seeing and thinking about what is being researched and the researcher's journey toward understanding. All this gives particular credence to the notion of being explicit with ourselves and others about the stances we take as researchers and of promising ourselves to monitor and report our stances as we best understand

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<sup>27</sup> Kemmis, "Action Research," 465.

<sup>28</sup> Smith and Dean, *Practice-Led Research*, 19.

<sup>29</sup> Smith and Dean, *Practice-Led Research*, 19.

them throughout the gathering, the figuring, and refiguring, and on to final publication.<sup>30</sup>

Before articulating specific leadership and pastoral actions which may be taken, expansive societal issues must be addressed in a way that is inclusive of theological implications. Too often, it would seem, observers have viewed human and societal situations purely around socio-political or psychological frameworks.

The steps that will be followed in the research include six stages. Firstly, all respondent comments will be made anonymous and structured in a large ‘spreadsheet’ designed for easy analysis.<sup>31</sup> Following this, a *substantive coding* stage will entail fracturing and analyzing the resulting data, resulting in the establishment of concepts. This will be recursive and reflective in nature. This will lead to an *axial coding* stage, wherein coded data will be co-related in order to begin the process of describing tenets of an emergent theory. A *phenomenological* exploration will elucidate a comprehensive understanding of the respondents’ lived experiences in their respective work environments. Finally, a *grounded theory* that reflects the critical concerns of the respondents will be developed. This grounded theory will guide and provide heft for the balance of this dissertation. Ely et al. write, “[Q]ualitative research is a deeply interpretive endeavour in that analytical processes are at work in every step of the crafting of the document.”<sup>32</sup> They go on to argue that while some consider description, analysis, and interpretation as discrete, “[A]ll three aspects . . . are way stations on a continuum along which our minds constantly travel back and forth.”<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Ely et al., *On Writing Qualitative Research*, 160.

<sup>31</sup> The spreadsheet can be found at Appendix 3.

<sup>32</sup> Ely et al., *On Writing Qualitative Research*, 160.

<sup>33</sup> Ely et al., *On Writing Qualitative Research*, 160.

The emergent nature of the discovery process derived from the coding stages of this research will lead both to recommended practices of leadership broadly, as well as a guide to those in workplace ministry generally, and ministry to leaders in particular. Ely et al. write:

One of the most fascinating—and sometimes frightening—aspects of qualitative research is its emergent nature. Nowhere is this more evident than during the interwoven processes of writing and recursive analysis. Qualitative analysis requires that the researcher go back again and again over the accumulated log material in a process that for many has a cyclical feel.<sup>34</sup>

These observations are reminiscent of other creative processes, such as poetry, interpretative painting, or sculpture. Ely et al. discuss the process of winnowing. They write:

The winnowing process helps us to edit; to decide what is excessive and/or unimportant to the study. Decisions about the basic story we are going to tell will have implications for the shape that the overall document will take, for what pieces of analysis need to be included and what are now irrelevant or excessive for the purpose at hand.<sup>35</sup>

An important and integral element of the methodology followed in this dissertation is the dynamic of reflexivity. In the winnowing process, as Swinton and Mowat observe, “Reflexivity is the process of critical self-reflection carried out by the researcher throughout the research process that enables her [sic] to monitor and respond to her [sic] contribution to the proceedings.”<sup>36</sup> For emphasis, reflexivity is a core element of this dissertation. Every effort is made, while drawing from life experiences, to pay attention to the data and the resulting insight to the issues of workplace theology.

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<sup>34</sup> Ely et al., *On Writing Qualitative Research*, 175.

<sup>35</sup> Ely et al., *On Writing Qualitative Research*, 188.

<sup>36</sup> Swinton and Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, 59.

### Historical Perspective

Egon Golomb offers another element of this corruption of work-life harmony—the massive social impact wrought by urbanisation. He writes, “The social evolution of modern urbanism appears to have outstripped pastoral institutions.”<sup>37</sup> We see this phenomenon almost everywhere. By way of underscoring this thought, villages throughout the country have been transformed from tight-knit communities where people, live, work, worship, purchase the essentials of life, and socialize, into what are now largely ‘bedroom’ communities from which people commute to work in a wide arc, frequently resulting in commuting times of up to several hours each way.<sup>38</sup>

The term *secularization*—in the context of this dissertation, may be interpreted as social disassociation or separation from religious or spiritual concerns. This is amplified by Michael Northcott. He writes:

Industrialization and urbanization were accompanied by a new sociological phenomenon, known as secularization, in which churches lost members and influence to other social forces, influences and actors. One cause of this decline in influence was the break-up of the old organic social context of the village and the small town in which the church was set as a central institution. In the new cities face-to-face relationships of production and trade were increasingly characterized by cash and contract, and rationality, rather than face-to-face exchanges and moral codes . . . The demise of the organic community was also characterized by social differentiation whereby whole sectors of social life gradually moved beyond the influence of the church and its functionaries.<sup>39</sup>

Thus, people choose, through economic necessity, to live in suburban environments.

This results in long commutes as stated above, and a disruption of community. Add to

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<sup>37</sup> Golomb, “Model Theoretical Considerations,” 359–60.

<sup>38</sup> A 2011 Statistics Canada report suggests that 17.2% of Canadian commuters took 45 minutes or more to get to work (Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 99-012-X2011003).

<sup>39</sup> Northcott, “Pastoral Theology,” 156.

this the diminishing perspective of a church or other religious place of worship as an anchoring element of a sense of belonging.

### **The Postmodern Workplace**

In the postmodern context upon which this dissertation is focussed, we are witnessing upheaval, breakdown, and reconstruction of society and the workplace. Communities and workplaces are coming to grips with significant ethnic and cultural change due to significant immigration from economically and conflict impacted countries. Workplaces are coming to terms with, and adjusting to, the recognition and acceptance of women as equal in stature. We are coping and adjusting to the recognition and acceptance of the LBGTQ communities as equal in our broader communities and workplaces. We are coping and adjusting to the recognition and acceptance of polarized political perspectives, together with social media bringing positive and, in many cases, negative effects on the way we view the world. Warren Bennis adds to this list of change-drivers:

Single-parent families, working mothers, one-person households, and non-traditional families are now having a significant impact on workforce make-up. Housing costs are exploding. Society is increasingly litigious. We are witnessing persistent poverty, drug abuse, and homelessness.<sup>40</sup>

Changes in workforce makeup, combined with changes in workplace structure and dynamics were reflected in the crafting of the research questionnaires.

Research suggests that the postmodern workplace is an environment of discord. As will be seen in the research analysis, respondents do largely report dissonance, sometimes acute, in their workplaces. This can only carry over into one's sense of self-worth, one's choices with where to live, one's effort to incorporate family life into

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<sup>40</sup> Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader*, 172.



sometimes crushing work and financial challenges; particularly credit-card debt.<sup>41</sup>

Dissonance erodes one's sense of belonging. Butler-Bass adds, "Instead of being grounded, people feel unmoored."<sup>42</sup> Thus the observations made by Golomb some five decades ago are being proven today. He writes:

The urban religious crisis in the industrial age was accompanied from the beginning by the breaking up of the social structures; so that the structure of pastoral care inevitably became unsuitable. Population increase resulting from industrial development social mobility up-rootings and feelings of being strangers all brought problems which broke the old parish conception.<sup>43</sup>

At the time of Golomb's writing, most people enjoyed company-sponsored defined-benefit pension plans, together with broad and extensive on-the-job training. The work-day was defined by regular attendance at the workplace. A Sabbath-type rhythm of work, worship and recreation was largely common. Today, the vast majority of people have to make their own retirement investment decisions (and are largely ill-equipped to do so<sup>44</sup>), on-the job training has been replaced by 'just-in-time' expertise, and two, or more, incomes are a necessity. Modern communications technology, rather than increasing our leisure time, has resulting in 'twenty-four-seven' work-related demands. Beyond this, whereas as little as five decades ago the notion of 'one career-one company' was largely anticipated as a possibility, today many companies' employees are on short-term contracts, and for most, a career that encompasses working in numerous organizations across several industry sectors is the acceptable norm—a norm

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<sup>41</sup> A 2019 article in Bloomberg News offers that household debt in Canada has reached levels that could be qualified as excessive. Canadians owe C\$2.16 trillion—which, as a share of gross domestic product, is the highest debt load in the Group of Seven economies.  
<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-03-26/canadians-are-feeling-the-debt-burn>.

<sup>42</sup> Butler Bass, *Christianity after Religion*, 172.

<sup>43</sup> Golomb, "Model Theoretical Considerations," 359.

<sup>44</sup> My work as Board Chair of the Ontario Securities Commission funded entity, 'Get Smarter About Money,' conducted research which suggests that Ontario residents have a financial acumen, on average, at the educational level of Grade 4.

that requires almost constant new learning and skill-development. For some, the traumatic effect of being ‘let go’ by their employer can be extreme. Career transition counsellors report a tragic number of situations where a person being terminated has been prone to violence, and to suicide.<sup>45</sup>

This dissertation assumes that the postmodern era has brought many changes and challenges to the workplace.<sup>46</sup> These include dramatic and distinctly new communication methods and technologies, significantly increased complexity in market structures, a substantially increased complexity in supply chain management (i.e. the relationship between product manufacturers and distribution structures) together with workforce arrangement. This upheaval is brought into view sharply through the lens provided by Mary-Jo Hatch and Anne Cunliffe when they articulate the contrasting view of the organization in the postmodern era vs. the modern era. Hatch and Cunliffe suggest that in the modern era, organizations may be viewed as, “Objectively real entities operating in a real world. When well-designed and managed they are systems of decision and action driven by norms of rationality, efficiency and effectiveness toward stated objectives.”<sup>47</sup> However, Hatch and Cunliffe assert that in the postmodern era, organizations are, “Sites for enacting power relations, giving rise to oppression, irrationality, and falsehoods but also humour and playful irony; as they are texts or dramas, we can rewrite organizations so as to emancipate ourselves from human folly and degradation.”<sup>48</sup> Employers may have four generations under the same roof, each

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<sup>45</sup> Reported, in conversation, by counsellors at *Verity International Inc.*, a Toronto based human resources consulting provider. When assigned to be present in multi-person layoffs resulting from plant closure, etc., consultants report requiring, on occasion, suicide prevention counselling.

<sup>46</sup> The questions included in the research questionnaire seek, directly and indirectly, to understand the respondents’ responses to these changes.

<sup>47</sup> Hatch, *Organization Theory*, 15.

<sup>48</sup> Hatch, *Organization Theory*, 15.

relating to fundamentally different traditions. This generational dilemma is just one dimension of the challenges impacting workplace dynamics. Add to this the impact of multiculturalism which, depending on the setting can have a significant effect on the perspectives and bases for individual judgements and responses to situations.

Adjustment to multiplicity of languages may be the simplest example of the impact of multiculturalism. Eve Haque writes:

There is an assumption that a shift from non-official-language to official proficiency is inevitable and desirable . . . Critical here is the conflation of language and culture so that concerns about non-official languages become concerns about racialized immigration and that English and French come to stand in for the founding cultural groups.<sup>49</sup>

The foregoing suggest the need for critical theological reflection on the human experience: a central element of practical theology. We may have reached a time in society where we have, in terms of our working lives, arrived at what is a virtual separation of the sacred and the secular. We must consider that this separation has resulted in a deep loss of personal purpose and meaning in our chosen endeavours. In 1966, Simon Phipps asserted, “The biblical outline of the world shows it as man’s [sic] means of freedom, God’s means of communication, and man’s [sic] means of response... and it all happens in the one secular world.”<sup>50</sup> This dissertation will seek to understand the degree to which people today attempt to navigate this secularization. The Church may be at fault. Phipps goes on to criticize an evangelism that implies a duality in our lives, i.e. our religious world and our secular world. In concurring with Phipps, this dissertation does not accept the duality of the sacred and the secular. Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart appear to support this rejection. They write:

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<sup>49</sup> Haque, “Multiculturalism,” 206–7.

<sup>50</sup> Phipps, *God on Monday*, 35.

The seminal social thinkers of the nineteenth century—Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud – all believed that religion would gradually fade in importance and cease to be significant with the advent of industrial society . . . During the last decade [2000's], however, this thesis of the slow and steady death of religion has come under growing criticism; indeed, secularization theory is currently experiencing the most sustained challenge in its long history.<sup>51</sup>

Phipps' assertion implies the hope that, through his agents, God might stitch back together an economic effort that fully encompasses divine-human purpose. For those called to the task of agency in this endeavour, there is much to learn if we are to reconcile what appears to be a widening divide, a divide made greater when the lexicon of economic activity is contemplated within a framework of theological reflection. Although Norris's and Inglehart's comments may, with hindsight, be only partly correct, this dissertation assumes that practices of leadership, when viewed as Spirit-led, are pivotal to human flourishing. Through a theological lens, the broad practice of leadership argued for in this dissertation is the synthesis of all the factors that influence the potential for a deep sense of human flourishing in which economic endeavour—at all levels—is perceived as a divine-human expression of God's kingdom and, indeed, may be perceived as preparatory for our eschatological *telos*. Thus, the practices which this dissertation will hopefully influence, include the work of the chaplain, the director of human resources, and indeed the chain of leadership within an organization, together with those who would provide the capital and governance for such endeavours. Finally, this dissertation will provide practical guidance to the individual who is seeking a deep and full sense of flourishing in their work. At the very least this will help those that wish

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<sup>51</sup> Norris and Inglehart, *Sacred and Secular*, 3.

to overcome the view that work is simply a means to economic security; a place where competition with others, rather than co-operation, is viewed as the way to ‘get ahead.’

### **Multiple Research Fields**

This dissertation welds together several fields of study. Each will be viewed through the lens of the others. The foundational premise of this dissertation asserts that workplace dynamics and resulting challenges, when viewed through the lens of the worker’s need for a sense of deep spiritual fulfillment and satisfaction, are poorly understood by both organizational leaders and those who wish to provide spiritual ministry to those engaged in work and leadership.

The aim is to set a fresh and enhanced template for the development of essential practices of leadership that will promote flourishing in the workplace. When we consider that, for most, more than fifty percent of our waking hours are spent in professional and economic pursuit, there is arguably no greater domain to achieve faithful living and authentic practice than the workplace. Swinton and Mowat offer that, “Practical Theology has a *telos* and a goal that transcends the boundaries of human experience and expectation.”<sup>52</sup> This dissertation seeks to construct leadership as the means to encourage workers to rediscover deeper meaning and purpose.

In the context of this dissertation, the term *leadership practice* may be interpreted as what Erlene Grise-Owens and Jay Miller describe as a “synthesizing framework.”<sup>53</sup> This dissertation seeks to synthesize leadership, operational management and practical theology.

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<sup>52</sup> Swinton and Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, 9.

<sup>53</sup> Grise-Owens and Miller, “Responding to Global Shifts,” 47.

To be examined is the conceptual view of the workplace as an environment designed for human flourishing. Shelley Trebesch offers a definition of what it means to flourish. She writes that it is, “to live within an optimal range of human functioning, one that connotes goodness, generativity, growth, and resilience.”<sup>54</sup> This dissertation will argue that sustained peak achievement of workplace output is impossible without an environment where human flourishing is complete.

There are myriad problems and challenges associated with the breadth and complexity of linking together what many have regarded as separate and non-integrated fields of study. This dissertation will, of necessity, engage with broad and varied literature. The branches of the proposed review include organizational theory, economics, social change (particularly influences on the emergence of the postmodern era), management theory, leadership theory, practical theology (particularly the areas of human development and spirituality), pastoral theology (applied particularly to the area of workplace ministry), and ethics, with a focus on workplace dynamics.

### **Assumed Challenges**

As indicated above, this dissertation centres on the confluence of three fundamental challenges to a very significant underpinning of human spiritual flourishing. These are:

1. Erosion of meaningfulness at work, both in the sense that work satisfies a person’s economic needs (e.g. equitable pay, job-security etc.), and that it satisfies a person’s sense of vocation. This yearning for meaningfulness is challenged by a workplace that has become largely bereft of any purpose other than an economic, administrative, or legislative as perceived by the enterprise and its funder.

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<sup>54</sup> Trebesch, *Made to Flourish*, 11.

2. A Church that, largely, does not respond comprehensively to the spiritual needs of workers, leaving congregants uncertain of how to link their remunerated labour with the call of their faith, and,
3. Human beings that have had little to no interaction with—even introduction to—the Gospel.

Further, there is risk of a spiralling state of distress, or at the very least, ennui, made worse by a lack of understanding of the reason for that state. People increasingly accept work as simply the route to a paycheque and social status. Consciously or not, people are putting greater distance between themselves and those that might minister to them. As those that might offer such ministry increasingly become unaware of the issue of diminishing purpose and its spiritual *gravitas*, each generation of workers is at risk of drifting further and further away from God’s intended purpose for our work, which this dissertation will argue is, in fact, *eschatological* in its importance.

In the same way that pastoral counsellors are provided with thorough preparation for specialized areas including clinical situations, there is a need for comprehensive preparation for workplace and work-related spiritual care.<sup>55</sup> Simply arriving at this circumstance presents a multi-dimensional challenge requiring special and dedicated effort. Scholars have attempted to deal with elements of the challenge which this dissertation will address. For example, Wesley Carr distinguishes between organizations and institutions. He writes, “The organization demands managers and people who will get things done . . . The institution looks for leadership, which has to recognize and work with what is mostly inaccessible—the unconscious aspects of the body’s life.”<sup>56</sup> One asks however, ‘Does the organization respond to values, or impose them?’ Carr

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<sup>55</sup> In the U.S. and Canada there is an organization known as Corporate Chaplains, which supports internal human resources staff in challenging times.

<sup>56</sup> Carr, “Spirituality of Institutions,” 115–6.

continues, “If the organizational image dominates, then values will be felt to be imposed. They become apparent practicalities: cutting costs, downsizing, restructuring and so on. The management approach focuses in terms of motivation by rewards and incentives.”<sup>57</sup> While presenting a laudable approach, this dissertation argues that Carr’s observations fail to explore fully the complexity of the situation and lack the granular nuances of both organizational design and leadership practice.

### **Academic and Corporate Interest in Spirituality**

An increasing number of schools of business and management are exploring spirituality and business. For example, there is an emerging discussion of ‘people-first organizations,’ and work-life balance in the sense that this discussion contributes to a positive work environment.

Many organizations are aware, and are sensitive to, employee wellness. For example, the 2017 Annual Report of the Public Guardian and Trustee for Ontario states, “As part of a larger Wellness Strategy supporting positive mental health within the organization the OPGT provided compassionate fatigue and vicarious trauma training.”<sup>58</sup> Swinton and Mowat note that, “[S]pirituality and religion (understood as related but not synonymous concepts), are fast becoming recognized as a significant aspect of the healthcare agenda.”<sup>59</sup> These aspects have not yet, however, become pervasive in the lexicon of leadership.

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<sup>57</sup> Carr, “Spirituality of Institutions,” 116.

<sup>58</sup> Public Guardian and Trustee for Ontario (OPGT) 2017 Annual Report, 3.

<sup>59</sup> Swinton and Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, 159.



Career concepts and expectations are changing. It is apparent that for most, a long-term career-path with the same enterprise is no longer an obtainable expectation. Job loss and the sometimes wrenching changes that accrue are significant factors of our era. In a work by Al Emid and myself, we wrote:

Losing a job can be a devastating blow. It undermines a person's emotional well-being at the same time that it knocks down the pillars of financial stability. After all, a job not only puts bread on the table but also, for a lot of people, instills a sense of purpose into everyday life. And because we spend so many hours each day at a job, we expect to love what we do.<sup>60</sup>

For many who go through a forced termination, the experience can be shocking to the point of being overwhelmed. This, sadly, is far from uncommon. It can be at least unnerving, causing individuals to become anxious and uncertain.

William Pollard asserts, "People want to work for a cause, not just for a living. When there is alignment between the cause of the firm and the cause of its people, move over—because there *will* be extraordinary performance."<sup>61</sup> As referenced earlier, today's intense focus on supply chain management brings a new challenge to creating environments that promote human flourishing. Charles Fine writes:

So how is supply chain design the *ultimate* core competency? In the case of Dell, it provides a cost advantage whose magnitude continues to increase as the industry clockspeed accelerates. In the case of Silicon Graphics, inattention to supply chain design led to a nasty fall. In that of Toshiba, it offers potential directions for greater profitability. And in the case of Merck, supply chain design involves betting the company on the winning structure of the industry.<sup>62</sup>

Here is a perfect example of business-oriented design engineers who are focussed on employing their expertise for the profitable 'speed-to-market' supply chain design and management objectives of their enterprises. These individuals are working for a cause as

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<sup>60</sup> Bates and Emid, *What I Have Learned*, 95.

<sup>61</sup> Pollard, *The Soul of the Firm*, 45.

<sup>62</sup> Fine, *Clockspeed*, 88 [emphasis original].

well as a living. It is possible that without their total commitment, their enterprises would falter, even fail.

### **Work as Struggle: A Search for Purpose**

Many observers describe work as a struggle at best, bruising at worst. In the introduction to his book *Working*, Studs Terkel offers:

This book being about work, is, by its very nature, about violence—to the spirit as well as to the body. It is about ulcers as well as accidents, about shouting matches as well as fistfights, about nervous breakdowns as well as kicking the dog around. It is above all (or beneath all), about daily humiliations . . . It is about a search, too, for daily meaning as well as daily bread, for recognition as well as cash, for astonishment rather than torpor.<sup>63</sup>

In this passage, Terkel echoes the Greek word *πόνοϋς*, broadly translated as ‘toil.’ Toil, by implication, brings anguish and pain. The Revelation to John suggests that at the eschaton, pain (*πόνοϋς*) will be no more (Rev 21:4). Yves R. Simon adds, “In most European languages, the words for the Latin and English *labor* mean also extreme effort associated with pain . . . the French *travail*, the German *arbeit* are also used for the pangs of birth.”<sup>64</sup> It is clear that work can be, and usually is, laborious. But this is not the end of the story—certainly, it does not have to be. Katherine Dell writes, “Work brings structure to a day and it brings us into contact with others: there is nothing more rewarding than a job well done.”<sup>65</sup>

It is likely that we can all think of discussions of the workplace that are expressed in pejorative ways: a place to ‘kiss up, kick down,’ a place of bullying,

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<sup>63</sup> Terkel, *Working*, xiii.

<sup>64</sup> Simon, *Work, Society and Culture*, 18.

<sup>65</sup> Dell, *Seeking a Life*, 34.

aggression, conflict, deviance, discrimination, harassment, incivility, mobbing, revenge, sabotage, swearing, violence, and worse.<sup>66</sup> By contrast, Robert Bruno writes:

The working-class Christians, Jews and Muslims that I spoke with described a living faith that was realized in God's name but was all about finding God in relation with others. While making no claims to a grand theology, I found the daily relational nature of spirituality to be a central tenet of working-class faith . . . God seems to be everywhere to the painter, the nurse, bus-driver, massage therapist, butcher, processing clerk, cemetery worker, and teacher.<sup>67</sup>

While Bruno's work with a group of Chicago's working poor is inspiring, it is the assumption of this dissertation that contemporary culture is sufficiently secularized that remuneration and the goals of workplace productivity conspire to redefine both work and workers in materialistic, non-spiritual terms. Both are conceived of in utilitarian (and thus intrinsically de-humanizing) terms.

### **Employees Reduced to Factors of Production**

To put it simply, labour—the fundamental human input to production—appears by many enterprises to be simply a factor of production. For example, we read frequent accounts of longstanding employees being denied expected benefits in the event of corporate restructuring.<sup>68</sup> Further, it appears that few work environments can be

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<sup>66</sup> A USA Today article in June 2019 reports that a postal worker on disability retirement for psychological issues returned to her workplace years later and killed six people. A Connecticut beer delivery worker irate over being forced to resign opened fire as he was being escorted out of the building, killing eight co-workers.

Just a week ago, a long-time municipal engineer submitted his resignation in the morning and within hours went on a rampage inside the building, killing 11 co-workers and a contractor. The Virginia Beach killing is one of 11 mass workplace killings dating back to 2006 in the U.S., according to a database of mass killings maintained through a partnership between The Associated Press, USA TODAY and Northeastern University. In all, nearly 90 people have died in these mass shootings, which are defined as 4 or more people killed, not including the perpetrator.

And while such workplace shootings remain rare among the tens of thousands of gun deaths each year, they resonate among Americans who worry they might become an aggrieved co-worker's next victim.

<sup>67</sup> Bruno, *Justified by Work*, 214.

<sup>68</sup> At the time of writing, business press, Money.com covers the story that Sears Canada seeks court protection from its creditors, while letting go seventeen percent of its seventeen thousand employees, and confirms, "that it does not intend to pay severance to those laid off."

guaranteed to be free of some form of harassment or abusive behaviour. Mental illness leaves of absence are increasingly common. Jean Twenge writes, “[S]tudies conclude that anxiety and depression are markedly higher than they were in earlier eras.”<sup>69</sup> Indeed, in 2016, the Canadian Federal Government announced a ‘Federal Public Service Mental Health Strategy.’ Taken together, the circumstances of the modern workplace described in the foregoing paragraphs may well be precursor to deeper psychological issues, violence, ill-health, even suicide. Beate Muschalla et al. write:

The workplace is an important part of people’s lives and thus exerts a strong influence on general well-being and health . . . The nature of workplace influences is two-sided. The workplace can exert positive influences by providing social support, identity and self-esteem, but it also involves demands, pressures, and even threats that can provoke anxiety.<sup>70</sup>

There are occasions when an organization’s majority owners seek massive change in the structure and leadership of the enterprise. This can occur when significant, or controlling, shareholders perceive that there is greater value in the business than is reflected in the common share price of the company. This was the case at CP Rail in late 2011, when Hunter Harrison was hired as the company’s Chief Executive Officer. Harrison was a railway executive known as a ‘turnaround specialist.’ What followed at CP Rail was extreme disruption. A 2016 news article chronicled the impact on CP Rail during the period that Hunter Harrison held the role of Chief Executive Officer.

Journalist Kristine Owrain writes:

Hunter Harrison is legendary in the industry for his operating method, known as precision railroading, which is designed to create a leaner company by introducing longer and faster trains, better service and lower costs. Including

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<sup>69</sup> Twenge, “Mental Health Issues” (blog) October 15 2015.

<sup>70</sup> Muschalla et al., “The Significance of Job-Anxiety,” 415.

both unionized and non-unionized employees, CP cut its total workforce by 40 per cent, to 11,700 from 19,500, during his four-and-a-half-year reign.<sup>71</sup>

One might argue that the journalist does not provide information regarding views on the quality of management and reliability of operations prior to Harrison's arrival. Certainly the financial analysts who covered the company during his tenure were largely favourable in their assessments of Harrison's directives' effect on profitability. Indeed, Mr. Harrison went on to receive a reported \$84 million as his annual salary from his subsequent employer, US based rail company CSX Corp. Assessing the effectiveness of management solely through the lens of financial performance, especially relatively short-term financial performance, is not enough. Owram continues:

CP calls its management training program 'Street-to-Seat,' and describes it as 'the single best way for a management employee to learn what the business is truly about.' A description of the program on an internal company website notes: 'With the ever-evolving railway industry, a conductor or locomotive engineer qualification can help open doors for different potential advancement opportunities. No matter what your role is at CP, this experience will make you better at what you do.' But the requirements have become increasingly onerous, said the CP office worker who was compelled by the company to start driving trains. He completed the Street-to-Seat training program with the expectation that he'd only be used in case of a strike, but said he now spends a quarter of his working hours on trains.<sup>72</sup>

This is a crucial story. If taken on a *prima facie* basis, this circumstance epitomizes a workplace situation which, if looked through the paradigm of work as an expression of divine-human endeavor, is corrupt; essentially destroying the opportunity for work to be a source of flourishing. Without question, organizations reach inflection points where significant disruption is required to correct a perceived weakness. The critical question

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<sup>71</sup> Owram, "The Other Side," 2.

<sup>72</sup> Owram, "The Other Side," 3.

is the degree to which the pace and nature of change incorporate the imperative of human flourishing as part of the change planning exercise.

### **Hospitality and Community**

This dissertation argues that the prevailing view of work, as an expression of spirituality, represents an area of social upheaval that must be addressed. It is a premise of this dissertation that exposure to the message of the Gospel is a rapidly decreasing, if not non-existent, element of the moral compass of many in western society. In other words, an increasing number have not been exposed, and therefore enlightened or given spiritual sight through an encounter with the Gospel, discovering that God is love, and that we are to respond by loving others. It is possible that the Church itself may unintentionally be a significant contributor to the state of cognitive dissonance with respect to a theological understanding of work. Peter Marty introduces a significant change in church culture. Following Pentecost, writes Marty, “In Acts 4 we learn that believers began to experience palpable unity with one another . . . Every individual in the community had the necessities of life met.”<sup>73</sup> This was complete integration of community, the organization of work, and mutual caring. Marty observes:

Today, we are direct descendants of a pattern of promoting private and personal spirituality that has long overwhelmed the much more difficult work of forming and sustaining Christian community. Some theologians argue that modernity has brought on a rampant individualism never seen before in church history, but it would be more helpful to say that contemporary consumerism and a market ideology have merely exacerbated the longstanding impulse among believers for a privatized faith.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Marty, “Shaping Communities,” 308.

<sup>74</sup> Marty, “Shaping Communities,” 309.

This notion of individualism is in direct contrast to the mutual dependence and concept of community in ancient times. Hospitality has endured as a key element of community. If we consider the word ‘forgiveness’ in terms of reducing stress, and allowance for, or overlooking, differences, then we can perceive the linkage between attributes of forgiveness and hospitality. Ironically, the very foundation of modern commerce could be the ancient precept of hospitality. Henri Nouwen writes:

[I]f there is any concept worth restoring to its original depth and evocative potential, it is the concept of hospitality . . . Old and New Testament stories not only show how serious our obligation is to welcome the stranger in our home, but they also tell us that guests are carrying precious gifts with them, which they are eager to reveal to a receptive host.<sup>75</sup>

Here Nouwen is echoing one of Jesus’ most fundamental instructions. Jesus’ admonishment is clear, “I was a stranger and you welcomed me (Matt 25:25).”

Arguably, without hospitality, commerce between different communities would have never become a reality. Jesus, too, is drawing back together love of God and love of neighbour (cf. Matt 22:36-40). Work is critical to neighbourhood. Without a strong and healthy economic foundation, neighbourhoods falter and decline. Arguably, a thriving economy may be perceived as eschatological. Miroslav Volf asserts an eschatological value of work:

It is possible that the statement in Revelation about the saints resting ‘from their labours (*kopon*), for their deeds (*erga*) follow them’ (Rev 14:13; cf. Eph. 6:8) could be interpreted to imply that earthly work will leave traces on resurrected personalities . . . Human work is ultimately significant not only because it contributes to the future environment of human beings, but also because it leaves an indelible imprint on their personalities.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Nouwen, *Reaching Out*, 66.

<sup>76</sup> Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 97–98.

The word ‘deed’ is taken in another of its meanings—that of action or performance. Jesus has shown us that forgiveness is the act that shapes everything we do. Elements of forgiveness will be explored in the analysis of responses to the research questionnaire. In the workplace, when deep dissatisfaction or behaviour is perceived as abusive, one frequently simply leaves the environment, thus there is no opportunity for reconciliation. Further, when litigation is involved, the opportunity to arrive at apology, let alone reconciliation, almost never occurs. Beyond this, very little, if any opportunity is created for an exploration of spiritual and emotional damage that occurs. It may be interesting to explore the First Nations’ concept and employment of healing—or peacemaking—circles, as a method for reconciliation and restorative justice, in which adversarial litigation is set aside. In other words, forgiveness is central to restoration. Forgiveness is at the very heart of faith. When viewed as practised theology, work and leadership—imbued with a culture of forgiveness—will have cooperation as the working model over interpersonal competition.

Jaco Hamman states further, “[F]orgiveness has a forensic component, a therapeutic component, and a *redemptive component*.”<sup>77</sup> Frequently, although not always, abusive behaviour in the workplace, if it reaches a legal process, will involve a forensic component—but only a societal forensic component. There is seldom recognition for a need to explore a biblical perspective on sin, or God’s justice and forgiveness. Thus, while civil litigation may be completed, therapeutic and redemptive processes and activities may not occur at all—leaving lasting scars that may manifest in physical as well as emotional illness.

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<sup>77</sup> Hamman, “Revisiting Forgiveness,” 444 [emphasis original].



As this dissertation research moves through the many iterative cycles of data collection, coding, analysis and theological reflection described earlier, the analysis and interpretation will seek to identify both profound and subtle linkages between professed faith and a deeper sense of purposefulness at work. Paul Ballard offers perspective on, “the Bible and theological reflection.”<sup>78</sup> He writes, “In theological reflection as a structured method, there is a conscious and deliberate exploration of belief and practice in a given situation. This could range from a moment in ministry, to working with a congregation, to a personal life decision.”<sup>79</sup> While Ballard does not discuss workplace experiences as explicitly integral, or even foundational to personal life decisions, this comment contains instruction. As Ballard states, “Theological reflection, as a deliberate process, aims to enable us to discern the wisdom of God in the scriptures for faithful living in the present.”<sup>80</sup> A challenge will be finding the right moment to explore biblical tenets and perspectives. Ballard describes the dynamic that must be anticipated. He writes:

The rapid social, economic, and political changes that are overtaking [and frequently polarizing] the world mean that we are increasingly living in a mobile, pluralistic society that can so easily lose cultural roots and cultural cohesion. In the West, certainly, it is no longer possible to assume a widespread familiarity with the Christian faith and the Bible, in particular – its stories, its language, and its perspective—which have for so long been at its heart. What does it mean to live in a Bible-poor, post-Christian culture? What does this mean for Christian practice, witness, and ministry?<sup>81</sup>

The research endeavour at the heart of this dissertation seeks to achieve what John Patton offers when he writes, “[P]astoral theology is not just concerned with human

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<sup>78</sup> Ballard, “The Use of Scripture,” 168.

<sup>79</sup> Ballard, “The Use of Scripture,” 168.

<sup>80</sup> Ballard, “The Use of Scripture,” 169.

<sup>81</sup> Ballard, “The Use of Scripture,” 170.

experience, but human experience in relationship to God and other persons.”<sup>82</sup> While the lexicon of the workplace may not permit a literal discussion of work as contribution to the coming transformation, we can certainly act in such a way that allows the Spirit to enter the conversation, bringing deeper reflection on the purpose of work. Stanley Grenz writes:

We have characterized the fundamental theological assertion concerning the relationship between God and the world by use of the terms ‘creator’ and ‘creation.’ The triune God is the creator of the world; and the universe is the creation of God. But the divine act of creation, while including the primordial calling of the world into existence, ultimately is an eschatological event . . . This conclusion naturally leads us to inquire regarding God’s purposes for the world he is making and God’s active directing of history toward the accomplishment of these purposes . . . We may summarize God’s intention for the world by employing the term, ‘community.’<sup>83</sup>

When the workplace is seen through the lens of community, that workplace may be imbued by an ethos of mutual collaboration rather than competition.

### **Seasons of Life**

The seasons of a person’s life appear to have a bearing on one’s coping mechanisms. Older respondents demonstrate an ability to derive inner strength in the face of less than optimal workplace experiences. Career changes over time gradually help older workers to find work environments more in line with their values, resulting in an amelioration of dissonance. This suggests that experiences, education, communities of civic engagement, such as volunteer activities, shape the way we respond to situations.<sup>84</sup> Bill Mowry writes:

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<sup>82</sup> Patton, “Practical Theology Asks,” 54.

<sup>83</sup> Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 112.

<sup>84</sup> In my own experience, it is these public and not-for-profit activities that have shaped leadership careers through the breadth of exposure to numerous environments with vastly different cultures, goals and methods.

Instead of a universal reality which is scientifically provable, there is a growing belief that people construct their sense of reality . . . This means that research and interpretation must consider the cultural and historical factors which make up the ministry or individual context. The emphasis now is on *interpretation* and not on predicting through universal laws.<sup>85</sup>

This will be helpful in interpreting what Teresa Amabile and Steven Kramer describe as, “workday events that ignite emotions and fuel motivation.”<sup>86</sup>

A preliminary literature search has not encountered a broad-reaching, multi-domain, effort to draw together the multivariate influences on the changing workplace, together with the resulting effect on the worker. These include economic priorities and influences, operations efficiencies, urbanization and resulting changes in commuting patterns, changes in job-training, changes in provision for financially secure retirement; ethnic, religious, and gender diversity, plus corporate structural changes. An example is the flattening of corporate hierarchy which has reduced, or eliminated middle management. This elimination distances senior management from the worker, thus removing opportunities for real coaching and mentorship. Consider also that all these phenomena have occurred in one generation. Thus, research will seek to explore how modern management and operations theory, as manifest in workplace procedures, have impacted the work environment, for better or worse.

### **The Church May Be Missing a Significant Discourse**

Swinton and Mowat state, “Practical Theology has a particular goal: to enable faithful living and authentic Christian practice.”<sup>87</sup> This dissertation holds the view that the

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<sup>85</sup> Mowry, “A Reflective Approach,” 56 [emphasis original].

<sup>86</sup> Amabile and Kramer, “The Power of Small Wins” 2.

<sup>87</sup> Swinton and Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, 9.

church is at risk of missing a significant discourse regarding the carrying out of our work as an expression of our ultimate substance as creatures of God. In the postmodern era this faith-work gulf is exacerbated by the fact that, for at least one generation, particularly in the West, there is little awareness of God's presence in our lives, let alone God's active interest in, and equipping of, our labour. The demographics of faith may also be a significant factor. Lane Greene writes regarding the U.S. context, "America remains unusual among rich democracies in being highly religious. Yet many have missed just how much less devout the country is becoming."<sup>88</sup> This phenomenon would appear to be following Europe and Canada, both of which are considerably further down this path.

### **A Reflective Analysis of Research Findings**

With this theological perspective in view, reflection will be guided by an approach which is articulated by Elaine Graham et al. They write, "Theological discourse is now seen as a process rather than a product."<sup>89</sup> Preparing for this discourse will require a series of iterative cycles consisting of assimilating views expressed through a multi-stage analysis of research questionnaire responses, together with reflection in a search for correlative linkages. Graham et al. stress "the possibility of theological understanding being glimpsed in 'secular' thought forms argues that these make a vital contribution to a living theological tradition."<sup>90</sup> This is fundamentally why a qualitative

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<sup>88</sup> Greene, "Losing Faith," 41.

<sup>89</sup> Graham et al. *Theological Reflection*, 5.

<sup>90</sup> Graham et al., *Theological Reflection*, 139.

research approach was chosen for this enquiry. Graham et al. underpin this view with their statement:

[T]he field of practical theology is now understood as centred upon the life of the whole people of God in the variety of its witness and service . . . In other words, theological reflection is an activity that enables people of faith to give an account of the values and traditions that underpin their choices and convictions and deepens their understanding. Theological reflection enables the connections between human dilemmas and divine horizons to be explored . . . At the heart of theological reflection, therefore, are questions about the relationship of theory to practice, and how to connect theological discourse about the nature of God to the exercise of faith.<sup>91</sup>

This confirms the layering approach taken, wherein care is taken to explore the subtle variations in the stories told. Swinton and Mowat confirm that practical theology seeks to “complexify and explore situations.”<sup>92</sup> They offer the succinct observation that “Practices, then, contain values, beliefs, theologies and other assumptions which, for the most part, go unnoticed until they are complexified and brought to our notice through the process of theological reflection.”<sup>93</sup> This is practical theology. This dissertation takes a deliberate and delicate approach to peeling back the layers of the manifold influences on the current world of economic pursuit through qualitative analysis, a critical literature review and reflection. As Swinton and Mowat point out, “A key aspect of the practical theological task is to evoke such ‘unnatural’ self-reflection and to raise people’s consciousness to previously hidden dimensions of everyday situations.”<sup>94</sup> Swinton and Mowat go on to provide a definition for qualitative research. They write, “Qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its

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<sup>91</sup> Graham et al., *Theological Reflection*, 5–6.

<sup>92</sup> Swinton and Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, 13.

<sup>93</sup> Swinton and Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, 13.

<sup>94</sup> Swinton and Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, 16.

subject matter . . . Qualitative research is a process of careful, rigorous inquiry into aspects of the social world.”<sup>95</sup>

### **A Search for New Knowledge**

Smith and Dean assert that, “What is of interest to practice-led researchers is the possibility of new knowledge.”<sup>96</sup> Broad analytical methods are employed in varying degrees in this dissertation to seek such new knowledge. These are: Narrative Research, Phenomenology, and Grounded Theory Research. These discreet methods will be effectively layered upon one another to arrive at a grounded theory. Smith and Dean write, “Qualitative research deals mainly with texts. It emphasized ‘written outcomes’ and disseminates research results in ‘discursive prose.’”<sup>97</sup> With respect to Narrative Research, John Creswell makes the introduction to this method by stating, “[I]t begins with the experiences as expressed in lived and told experiences of individuals.”<sup>98</sup> They go on to write, “Much of the restyled scholarly work in qualitative research over the last two decades is interdisciplinary.”<sup>99</sup> This is the nature of this study.

As will be described fully in Chapter 2, four of the six questions asked in the research questionnaire require free-form narrative responses. Analysis will begin with coding of the questionnaire responses by discrete topics as they emerge in the narratives. Judith Holton writes, “Coding is the core process in classic grounded theory methodology. It is through coding that the conceptual abstraction of data and its

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<sup>95</sup> Swinton and Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*, 16.

<sup>96</sup> Smith and Dean, *Practice-Led Research*, 48.

<sup>97</sup> Smith and Dean, *Practice-Led Research*, 127.

<sup>98</sup> Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 70.

<sup>99</sup> Smith and Dean, *Practice-Led Research*, 128.

reintegration as theory takes place.”<sup>100</sup> This dissertation will follow a substantive coding method, fracturing and analyzing the data.

The first phase of analysis will be simply reading the respondents’ stories. Creswell states, “Narrative stories tell of individual experiences, and they may shed light on the [self-identities] of individuals and how they see themselves.”<sup>101</sup> As the various narratives unfold and are recorded, the assumption is that similarities will surface in terms of experiences and the impact of those experiences. This leads to a phenomenological perspective. Creswell writes:

[A] Phenomenological study describes the common meaning for several individuals of their *lived experiences* of a concept or a phenomenon. Phenomenologists focus on describing what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon. The basic purpose of phenomenology is to reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence.<sup>102</sup>

Max Van Manen amplifies this. He writes, “[P]henomenology of practice is meant to refer to the practice of phenomenological research and writing that reflects *on* and *in* practice and prepares for practice.”<sup>103</sup> This reflects and affirms the flow of research analysis chosen for this dissertation.

Creswell refers to hermeneutical phenomenology, which he describes as “oriented toward lived experience and interpreting the ‘texts’ of life.”<sup>104</sup> Emphasis will be given to the critical need to comprehend fully what is being learned from the narrative responses as precursor to theological reflection. Patton underscores the point, by asserting, “Theological ways of conceptualizing life experiences are best deferred

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<sup>100</sup> Holton, “The Coding Process,” 1.

<sup>101</sup> Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 71.

<sup>102</sup> Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 76 [emphasis original].

<sup>103</sup> Van Manen, *Phenomenology*, 15 [emphasis original].

<sup>104</sup> Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 79.

until a significant relationship and language appropriate to that relationship are developed.”<sup>105</sup> It is anticipated that several passes through the gathered data will be required to interpret the lived experiences of the respondents fully.

With respect to grounded theory research, Creswell points out that, “[T]he intent of a grounded theory study is to move beyond description and to generate or discover a theory, a ‘unified theoretical explanation’ for a process or action.”<sup>106</sup> With the benefit of a significant and diverse number of responses to six questions, several iterations of the analysis will take place in order to fully grasp the nuanced themes that emerge. Juliet Corbin and Anselm Strauss write:

The data that qualitative researchers work with are complex. They consist of multiple concepts existing in complex relationships that are often difficult to tease out the data. Having a way to think about those relationships can be helpful. One tool for helping the researcher to identify contextual factors and then link them with process is what we call the paradigm. The paradigm is a perspective, a set of questions that can be applied to data to help the analyst draw out the contextual factors and identify relationships between context and process.<sup>107</sup>

As the narratives are drawn from responses to the research questionnaires and are recorded and catalogued, a mosaic of lived experiences will emerge. As presented earlier, a large ‘spreadsheet’ will be constructed to create a whole view of responses to questions by each respondent. The assumption is that similarities will surface in terms of shared or similar experiences, together with the impact of those experiences.

This dissertation will examine the development of leadership practices as they influence the formation of culture in the workplace. It will be seen that a critical characteristic of leadership is its essential transformative nature in bringing both

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<sup>105</sup> Patton, *From Ministry to Theology*, 41.

<sup>106</sup> Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 79.

<sup>107</sup> Corbin and Strauss, *Basics Of Qualitative Research*, 89.



individuals and entire organizations to new levels of performance and human flourishing. Therefore, the absence of evidence of transformative change effectively translates to an absence of leadership. Bruce Aviola and David Waldman suggest that, “[T]ransformational leadership involves a higher-order change in that followers are encouraged to take on more challenge and responsibility while also contributing to organizational change and innovation.”<sup>108</sup> Hamel writes, “*People change for what they care about*. In the final analysis, there are no adaptable organizations, only adaptable people.”<sup>109</sup>

It is also a premise of this dissertation that role-modelling is a critical practice of leadership. Studies and work experience lead to a deep awareness of the impact of role modelling in an organization, both positively and negatively. The issue of dishonesty and cheating is a prime example of negative, even destructive role-modelling. Ting Zhang et al. write:

Behavioural ethics research has shown that peoples’ judgments, intentions and behaviour depend on the situational and social forces in the environment. For example, individuals are more prone to cheat when they feel cognitively depleted and can easily justify their behaviour; and because people often look to others to determine acceptable norms, people are also more likely to cheat when they see others cheating.<sup>110</sup>

This phenomenon of cognitive depletion—mental exhaustion—creates a risk at times, resulting in physical fatigue and emotional overload. This too, will be explored in the responses to the research questionnaire.

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<sup>108</sup> Aviola and Waldman, “Transformational Leadership,” 59–60.

<sup>109</sup> Hamel, *The Future of Management*, 172 [emphasis original].

<sup>110</sup> Zhang et al., “Ethical Behaviour,” 70.

## Conclusion

For most, our work is a deep expression of who we are. Among the first questions that we ask someone whom we meet for the first time is, “What do you do?” This question, perhaps without our realization, instantly invokes all the aspirations, fears, goals, and unresolved conflicts that we all hold in our workplace endeavours. Virtually all of us seek to find deeper purpose in our work, although we express this in different ways. We seek a purpose that is far beyond economic security, even beyond achieving a sense of a job well done. We want to flourish—to blossom, to thrive, to be at the peak of our development—and, for the most part, we want our neighbours and co-workers to flourish. The proposition which undergirds this dissertation is that for many, if not most, this aspiration is unfulfilled. We are settling for less, much less in some cases.

Spirit-led leadership is presented as critically important in the postmodern era. Leadership is providential. Leadership must be recast as practised theology. If work is a means to flourishing, then the ethos of the workplace is the energy source from which flourishing may be achieved. Leadership is the means by which that energy is released. God called Abraham to lead (cf. Gen 12:22). God called Moses to lead (cf. Exod 3), and God called Ananias to lead (cf. Acts 9:17). God called and equipped many others to lead. In each situation this resulted in a release of energy that formed a new ethos—by which situations and people were transformed, and by which flourishing followed.

To arrive at recommendations for the praxis of leadership, together with recommendations for workplace ministry requires a process that is by necessity complex. Development of the questionnaire that is central to the qualitative research in this dissertation has been founded in the desire to allow respondents to narrate their lived experiences freely. The narrative responses were then coded, mapped upon in in

light of a multidisciplinary literature review, together with the author's personal experiences.

## CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH GOALS, METHODOLOGY, AND FINDINGS

If leadership is to be understood as a praxis which is rooted in practical theology, then it is critical to understand how people view their work, particularly through the lens of faith and spiritual flourishing. In order to explore such views, a six-part questionnaire was devised, using closed-end and open-end questions,<sup>1</sup> to elicit contemplative observations regarding the respondents' sense of meaningfulness and purpose at work, together with spirituality and faith as elements of their orientation in terms of finding meaningfulness and purpose at work.<sup>2</sup> This chapter is revelatory in terms of attitudes toward work, as articulated by the respondents.

Workplace experiences present a life cycle interest from a research point of view in that workplace experiences pervade and impact all facets of one's life. By design, the research questions uncover lived experiences which, inductively, may be assumed to be wrought largely by the impact of leadership on workplace ethos. It is critical to note that the narratives recorded by the respondents offer crucial insights into the implied effects that leadership styles, approaches and decisions have on the degree to which a state of flourishing is achieved. Also provided are examples of coping mechanisms, and ways in

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<sup>1</sup> Closed-end questions seek a 'yes or no' answer, whereas open-end questions elicit a longer, detailed, response.

<sup>2</sup> An application was made to the McMaster Research Ethics Board to involve human participants in research. Approval was received on June 1st, 2018. A copy of this certificate can be found at Appendix 2.

which people achieve some level of meaningfulness, together with those factors which trigger changes in career paths.

### **Who Was Invited to Complete the Questionnaire?**

An invitation was broadly distributed via several contact networks in Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States.<sup>3</sup> The goal was to receive between twenty-five and thirty-five completed responses from men and women across a broad range of occupations, and of varying ages. While this dissertation research is qualitative rather than quantitative in nature, a range of twenty-five and thirty-five responses, together with geographic and professional distribution, provides assurance that the results could not be attributed to chance. Thirty-two completed responses were received.

### **What Was Asked?**

The participant questionnaire included the following:

Please respond to as many of the questions below as you are comfortable answering and as they apply to your own experience: I am looking for as much as you are willing to share. Please use additional space if you require. It will take approximately 10-20 minutes to complete this questionnaire.

1. Please identify whether you: (a) Work in a supervisory role, (b) non-supervisory role or, (c) are a retiree?
2. Please offer your thoughts regarding the degree to which you enjoy a sense of deep meaningfulness at work, both in the sense that work satisfies your economic needs (e.g. equitable pay, job-security etc.), and that it satisfies your sense of vocation—even calling. Has this changed over time? Do you feel that your views are shared by your peers and co-workers? Please take as much space as you need to answer this question in detail, using specific examples and experiences where you wish.
3. Would you describe yourself as a person of faith? Please answer yes or no.

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<sup>3</sup> The invitation was distributed, as approved by the McMaster Research Ethics Board, to colleagues and contacts, with the request to further distribute it to their networks.

4. If you are a person of faith, how does your spiritual or faith-orientation have a bearing on your views as expressed in question 2 above? Please offer your thoughts on the ways in which your faith impacts or affects your views of work.
5. Are you comfortable in speaking about your faith and the ways in which your faith affects your approach to work? Please answer yes or no, and explain further if you wish.
6. If you have experienced a conversation with an advisor, e.g. a minister in your faith tradition, please offer your thoughts on the ways in which these conversations have assisted you in putting your work in a more satisfying perspective.<sup>4</sup>

Respondents were invited take as much space as needed to offer narrative commentary wherever they wished to.

### **What Was Done With the Responses?**

The first step was the creation of a large spreadsheet, using *Microsoft Excel* software. This spreadsheet was populated with each verbatim response to the six questions asked in the questionnaire. In this process, all responses were rendered anonymous, with responses tabulated under ‘respondent 1,’ ‘respondent 2,’ and so on. Further, the responses were edited to remove information that might provide a reader with knowledge of the respondent’s identity through discussion of work location or other specific information that might identify the respondent.

With this spreadsheet completed, several analytical scans of the responses were used. These included substantive and axial coding stages, concept mapping a phenomenological examination, and the identification of tenets of emergent theories, leading ultimately to the formation of a grounded theory. In this chapter, and in the

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<sup>4</sup> For the complete table of responses, see Appendix 3.

balance of this dissertation, where considered germane, verbatim quotations from research participants will be included, in some cases used in multiple instances. Anne Corden and Roy Sainsbury confirm the appropriateness of this. They write, “Including verbatim quotations has become effectively standard practice in much qualitative social research [citing such benefits as] validity, reliability, and credibility.”<sup>5</sup> The questions are designed to cause the respondents to contemplate their circumstances quite deeply.

Woods states that among the questions that he has asked are:

- How do people construct what justice means for them?
- What is it that, when two people in the same situation have the same impulse to do something society would, by and large, deem that something should not be done, enables one person to stop without doing whatever the something may be, and allows the other person to figuratively step over the line and do it?
- What does it take for one generation to empower another generation in leadership?<sup>6</sup>

Wood’s comments inspired the manner in which the research questions were crafted. I.e. in order to elicit clear and meaningful narrative.

As stated earlier, thirty-two responses were received from men and women in Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom. Their workplace environments include capital markets, accounting, agriculture, construction, teaching, nursing, long-term and palliative care, together with administrative roles in public service, church, and not-for-profit enterprises. Although age information was not requested, responses suggest that the sample includes individuals that range in age from mid-twenties to mid-seventies.

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<sup>5</sup> Corden and Sainsbury, “Using Verbatim Quotations,” 1.

<sup>6</sup> Woods, *Designing Religious Research*, 14.

### **Many Identify A Divine Calling, But Speak of Injustice**

Despite feelings of unfair treatment at work, several identify a strong sense of God’s calling in their work. A respondent writes, “I believe that I am doing good works, utilizing God-given talents.”<sup>7</sup> Many, however, describe injustice in their environment. A respondent writes, “Many events have placed a sense of doubt in my job security. E.g. others not being supported or not being assigned to a position that I felt qualified to do; being assigned a role that suited the company, but which impeded my development.”<sup>8</sup>

Carlton Snow writes:

Trust is an elusive abstraction. Like the air we breathe, trust is taken for granted, drawing little attention to itself until the atmosphere goes bad. At the same time, trust, elusive though it is, is a concept that has practical importance: the issue of trust is central to the development and continuation of a productive work experience.<sup>9</sup>

Generally, it would seem certain among all the respondents that trust is assumed to be offered automatically and immediately by them, in their workplace, to their manager and their peers. This appears particularly to be the case among those who articulate a spiritual calling to their work. Trust is central to faith. Thus, when trust is eroded, frequently it is the workplace environment that has caused it, deliberately or inadvertently.

### **Purpose and Aging**

The seasons of life have an impact on the response to views regarding a sense of purpose. A respondent writes, “[In my] second career [I am doing] what I am meant and

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<sup>7</sup> Verbatim respondent 13.

<sup>8</sup> Verbatim respondent 22.

<sup>9</sup> Snow, “Rebuilding Trust,” 35.



called to do.”<sup>10</sup> This may be partly the result of learning more about our gifts and capabilities vs. our aspirations. This suggests that aging results in becoming more completely aware of our calling. It may also be about becoming more comfortable in our own skins as we age. Capps writes, “To reconnect with [our] earlier time, then, is more than an expression of nostalgia for bygone years—though it is partly that. It is the attempt to understand ourselves so that we become better at living in the here and now.”<sup>11</sup> Respondents whose narratives made it clear that they had been working for several decades, frequently offered a response to their circumstances that reflected deeper resolve in the manner in which they internalized and managed their situations.

### **Values, Goals, and Choices**

In a number of their narratives, respondents discuss personal values and goals, choices and compromises. There is frequently expressed a stronger or weaker sense of calling, but this calling is often left unanswered for the sake of economic necessity, or the converse, i.e. enjoyment of the work circumstance means a loss of economic return. A respondent writes. “I will be working out of financial necessity until I am at least 70. My work is a calling.”<sup>12</sup> Richard Higginson writes, “Organizational life offers many dilemmas that have no easy answers. Ethical complexity is all around, and so leading with integrity is often a matter of walking through a moral minefield.”<sup>13</sup> Clearly the same is true of followers.

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<sup>10</sup> Verbatim respondent 15.

<sup>11</sup> Capps, *The Decades of Life*, 120.

<sup>12</sup> Verbatim respondent 13.

<sup>13</sup> Higginson, “Integrity and the Art of Compromise,” 28.

## People Experience Dissonance

The workplace, and the marketplace more broadly, create significant dissonance for some in terms of their personal values and the resulting desire for perfection in their chosen endeavour. Expressed, on occasion, is a deep desire to figure out how faith should guide one's actions. A respondent writes, "I pray for the wisdom to make the most of every day."<sup>14</sup> For some, modelling their values, or faith, is not made easy by the workplace. Several commented on being taken advantage of, yet still felt blessed. Others felt sadness at seeing how colleagues were being treated. A respondent writes, "I believe that easing the suffering of others is an easing of my own suffering."<sup>15</sup>

Numerous respondent comments underscore the sense of dissonance, or disharmony. Dissonance is perceived and described in varying degrees, manifest frequently by feelings of lost empowerment. Despite feelings of dissonance, respondents still held an underlying sense of commitment to their work. Isabel Lopez writes, "[In chaotic times] I am convinced that we must find our own center, and that once we have found it all the chaos becomes irrelevant."<sup>16</sup> Finding one's spiritual centre is expressed, albeit sometimes tentatively, by respondents. A respondent writes, "I'm still trying to figure it all out."<sup>17</sup> Another respondent writes, "I gained a sense of vocational enjoyment and I am committed."<sup>18</sup> This is an issue for leadership, in terms of creating an environment that is conducive to finding resolution to such dissonance. A number of respondents' comments suggest evidence of a pervasive lack of leadership relative to their expectations. Comments point to the goals of the organization taking primacy over

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<sup>14</sup> Verbatim respondent 9.

<sup>15</sup> Verbatim respondent 17.

<sup>16</sup> Lopez, "Finding Wisdom," 81.

<sup>17</sup> Verbatim respondent 17.

<sup>18</sup> Verbatim respondent 26.

needs of the employee. Kellerman writes, “[L]eadership can be considered the exercise of influence, or a power relation, or an instrument of goal achievement . . . The point is that each of these definitions is value-free.”<sup>19</sup> It appears that sometimes it is incompetence that leads to a lack of good leadership. Sometimes it is a lack of commitment. It is also clear that, on occasion, employees are being coerced toward a particular goal, without regard to implications in terms of meaningfulness and purpose.

While several speak of their faith, few respondents see the church as a place of spiritual guidance in terms of work challenges and choices. Some respondent narratives describe faith in the message of scripture, yet these same narratives articulate real despair in the nature of the workplace situation alluded to. John Beckett writes:

God wants a greater role not only with individuals, not just in church, but also in our families, our schools, in government, *and* in commerce and industry. He has a purpose for us and our work and a dynamic role to play. For God to have greater access, we must open our spiritual doors—doors that invite and encourage his presence.<sup>20</sup>

It appears that we must bring our ministers to a greater level of knowledge of the workplace and its challenges, and we must equip them to engage in these places.

Dissonance appears to be pervasive. A respondent writes, “I am wrestling with how the church should approach gender identity and sexuality issues—this is not a safe discussion.”<sup>21</sup> Sometimes this dissonance is internal to organizational situations, i.e. generated by practices and circumstances inside the structure of organizations. In other cases this dissonance is external to the organization, including shifting marketplace

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<sup>19</sup> Kellerman, *Bad Leadership*, 12.

<sup>20</sup> Beckett, *Loving Monday*, 135 [emphasis original].

<sup>21</sup> Verbatim respondent 1.

attitudes and expectations, changing community structures, changing family characteristics, and changing approaches and attitudes to the concept of faith.

### **Stress of Entrepreneurship**

Several describe the stress of being self-employed and building a business. A respondent writes, “It can be scary at times.”<sup>22</sup> This is a particularly unique phenomenon.

Entrepreneurs, by nature, are resilient and hopeful, but the loneliness of leading a start-up can be overwhelming for them.<sup>23</sup> New businesses are completely engulfing of the entrepreneur’s time, resources, intellectual effort, emotional energy, self-esteem, and reputational credibility. Cash-flow concerns can occur daily. Sometimes these concerns reach crisis proportions. Family relationships can suffer. Community engagement outside of the enterprise can fall away entirely.

A number of respondents affirm that their spirituality and faith carried them through difficult times. Respondents also discuss real joy derived from coming alongside others. This is expressed as providing help and guidance. They describe how they grew from such experiences. John Kuypers speaks to this. He writes:

We don’t want inner peace first, we want results first. This is the stubborn human way that keeps us trapped in unhappiness for years over troubling issues. The first rule of inner peace is a mind-blowing paradox where we become spiritually powerful only after we become humanly powerless.<sup>24</sup>

In other words, it is the inner peace of these respondents that sustains them in difficult times, and it is their love for others that urges them to find ways to help others find such

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<sup>22</sup> Verbatim respondent 8.

<sup>23</sup> I have experienced this condition personally. Leaving a secure and well-paying position in mid-career to begin a de novo enterprise brought many periods of intense loneliness.

<sup>24</sup> Kuypers, *The First Rule*, 107–8.

peace. A respondent writes, “I was brought up to think that 'helping others' is what we're meant to do.”<sup>25</sup>

### **Some Professions Deliver Deep Enjoyment**

Some professions, such as teaching and nursing, appear to be circumstances where there are certainly stressors, but also where deep enjoyment of improving and shaping, sometimes saving, the lives of people is experienced. A respondent writes, “I work in the long-term care sector. I feel I have always been called to work with older adults.”<sup>26</sup> Jennifer Worth writes, “She was only a nurse and a social worker. What could she do? A calling from God is always hard and demanding, but it can never be resisted, whatever the cost to the individual.”<sup>27</sup> Perhaps it is the nature of immediacy and urgency that caring for another as a medical provider or teacher in certain work situations simply cannot be deferred that makes the vocational call so strong that it cannot be missed.

Some express the notion that a sense of purpose has grown over the years. A respondent writes, “I have a sense of meaningfulness, but it is not deep and has grown over time.”<sup>28</sup> Thus, for these individuals, their career has been a series of building blocks—a process of personal construction. This confirms that the seasons of a person’s life have a bearing. As observed earlier, older respondents demonstrate an ability to cope and derive inner strength in the face of less than optimal workplace experiences.

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<sup>25</sup> Verbatim respondent 10.

<sup>26</sup> Verbatim respondent 20.

<sup>27</sup> Worth, *In the Midst of Life*, 63.

<sup>28</sup> Verbatim respondent 7.

Career changes over time gradually help older workers to find work environments more in line with their values. Thus, for them, dissonance is ameliorated.<sup>29</sup>

Some observe that success provides a platform for philanthropy. For example, wealth-creation leads to a sense of accountability and purpose. A respondent writes, “We are able to contribute money to causes important to us.”<sup>30</sup> In some cases this is the result of an expressed sense of community. In some cases it is the result of one’s reflection on personal experiences of being economically challenged in an earlier period in one’s life and being grateful to have achieved business success. For some it is the response to one’s faith calling that is manifest in the impetus to share one’s gifts.

### **Several Are Adrift**

In several cases there is a clear sense of feeling adrift in the workplace—a loss of being secure in their expectation of return on the investment of one’s labour relative to all the rewards one hopes to receive. A respondent writes, “Work does not satisfy my economic needs.”<sup>31</sup> The ‘gig economy’ is a pervasive factor in the postmodern environment, bringing with it a broad range of challenges, beginning with long hours commuting and on the job.<sup>32</sup> Nouwen writes, “If I were to let my life be taken over by what is urgent, I might very well never get around to what is essential.”<sup>33</sup> Many are overrun by the urgent.

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<sup>29</sup> My work with human resources counselling activity affirms that many individuals in forced career transition regularly find new and different roles that reflect the values they have come to embrace more clearly.

<sup>30</sup> Verbatim respondent 17.

<sup>31</sup> Verbatim respondent 1.

<sup>32</sup> Gig Economy: A colloquial term that has become broadly used. People in the ‘gig economy’ are employed in multiple concurrent part-time jobs, or ‘gigs.’

<sup>33</sup> Nouwen, *Letters to Marc*, 3.

A respondent writes, “It is meaningful to me to work alongside people to help them explore their lives and life circumstances and how these things affect their well-being.”<sup>34</sup> For most, the need to feel needed is central. This is among the most basic of human needs. This is at the very root of a caring environment. Nel Noddings writes, “[A]s I reflect on the way I am cared for, I see clearly my own longing to be received, understood, and accepted.”<sup>35</sup> Whitehead and Whitehead add that this issue of needing to be needed is heightened in the middle years. These are often the most valuable years of one’s career in terms of growth, progress, and self-actualization. They write:

Psychologically the mid-years are marked by the dominance of three interwoven themes: personal power, care, and interiority . . . The middle-aged person wants to be, needs to be, effective in the tasks that define her or his work . . . The middle-aged person wants to be, needs to be, responsible for others . . . The outward movement of expanding responsibility in the mid-years is accompanied by a movement within. There is heightened sensitivity to the self and an increasing focus on inner needs.<sup>36</sup>

Feelings of unfair or inappropriate treatment of self and others at work appear. A respondent writes, “Two males in same job before me [were] paid more!”<sup>37</sup> Such feelings are amplified by surprise and disappointment with failures of what should be automatic choices and decisions in a contemporary workplace. A lack of justice in the workplace is articulated by several respondents. Gender income inequality, or being passed over for opportunities that are perceived to be deserved, are described by respondents. There is considerable disappointment over the perception that the needs of the organization take precedence over the needs of the worker, in some cases to the detriment of the worker. Once again, these experiences lead to dissonance. This

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<sup>34</sup> Verbatim respondent 12.

<sup>35</sup> Noddings, *Caring*, 49.

<sup>36</sup> Whitehead and Whitehead, *Christian Life Patterns*, 114.

<sup>37</sup> Verbatim respondent 1.

dissonance presents as a lack of harmony and a lack of satisfaction in being fully aligned with organizational objectives.

A sense of calling or vocation, identified by a number as being received from God, draws people to certain professions, although in some cases failure to achieve an optimal level of vocation is often suppressed. A respondent writes, “I strive to be more like Jesus in the way

I work and interact with my colleagues.”<sup>38</sup> Economic needs lead some people to settle for less in terms of the achievement of meaningfulness.

Among the respondents, experiences of faith range from strong to non-existent. As will be seen, many assert a form of spirituality over traditional religious faith. People whose faith is strong frequently struggle with their attempts to connect the tenets of their faith with their decisions and choices. For the most part, respondents do not turn to their church, and some even articulate observations of dissonance in their church environments.

There is anxiety over a lack of personal control and empowerment in many cases, both for self and for others in the workplace. Still, a number see their faith, or spirituality, as anchoring them, citing prayer as important in getting through difficulties, especially in times of change. A respondent writes, “The industry changed and, in my view, became less ethical.”<sup>39</sup> Pattison writes, “Change is extraordinarily painful; it often diminishes people’s capacity to perform in an optimum way. It may bring increased illness within the workforce and affected communities and so contribute to making

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<sup>38</sup> Verbatim respondent 9.

<sup>39</sup> Verbatim respondent 3.



society less healthy.”<sup>40</sup> By contrast, it is possible that when a core group values their work, others will begin to see work as having greater value.<sup>41</sup>

### **The Concept of a Career-For-life Appears Lost**

There is a profound change in the way people navigate careers. The one career for life expectation appears largely to be gone. Sometimes the result is a radical departure from what have been traditional career constructs, for example the rise of the ‘gig economy,’ where individuals see multiple, concurrent jobs as the norm. In other cases it is a change in the ethos of a company or a particular industry that causes a person to move on. A search for greater purpose, sometimes resulting in the decision to become an entrepreneur, becomes the cause to move on. Wholesale organizational change leads to layoffs, sometimes for a small number of people, sometimes entire divisions.

### **Gender Inequality is Significant**

Gender inequality encompasses not only compensation inequality, but also workplace practices and dynamics. Norms that were tolerated, even accepted, in past eras, are no longer reasonable, but in many cases still practised. Behavioural characteristics that are commonly viewed as evidence of assertiveness are being viewed by women as archaic and deleterious. Compensation inequality appears across all sectors, including faith-based organizations. A respondent writes, “This is not how the body of Christ should

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<sup>40</sup> Pattison, *The Faith of Managers*, 127.

<sup>41</sup> In my childhood years I recall my mother having a number of ‘pin money’ jobs. Notwithstanding the tedious nature of these tasks, such as painting toy soldiers, she always saw the value in her work, both for the recipients of her labour, and for the positive financial and ethical impact on my brother, sister and me.

behave. Two males in same [were] job before me paid more!”<sup>42</sup> Being passed over for promotion opportunities is also a manifestation of inequality.

### **A Wide Range of Points of View as to What it Means to Be Spiritual**

While faith in God is specifically referenced by many, a significant number make reference to a spirituality that is separate from any traditional faith orientations. A respondent writes, “I do not subscribe to an organized religion, however I do hold to my own spiritual beliefs.”<sup>43</sup> A number ardently profess an atheist view. A respondent writes, “I am not a person of faith.”<sup>44</sup> Another simply ignores the question. One person is uncomfortable with the faith conversation, and another is wary of such conversations. Bell offers that, “Organizations . . . have an opportunity to help employees understand more about spirituality while building a work foundation that could potentially engage employees to search for new meaning in the workplace.”<sup>45</sup>

### **Lack of Workplace Mentorship**

Only one respondent specifically refers to a relationship with a mentor, stating, “I have sought out and found a mentor.”<sup>46</sup> This absence of mentorship may have the resulting development of attitudes of ‘going it alone.’ This may be the result of a decline in traditional middle management in organizational structure. It may also be the result of the rising gig economy and increased telecommuting. One respondent is critical of

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<sup>42</sup> Verbatim respondent 1.

<sup>43</sup> Verbatim respondent 5.

<sup>44</sup> Verbatim respondent 19.

<sup>45</sup> Bell, *Spirituality in the Workplace*, 3.

<sup>46</sup> Verbatim respondent 6.

management engagement, writing, “Many events have placed a sense of doubt in my job security. E.g. others not being supported; not being assigned to a position that I felt qualified to do; being assigned a role that suited the company, but which impeded my development. Being reprimanded for something I did not do.”<sup>47</sup>

### **Trust is Sought but Hard to Find**

Responses make it clear that people still care about one another, but are sometimes unsure of who to trust, or when to engage. A respondent writes, “My views, which stem from a deep rooted belief in Christian life, are not popular amongst peers. I feel quite powerless at times.”<sup>48</sup> Another writes, “I have a quiet faith.”<sup>49</sup> Several responses suggest that these people are less than fully engaged emotionally in their work. A respondent writes, “I do not feel a high degree of meaningfulness – but to some degree, yes.”<sup>50</sup> At the very least, this suggests that people approach deeper engagement with coworkers tentatively at the very least. At worst, people simply eschew engagement beyond the practical requirements of the task at hand. In effect, full engagement is a function of trust. A respondent writes, “I believe that we are all connected and that the energy we bring to our interactions affects the quality of connection, and other things, like loyalty, trust, etc.”<sup>51</sup> Jack Barbalet asserts, “Trust is epistemic . . . trust entails a belief or feeling about the reliability of another, so that in depending on another through

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<sup>47</sup> Verbatim respondent 22.

<sup>48</sup> Verbatim respondent 6.

<sup>49</sup> Verbatim respondent 21.

<sup>50</sup> Verbatim respondent 32.

<sup>51</sup> Verbatim respondent 4.

trust one expects not to be subject to incompetent support, or betrayal.”<sup>52</sup> Creating an environment of trust, it would appear, is a sacred obligation.

### **Where Faith Is Expressed, Views of Work Change**

A number of respondents expressed the belief that they were divinely designed, with a particular role in view. A respondent writes, “I believe that God has placed me where I am today.”<sup>53</sup> Notwithstanding this, several circumstances were described as difficult to navigate or understand. A respondent writes, “There were times when the sense of being tested really could be borne through a sense of faith.”<sup>54</sup> One response specifically articulated a view of the human condition of brokenness. Many express a sense of concern and disappointment, but accept situations as reality that must be managed or tolerated. The notion of faith in action is present, but only a few describe specific ways that they act on this imperative. Prayer for personal discernment and for others is noted.

Those affirming faith also affirm a sense of divine calling. Among those who do not affirm a personal faith in a religious sense, several perceived a higher power—an energy that holds humanity together calling up motives of loyalty and mutual assistance, and of goodness. A respondent writes, “I believe that there is something higher, but not through the lens of religious faith.”<sup>55</sup> In some cases, the faith call leaves unanswered questions as to right behaviour. A respondent writes, “I’m challenged. Do I take my son to church? Do we volunteer? Rather than church, I would rather be out there helping people.”<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Barbalet, “The Experience of Trust,” 15.

<sup>53</sup> Verbatim respondent 12.

<sup>54</sup> Verbatim respondent 14.

<sup>55</sup> Verbatim respondent 4.

<sup>56</sup> Verbatim respondent 29.

### **Many Are Struggling**

Regardless of faith or spiritual affirmation, respondents express a desire for belongingness, despite cynicism in some cases of the notion that good deeds would be reciprocated. A respondent writes, “I find myself more able to see the human side of issues. That does not always help.”<sup>57</sup> Combined with this is the view that most are struggling, one way or another, to make the most of it at work. There is largely a sense that concerns and disappointments are to be expected and coped with. A respondent writes, “I do not expect others to help me, but I do expect me to help others.”<sup>58</sup> This appears to be an effort to compartmentalize one’s struggle. Some are skeptical, even critical, of what they believe that religion has to offer, while others are certain of the role of Jesus as a model for them and felt divine direction in their lives and work. Thus, hope is stronger than lived experiences in many cases. A respondent writes, “I do have faith, but only [in the sense] that I believe there is something out there that we are all striving towards.”<sup>59</sup>

### **Bringing Faith into Workplace Interaction**

Some have learned to bring faith into their workplace interactions, generally more by letting their faith show through in the way they treat others, rather than in explicit expression of faith concepts. A respondent writes, “My faith affects how I treat others. It deepens my perseverance to do the best I can do to glorify Him.”<sup>60</sup> Others confirm strong avoidance of such conversations. Some foster an environment where views are

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<sup>57</sup> Verbatim respondent 18.

<sup>58</sup> Verbatim respondent 16.

<sup>59</sup> Verbatim respondent 16.

<sup>60</sup> Verbatim respondent 32.

welcome, as long as proselytizing does not occur. One respondent made the desire to discuss faith a condition of employment.

### **Discussion With a Minister or Spiritual Counsellor**

The question regarding work-related issues with a minister or spiritual counsellor drew responses that were almost entirely in the negative. Almost no one reported having work-related conversations with a minister or counsellor. Where positive responses were reported, feelings of empathy—a capacity for caring, being offered were reported. A respondent writes that a conversation “affirmed that things have a way of working out.”<sup>61</sup> Offers of people being sounding boards were identified. A respondent writes, “I seek first if there is room for the conversation.”<sup>62</sup> Where conversations with a counsellor were reported, they appear to have been episodic and incomplete.

### **Respect and Concern For Peers**

As stated, many respondents spoke of peers as unique, equal, and connected. They also spoke of peers as extraordinary, unparalleled, or rare. People of faith see their fellow human beings in this way. Seeing each other as uniquely designed by God brings a sense of being privileged to interact with others. One writes, “I am privileged to pave roads forward for others.”<sup>63</sup> The notion of connectedness is asserted in many ways by people who identify as being of faith, or as being spiritual.

Respondents who affirm that they are people of faith frequently used such terms as steady, or humble. Respondents also use the words salvation, grace, and strength, to

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<sup>61</sup> Verbatim respondent 13.

<sup>62</sup> Verbatim respondent 6.

<sup>63</sup> Verbatim respondent 1.

describe a divine source in coping with their work. Grace in this context suggests receiving help from God—we are able to share that help (grace) with others. This echoes a number of respondents who assert that it is their action that counts in their efforts to bring grace into the workplace.

### **Several Are Dissatisfied With Elements of Work**

For emphasis, dissatisfaction with elements of work was a theme common to people of faith as well as those not of faith. A sense of calling was described by both groups also. Frequently, respondents knew, for example, when they were not strongly called to the work they were doing. For respondents who do not describe themselves as people of faith, the word ‘calling’ appears to be used in the sense of an intellectual impulsion rather than a divine summons. The recognition of work trade-offs, for example longer hours or an unpleasant work environment in return for much-needed compensation, was clear. Conversely, respondents describe enjoying particular work for flexibility, freedom of choice, while acknowledging that they wished they could achieve a greater degree of financial reward. It is clear that a sense of ethical behaviour and treatment of others is as critical among those who profess no faith as it is among those that do profess faith.

Among all the respondents, for the most part there is relatively little expression of how to change or improve their environments (although to be clear they were not asked to offer such perspectives). Fatigue and powerlessness were frequently results of dissonance. Also evident was the sense of resignation that finding greater purpose required economic compromise. While some express expediency as a factor in their workplace endeavours and choices, ethical behaviour and correctness of behaviour are very much paramount. It is possible, even likely, that workplace demands create

complexity in ways that are leading to greater dissonance.<sup>64</sup> Graham Stanton writes, “[C]omplexity renders the future fundamentally uncertain, and therefore unpredictable and uncontrollable.”<sup>65</sup>

### **Discussing Faith at Work**

The issue of discussing faith at work drew varied responses, but generally it drew caution. There is also the suggestion that when faith is brought up, the discussion is perceived as dogmatic and closed, rather than being presented as a means of open dialogue. Some say that they have learned to bring it up over time. Several make the point that they would rather let their actions express their beliefs. Two say that they actively seek to spread the gospel. Another says they do not want to be converted. There is also a fear and concern expressed that peers are still searching for deeper purpose. The workplace has generally, become an environment where discussion of faith is avoided. It may be that spirituality, without reference to a specific faith orientation, may be broached, but generally no discussion is the standard. These responses lead to the theory that most avoid the conversation, perhaps out of a desire to be polite, or of a sense of awkwardness, or a fear of conflict. The workplace generally, then, is not viewed as a place for a discussion of faith.

Most had a sense that their faith or spiritual orientation had bearing on their work, in the sense that they feel led to their work through their faith, or that the way in which they discharge their work duties and treat co-workers are guided by their faith.

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<sup>64</sup> Volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity are phenomena described by the U.S. Army War College in 1987. The acronym VUCA is frequently used in leadership journals.

<sup>65</sup> Stanton, “A Theology of Complexity,” 148.



### **Work is Vital to Personhood**

There is a common voice from all these respondents. This voice asserts that work is vital. All respondents did—or if retired, have done—work that expresses their personhood, in the sense that it brings a degree of economic security as well as a means of putting intellect and learned skills to productive purpose. Virtually all respondents expressed a need for a work environment that provides a means of achieving self-actualization and individual identity. A respondent writes, “I believe that my work's meaning is driven by my desire to contribute to others' growth and development. I am also deriving meaningfulness from volunteering.”<sup>66</sup> Prayer regarding work and coworkers is referenced broadly. When personhood is not manifest in work, the worker moves on, or is left experiencing dissonance and withdrawal.

### **Emphasis on Dissonance**

Particular emphasis is given to the issue of dissonance. Dissonance at work appears to be a very strong theme among the majority of respondents. Only six of thirty-two respondents describe working lives without referring to some form of dissonance. One respondent describes an early career that held considerable dissonance, however, this respondent's later career was enjoyable and without dissonance. The remaining respondents describe a workplace that held dissonance—a lack of harmony—that ranges from mild to severe as discussed below. Mild dissonance implies the presence of such emotions and realities as “feeling powerless,”<sup>67</sup> and dealing with others who don't share a focus on “good or skilled workmanship [sic]”<sup>68</sup> Several offered that they felt that co-

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<sup>66</sup> Verbatim respondent 5.

<sup>67</sup> Verbatim respondent 6.

<sup>68</sup> Verbatim respondent 16.

workers did not share the same values or passion. Moderate dissonance suggests a more troubling circumstance where co-workers do not “know how to get a deep sense of purpose.”<sup>69</sup> Many in this category spoke to the view that they are not doing the work that they feel is their calling, or describe a financial cost to them to pursue their work. One affirms “[My work is lacking] in terms of fully satisfying a sense of calling.”<sup>70</sup> Several affirmed a lack of job-security and unreasonable compensation. Severe dissonance implies abuse. In two cases, the respondents perceived abuse from the perspective of gender income inequality, combined with a lack of recognition for their work. Several stated that they had no sense of fulfillment or vocation. Others perceived an increasingly unethical work environment. Several reported stress as a result of a lack of justice, combined with highly politically charged environments. One commented that the workplace had become highly internally competitive; that everyone was out for personal gain, driven only by money.

For emphasis, some four fifths of the respondents expressed, through their comments, work circumstances that range from moderately dissonant to severely dissonant. This is from an overall sample of individuals, supervisory and non-supervisory, that are in full time positions or have retired from full time positions. These phenomena suggest that the workplace is largely a place of dissonance, ranging from mild to severe.

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<sup>69</sup> Verbatim respondent 2.

<sup>70</sup> Verbatim respondent 17.

### **Phenomenological Observations**

The phenomenological observations that follow draw from particular anecdotes that bring deep insight into the lived experiences of the respondents. These offer a compelling understanding which will undergird both the grounded theory derived from this research and ultimately the leadership and ministry commentaries and recommendations that follow.

Several respondents appear to see beyond the challenges of their tasks. They describe God's very real presence in their lives. The word, 'justice' was used to imply a vision of appropriate organizational values and leadership behaviours. Concern for others is mentioned. This was manifest in the belief that peers want a deep sense of meaningfulness, but may not know how to get it.

The idea of meaningfulness—of having significance or purpose—was a pervasive view expressed by many respondents. Some said that meaningfulness went hand-in-hand with calling. One respondent described how deeper meaningfulness has been perceived as they aged. As stated, the experience of dissonance is quite pervasive, with a significant number of respondents describing real inconsistency between the values they hold and the circumstances in which they work. This might be assumed to be a desire for rectitude, fairness, and soundness. A respondent described experiencing a stressful environment. Another respondent made the observation that they pay a price to achieve meaningfulness. While some stated they had achieved a sense of meaningfulness, in many cases, for these same individuals, it was accompanied by dissonance. The notion emerges that they have learned to compartmentalize their feelings of dissonance. These individuals chose to focus on those elements of the work that gave them meaning. For some, however, a state of meaningfulness was a yet

unachieved aspiration. It was clear that several respondents have reached a place where they are content, at least to a degree, despite elements of their work that create dissonance.

For several, times of dissonance also brought forward a sense of spiritual presence and guidance. A respondent writes, “My faith keeps me steady when I don’t see where next month’s income will come from. My faith keeps me humble to know that I have something to learn from every client.”<sup>71</sup> This notion of God leading them through specific challenges, and sometimes more broad conundrums, was evident. Prayer was mentioned both for personal guidance and for others.

Frequently appearing were the words, calling, and ‘vocation’ which seemed to have the same, or very similar, meaning. From the Latin *vocare*, to call, we get the term ‘vocation’—interpreted as summons, or impulsion. In other words, an external demand is placed on us to commit ourselves and our labour to a specific occupation. The word *calling* adds the dimension of inner urging. This sentiment was expressed by many respondents. What was also present was the suggestion that to respond to their calling brought both challenges and growth. In some cases this resulted in a need to move to a different work environment—a completely new occupation. Such a change was required in order to find both peace and the opportunity to flourish.

A respondent discovered that a new business venture was the correct response to dissatisfaction with their workplace. While in some cases the realization of a specific calling occurs prior to the change, for others there is a move to a new environment altogether, followed by a growing realization that the new environment brings a strong

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<sup>71</sup> Verbatim respondent 6.

sense of vocation. Several also commented that even though they shared the same work with others, their colleagues' sense of vocation did not necessary seem pervasive.

The terms, “ethics,” and “purpose,” were used frequently. These terms suggest standards of conduct, i.e. moral judgment and purpose—intention and determination behind an action or statement. When individuals use these terms in the context of describing their sense of calling and vocation, they describe the boundaries of behaviour and treatment that either keep a person within a realm of contentment with their circumstances, or they describe the type of situation that pushes them outside those boundaries, and therefore leads to dissonance and discontent.

### **A Grounded Theory of Leadership Dynamics in the Workplace**

As described in Chapter 1, the resulting output of the grounded theory method of analysis of the qualitative data derived from the research questionnaire supporting this dissertation is a conceptualization of the lived experiences of the respondents. This conceptualization forms the emergent grounded theory upon which the perspectives and arguments of this dissertation are constructed. In particular, this emergent grounded theory will crystallize and reinforce the practices that will be argued as essential for transformational leadership. Elements of this emergent grounded theory will be prefaced by the term ‘the findings of the survey indicate.’

Virtually every respondent articulates a desire for purpose and meaningfulness in their work, however this desire, for a significant number of respondents, is rendered ineffective by a degree of dissonance in their experiences at work. For some this is a lack of harmony between their desire for meaningfulness and their comfort in expressing their complete personhood in their work. For others there is evidence of significant

inconsistency between their values and their actual lived experiences in the workplace. For still others there is a cultural dissonance—the result of an inconsistency—wrought by a feeling of changing ethics in their chosen fields of endeavour. This dissonance sometimes results in fatigue and feelings of powerlessness.

Among respondents of professed faith or spirituality, there is a sense that their spirituality grounds them and strengthens them in uncertain situations, for example in navigating careers. Prayer is a frequent practice. A sense of hope is strong. Some express their work as an opportunity to be models of their faith.

Frequently there is a sense of resignation among respondents that finding greater purpose and meaningfulness requires economic compromise. Unfairness, inequity, and injustice, is experienced or observed in enough cases for it to be a significant issue. Stated examples are gender inequality, and being passed over for opportunities considered to be earned. This sense of resignation, which may be made worse by a loss of mentorship, frequently leads to eschewing achievement of purpose for an assurance of economic stability.

Although many state that they act their faith at work, people of professed faith or spirituality tend to avoid expressing their beliefs at work out of concern of feeling awkward, or finding themselves in conflict with others. People care about co-workers. Hope is manifest in many responses.

The majority of respondents have not had a conversation with a minister, pastor or counsellor regarding workplace challenges, though it is evident that there is a search for spiritual meaning. Several nuances in the responses suggest that there would be no

perceived value in such a conversation. A respondent writes, “No. I don't want to be disrespectful.”<sup>72</sup>

While not one of the respondents identifies the leadership within their work environment as the author, or cause, of their workplace circumstances, this research concludes that the specific elements and dynamics of the workplace experiences described are the direct result of leadership decisions and choices. Leaders hold charge of ethos, organization, and progress within the workplace. If there is dissonance, disappointment, injustice, and all the dynamics which lead to, or detract from, a depth of personal meaning, calling, and one’s sense of flourishing at work, all of these phenomena are in the hands of leadership. These phenomena also proved instruction and guidance to pastoral counsel.

### **Conclusion**

Respondents in supervisory roles and respondents in non-supervisory roles offered similar comments in terms of the benefits of work and a sense of purpose. Individuals in both groups reported praying, and the view that God is involved in their lives. Those in non-supervisory roles had more to say in general, especially regarding stressors in the workplace. Retired respondents also lamented a loss of ethics in the workplace. Those who are self-employed expressed joy in helping others, and a strong sense of ‘family’ at work. The question regarding speaking about faith in the workplace drew equally negative responses among supervisory and non-supervisory respondents.

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<sup>72</sup> Verbatim respondent 26.

What is clear is that there is a modest to strong sense of dissonance at work. This lack of harmony between one's sense of purpose and the realities of workplace interaction can be addressed by leadership. The research responses imply, collectively, that it is the ethos of leadership that is needed in order to create a workplace that promotes flourishing. People want to have an impression that work is fair, ethical and meaningful in the fullest sense of a person's expectations. Further, those who express faith and those who do not, express a degree of passive acceptance, or acquiescence, about the apparent norms that they are required to conform to in order to make a living. Despite this, hope is expressed, particular by those of faith. A sense of caring about one's co-worker is strong.

While this dissertation has the workplace as its focus, it is possible that for many in society, the ability to reach a sense of flourishing may be at risk of disappearing altogether. Anne Snyder writes:

Seven million prime-working-age American men [sic] sit at home, idle and unemployed. Neighbourliness is an increasingly rare experience, with only 31 percent of Americans socializing weekly with someone next door (down from 44% in 1974). More people live alone, eat alone, and displace real-time conversation with controlled (if frenetic) screen time than ever before. Moral depth and literacy have declined, while a 2017 Gallup poll found that Americans' views of the state of our moral values as a society are themselves at a nadir . . . The young express a crisis of purpose and moral direction.<sup>73</sup>

A significant number attest directly to divine-human cooperation, even though they recognize that it is frequently fractured. Others seek meaningfulness that is beyond economic security—for example, the simple satisfaction in a job well-done and to be recognized for good work by others.

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<sup>73</sup> Snyder, "Why Character," 44–45.



### CHAPTER 3: ANALYZING THE ROOTS OF THE CONTEMPORARY WORKPLACE

With the qualitative research analysis completed and a grounded theory articulated, this dissertation turns to the complexities of the postmodern workplace as it evolves from the modern. In order to arrive at an articulation of leadership as an opportunity for theology in practice, together with a view of the workplace as a mission field, it is critical to understand the nature of work and the workplace, together with the forces which shape work and leadership. These topics are the subject matter of this chapter. Primary disciplines drawn from are organizational theory, management theory and practical theology.

Organizations are conceived, created, structured, and shaped to achieve the goals and imperatives of the founders. Organizational structure, in turn, produces job descriptions, professional requirements, compensation structures, and career progress standards. Organizational structure dictates the nature and objectives of management hierarchy. Concepts of ethical norms pervade all organizations.

With respect to for-profit enterprises, capital formation and the choice of funding models have a critical impact on the foregoing. In such organizations, stakeholder and shareholder expectations and demands create overarching expectations, with resulting, sometimes dramatic, impact on leadership imperatives.

Enterprise clusters create social and community structure. In Ottawa, Canada, for example, government and public service organizations are predominant, leading to

specific community and transportation hub creation. Organizational structures, while specific to the particular agency, have a significant number of commonalities across government and public service organizations in terms of compensation and benefits structures, career progress expectations, and so on. Communities reflect this. Status within an agency frequently translates to standing in the community.

Organizational structures are changing, in some areas dramatically (supply chain constructs, for example) as the modern era gives way to the postmodern,<sup>1</sup> even while many enterprises employ as many as four generations. With these foundational imperatives and enterprise influences in view, this dissertation turns to a number of workplace dynamics as they influence human flourishing at work.

A significant influencer in terms of the achievement of human flourishing, which is the direct result of organizational structure, is the establishment of hierarchy and the exercise of power. Research narratives expose the outcomes of the ways in which power is exercised, from command-and-control to leading-as-partnering approaches.

As will be described, dissonance—a lack of harmony between personal values and work imperatives—from moderate to severe, is a significant inhibitor to human flourishing. This is manifest in absenteeism and a loss of meaningfulness at work.

People care about their work and care about their co-workers. However they are concerned about a number of perceived challenges and inequities. Mentorship has declined. Traditions are under duress. Career expectations have changed. Some are lonely.

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<sup>1</sup> In the context of this dissertation, the term postmodern is distinguished from postmodernism. While postmodernism has broad implications, for example philosophical perspectives on aesthetic, literary, political, artistic and social movements, postmodernity is more narrowly focussed on changes to institutions and innovations since the 1950's.

Models of leadership have changed as organization structures and communication methods have changed. Some organizations have traditional, hierarchical structures while others are nodal in nature.

Following an analysis of the contemporary workplace, this chapter offers to a view of leadership as theology in practice. Leaders are presented as shepherds, purveyors of hope and forgiveness as they adapt to changing workplace structures. Discussed also is the apparent rise in a post-religious spirituality. The workplace is also viewed as a mission field.

### **A Leadership Vignette**

Not so long ago, a young man began a career as an auxiliary traffic officer with the British police. It was the first morning of the first day of training specific to his assignment. Indeed, it was his very first—proud—day in uniform. He arrived early for his first class. The first to arrive, he chose a desk in the classroom—two rows back at the left-most end of the row. He positioned his police officer’s peaked cap at the front right hand side of his desk, centred his note paper and pen, and waited. Other recruits began to arrive. Eventually, precisely at the top of the hour, the assigned senior instruction officer arrived. Before the assembled students, the instructor walked directly, in a very straight line, to the young man, to whom he barked, “I’m getting old, and I’m getting cranky! Put your cap on the hook outside, then come back and sit down!”

The message received by the class, intended or not, was that they were going to be subjected to a week of perfunctory instruction. It would be a routine that the instructor had likely carried out many times; lacking interest, care, or enthusiasm. Inferable, also, was that the instructor had no interest in learning anything from the

students.<sup>2</sup> Barbara Kellerman writes, “Leaders become incompetent for various reasons. Some lack experience, education, or expertise. Others lack drive, energy, or the ability to focus. Still others are not clever enough, flexible enough—or whatever enough.”<sup>3</sup> It may not be fair simply to write off our police instructor as incompetent. He may have been going through illness, emotional stress, or some other distraction that particular week. He may have been assigned to a task that he did not want to do. Perhaps it was an assignment that he was ill-suited to do. Perhaps he started his career with the same verve as the young man whom he had disciplined; somewhere along the way losing sight of his purpose as a dedicated and caring instructor. Good, well-intentioned, people sometimes lose their compass. Wiley Souba writes:

The ethical foundation of the medical profession, which values service above reward and holds the doctor-patient relationship as inviolable, continues to be challenged by the commercialization of health care . . . The four *prima facie* principles of medical ethics— beneficence (doing good for the patient), no maleficence (do no harm), respect for patient autonomy (patient choice), and justice (ensuring fair and equal treatment)—and the more recently developed Charter on Medical Professionalism are routinely challenged by a health care system where the business of healthcare has become business.<sup>4</sup>

In the 1960s “the job of sales clerk was considered a position to aspire to, requiring good arithmetic ability and communication skills. Indeed, the job of bank teller seemed unreachable to many.”<sup>5</sup> Many sought such opportunities because they offered a reasonable and secure salary, frequently with good benefits, plus good standing in the

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<sup>2</sup> I was the student auxiliary traffic officer. Interestingly, a very different leadership style emerged. I had given a traffic violation ‘ticket’ to a senior elected civic official. This person demanded that the station senior officer quash the matter. The senior officer asked the civic official if the traffic violation had actually occurred. The civic official agreed that it had, upon which the senior officer stated that the violation, as written up by me, would stand. The senior officer stood with me—trusting me—throughout the matter.

<sup>3</sup> Kellerman, *Bad Leadership*, 51.

<sup>4</sup> Souba, “The Being of Leadership,” [n.d.].

<sup>5</sup> Bates, *Sales Force Management*, 79.

community. They could well become careers for life. Many of the financial institutions, as well as other employers, invested in considerable training programs for their employees. Much has changed indeed; many organizations seek ‘just-in-time’ expertise in the same way that they resource ‘just-in-time’ materials.<sup>6</sup> Today, many commute long distances to their workplace, fracturing their sense of community. Career certainty is reduced and, as will be described later in this dissertation, organizational structure has changed dramatically. Somewhere along the way we stopped speaking about our faith at work as well. Jonathan Merritt writes, “An overwhelming majority of people say that they don’t feel comfortable speaking about faith, most of the time.”<sup>7</sup> A respondent notes, “Faith is rarely discussed in a workplace - as such this is awkward and I rarely, if ever, begin it.”<sup>8</sup>

In 2005, Helen Cameron et al suggested that, “There appears to be little scholarly dialogue between the fields of management studies and theological studies.”<sup>9</sup> This does appear to be changing. This dissertation contributes to discussion of the relationship between theological studies and organizational behaviour theory, leadership theory, operations management theory, psychology, and economics.

As stated earlier, personal reflection is founded in five decades of leadership experiences in business, not-for-profit, academic and public service situations. In terms of autobiographical reflection, A. Walker writes:

[A]utobiographical research has evolved to bodies of work substantiating its values of connecting lived experiences with learnings . . . The use of reflective,

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<sup>6</sup> Just-in-Time (JIT) inventory management aligns the supply of raw materials with production cycles in a manufacturing situation, thus reducing inventory costs and improving efficiency.

<sup>7</sup> Merritt, “It’s Getting Harder,” [n.d.].

<sup>8</sup> Verbatim respondent 18.

<sup>9</sup> Cameron et al., *Studying Local Churches*, 68.

autobiographical narratives allows the researcher to draw from questions that examine life experiences to analyze the self within the lens of criticality.<sup>10</sup>

### **Integrating Qualitative Research and A Critical Literature Review**

Juliet Corbin and Anselm Strauss present a number of research exemplars which are considered in the development and analysis in the qualitative research conducted for this dissertation. They write, “Committed qualitative researchers lean toward the fluid, evolving, and dynamic nature of this approach in contrast to the more rigid and structured format of quantitative methods.”<sup>11</sup>

Using a questioning structure that elicits largely narrative responses from individuals who span in age from ages mid-twenties to ages mid-seventies, in the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States calls for careful reflection on idiomatic expression. For example, a respondent writes, “I did not feel as though the work fed my soul.”<sup>12</sup> Corbin and Strauss write, “Technically, doing analysis of a word, phrase, or sentence consists of scanning the document, or at least a couple of pages of it, then returning to focus on a word, or phrase, that strikes the analysts as being significant and analytically interesting.”<sup>13</sup> Corbin and Strauss also stress the perspective of ontology. They offer, “The complexity of phenomena direct us to examine problematic as well as routine situations and events. Important to us are the great varieties of human action, interaction, and emotional responses that people have to the events and problems they encounter.”<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Walker, “Critical Autobiography,” 1899–1900. All autobiographical reflection will be presented in footnotes.

<sup>11</sup> Corbin and Strauss, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, 13.

<sup>12</sup> Verbatim respondent 28.

<sup>13</sup> Corbin and Strauss, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, 78.

<sup>14</sup> Corbin and Strauss, *Basics of Qualitative Research*, 6.

With these perspectives in view, this dissertation turns to the workplace. It is the structure and dynamics of the workplace that result in the comments offered by the research respondents.

Foundational to organizational formation and the imperatives of management is the concept of scarcity. The study of economics is the study of how one agent acts upon another and the impact of that action. Specifically, economics drives the science of the production of goods and services, together with the manufacture, distribution and consumption of those goods and services. Nobel Prize winner in Economics Milton Friedman presents a strong opinion on “the role of competitive capitalism—the organization of the bulk of economic activity through private enterprise operating in a free market—as a system of economic freedom and relying primarily on the market to organize economic activity.”<sup>15</sup> Specifically, management must choose among a restricted set of potential alternatives in setting a path forward for the enterprise. James Gwartney and Richard Stroup write, “Since scarcity prevents us from having as much as we would of economic goods . . . we are forced to choose among a restricted set of potential alternatives.”<sup>16</sup> This is a critical matter in the decision to add or remove resources to an enterprise. Most organizations grow (or decline) in a linear fashion. However the decision to add or remove resources, particularly large capital resources as well as human resources, is one that might be described as a step function. The timing of such decisions can have major implications on cash flow, for example. Indeed, a series of missteps may result in insolvency.

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<sup>15</sup> Friedman, *Capitalism*, 4.

<sup>16</sup> Gwartney and Stroup, *Economics*. 5.

The choice of incentives is a critical leadership decision. How should employees be paid, both in sum and in structure? This is tied to what economists describe as monitoring, which is focussed to a significant extent, on the concern that unmonitored employees will shirk. Gwartney and Stroup describe shirking as, “Working at a less than normal rate of productivity thus reducing output.”<sup>17</sup> This presents the notion that, left to their own devices and without the right resources and incentives, workers slack off. A key economic concept, which leads to organization theory, is the study of productivity and choice of specialized skills. Again, this a cost/output dilemma that leadership must resolve.

### **Organizational Theory**

The organization is that construct of human endeavour which responds to the needs of the enterprise. Fundamentally, organization theory focuses on gathering and structuring the physical, technical, and workforce attributes necessary for success. Nancy Langton et al. assert that,

There are six elements that managers need to address when they design their organization’s structure: work specialization, departmentalization, chain of command, span of control, centralization and decentralization and formalization [of the decision-making process].<sup>18</sup>

Critically it is the community of effort, and that community’s engagement with the world, that must be created and nurtured in order to achieve and sustain the goals of the enterprise. Hatch and Cunliffe present critically important social and organizational changes in perspectives that distinguish the postmodern era from the modern era. Her

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<sup>17</sup> Gwartney and Stroup, *Economics*. 499.

<sup>18</sup> Langton et al., *Organizational Behaviour*, 502.



work begins with a summary of the “key philosophical differences constituting the modern, symbolic and postmodern perspectives and their implications for organizational theory.”<sup>19</sup> Of particular interest are perspectives on the structural choices for organizations, as well as the issue of internal competition. Both of these elements of the postmodern organization have bearing and will be discussed.

The ages of the respondents to the research survey supporting this dissertation range from mid-twenties to mid-seventies. Thus, the contrasting perspectives offered by Hatch and Cunliffe are important. They write:

Because humans belong to many different communities of practice, each having their own ways of talking that produce a context for local meaning making and identity construction, an organization’s social structure can embrace multiple communities of practice, each emerging spontaneously in response to particular interests, needs, desires, or problems. Communities of practice can cross boundaries drawn between business units and project teams, hierarchies, or any other dimension of social structure. Individuals can move between different communities, sharing and brokering knowledge as they do so. Like networks, communities of practice are characterized by connections rather than hierarchical or formalized relationships, making the manager’s role one of enabling organizational learning and innovation.<sup>20</sup>

When we are reminded that as many as four generations of workers occupy the same workplace, these observations gain considerable heft. Organization structure dictates the enterprise’s approach to the way human talent is identified, chosen, located, organized, trained, and remunerated.

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<sup>19</sup> Hatch and Cunliffe, *Organization Theory*, 14.

<sup>20</sup> Hatch and Cunliffe, *Organization Theory*, 14.

## Management Theory

Understood at its most fundamental level, management is involved with the structuring of work—to conceive of and develop the appropriate apparatus and expertise for the task at hand, in the most cost-effective manner possible. Peter Drucker writes:

Within the life-span of today's old-timers, our society has become a 'knowledge society,' a 'society of organizations,' and a 'networked society.' In the twentieth century, the major social tasks came to be performed in and through organized institutions—business enterprises, large and small; school systems; colleges and universities; hospitals; research laboratories; governments and government agencies of all kinds and sizes; and many others. And each of them in turn is entrusted to 'managers' who practise 'management.'<sup>21</sup>

Knowledge, organization, and networking could well describe the critical success factors for virtually every enterprise. It is the theory, structure, and processes of management that create the environments for, as well as the demands that are placed upon, leadership. However, the ultimate critical success factor may be teleological in nature. In simple terms, we might consider the questions where are we going and how will we know we have arrived? Answering these questions knit together knowledge, organization, and networking in a way that leads to the deeper question: 'Are we flourishing?' This may be difficult to answer. Mintzberg writes, "Study after study has shown that [a] managers work at an unrelenting pace; [b] their activities are typically characterized by brevity, variety, fragmentation and discontinuity; and [c] they are strongly oriented to action."<sup>22</sup> Time for reflection is clearly at a premium, particularly when leaders are tied to, often largely remunerated by, achieving relatively short-term shareholder expectations. Indeed, of critical importance for management is the

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<sup>21</sup> Drucker, *Management*, 1.

<sup>22</sup> Mintzberg, *Managing*, 19.

adherence to and achievement of the set of quarterly and annual performance metrics deemed essential for the enterprise.

The goal of the workplace is measurable output, whether it be social or economic. Ever since the Dutch East India Company allowed the public to invest in its business in 1602, for those enterprises focussed on economic returns, the measure is profit. Getting the best possible return for stockholders may, however, require a deeper understanding of, and possible investment in, the development of greater purpose among employees. This may include working with those employees on community initiatives not necessarily tied directly to the organization's core products and services. The findings of the survey indicate that for most there is an expression of faith or spirituality. However, this is broadly perceived as unwelcome in the workplace. If human flourishing in the workplace dimension of one's life is achievable, arguably increased productivity is the outcome. Increased productivity inevitably leads to increased customer satisfaction, and business profitability. Drucker writes:

Asked what a business is, the typical businessman [sic] is likely to answer, 'An organization is designed to make a profit.' The typical economist is likely to give the same answer, 'to maximize profits.' This answer is not only false, it is irrelevant . . . Profit is not the explanation, cause, or rationale of business behavior and business decisions, but the test of their validity . . . To know what a business is, we have to start with its *purpose*. Its purpose must lie outside of the business itself. In fact, it must lie in society, since business enterprise is an organ of society. There is only one valid definition of business purpose: *to create a customer*.<sup>23</sup>

Simon Sinek crystallizes the point, He writes, "Great leaders . . . are able to inspire people to act. Those who are able to inspire give people a sense of purpose or belonging

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<sup>23</sup> Drucker, *Management*, 97–98 [emphasis original].

that has little to do with any external incentive or benefit to be gained.”<sup>24</sup> Such leaders and their organizations create a customer.

Creating a customer requires a relationship of trust. Critically important to Drucker’s statement is its corollary: individual purpose. Organizational purpose is manifest when the purposes of the individuals *within* the organization become manifest. A respondent writes, “In terms of my spiritual beliefs, I believe that we are all connected and that the energy we bring to our interactions affects the quality of connection, and other things like loyalty, trust, etc.”<sup>25</sup> Trust is personal. By contrast, grounded theory suggests that it is evident that several respondents resign themselves to the perspective that finding greater purpose requires personal economic compromise. Drucker writes:

We do not learn anything about the work of a heart specialist by being told that he [sic] is trying to make a livelihood, or even that he [sic] is trying to benefit humanity. The profit motive and its offspring maximization of profits are just as irrelevant to the function of a business, the purpose of a business, and the job of managing a business . . . The first function of a business is marketing. The second function is innovation.<sup>26</sup>

A respondent writes, “I changed careers 16 years ago to start a business. It has become my calling. It can be scary and overwhelming at times. All my efforts and funds go into the business. My workers and family are my peers.”<sup>27</sup> Another respondent writes, “The industry changed and, in my view, became less ethical. I joined a small firm owned by a gay Christian man, who is on the same page as me in terms of ethics and purpose.”<sup>28</sup> Thus, return of profit to a shareholder may have far broader ethical implications than next quarter’s returns.

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<sup>24</sup> Sinek, *Start With Why*, 6.

<sup>25</sup> Verbatim respondent 4.

<sup>26</sup> Drucker, *Management*, 97.

<sup>27</sup> Verbatim respondent 8.

<sup>28</sup> Verbatim respondent 3.

Organization culture can be dominated by the business funding model. A significant development in the formation of capital markets in recent decades is the rise of venture capital. These are pools of money raised with the purpose of higher risk investments in start-up or early-stage enterprises that may be unable to raise capital through borrowing or through issuing shares directly in the stock markets. H. Ooghe et al. write:

Companies with high-risk projects cannot raise finance from conventional funding sources . . . The venture capitalist provides mostly equity capital . . . Another aspect of importance for the venture capitalist are the exit mechanisms as he [sic] wants to sell his [sic] participation after five or ten years with the hope to realize capital gains.<sup>29</sup>

When start-up businesses are funded by venture capitalists, generally the venture capital provider is not a passive lender. They seek positions on the board of the investee company. They impose their own values, performance benchmarks and timelines on the investee organization. They become involved in the governance of the enterprise. Sometimes this is valuable, and sometimes it is stressful. Selznick writes, “Perhaps the most obvious indicator of organizational character as a palpable reality is the abandonment of old organizations and the creation of new ones when changes in general orientation seem required.”<sup>30</sup> Venture capital objectives can, and often do, drown out all aspirations of the business, save for those of the venture capitalist.

The findings of the survey indicate that acting our faith—being guided by faith, may be the most important way to bring faith into the workplace. This brings an acute

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<sup>29</sup> Ooghe et al., “Venture Capital,” 29–30.

<sup>30</sup> Selznick, *Leadership in Administration*, 41.

awareness of embedded cultures and traditions in different work environments. Israel

Drori et al. write:

Transnational entrepreneurs are individuals who migrate from one country to another, concurrently maintaining business-related linkages with their countries of origin and with their adopted countries and communities. By travelling both physically and virtually, transnational entrepreneurs engage simultaneously in two of more socially embedded environments, allowing them to maintain critical global relations that enhance their ability to creatively and efficiently maximize their resource base.<sup>31</sup>

Thus, these transnational entrepreneurs gain insights that others may not be aware of. As a result, they adapt and respond easily to multiculturalism. We can learn from this adaptive capability. The findings of the survey indicate that desire for interaction with others that is ethical and caring is pervasive. Drori et al. write:

The efforts of our transnational entrepreneur to translate, innovate, and modify structures simultaneously operating in two distinct cultural paradigms represent entrepreneurial activities that take advantage of a new globalized and interconnected world . . . Accordingly, we define transnational entrepreneurs as: *social actors who enact networks, ideas, information, and practices for the purpose of seeking business opportunities or maintaining businesses within multiple social fields, which in turn forces them to engage in varied strategies of action to promote their entrepreneurial activities and social changes.*<sup>32</sup>

We can learn much from these transnational entrepreneurs. They are also examples of ‘positive deviants.’ Sara Parkin describes a positive deviant as a “person who does the right thing despite being surrounded by the wrong institutional structures, the wrong processes and stubbornly uncooperative people.”<sup>33</sup> Parkin uses the term specifically in connection with those who champion issues of sustainability. However, others use this term in consulting situations where significant change is being sought in organizations where the right person to bring about change may not be part of the management

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<sup>31</sup> Drori et al., “Researching Transnational Entrepreneurship,” 3.

<sup>32</sup> Drori et al., “Researching Transnational Entrepreneurship,” 4 [Emphasis original].

<sup>33</sup> Parkin, *The Positive Deviant*, 1.

structure of the organization.<sup>34</sup> Positive deviants frequently find themselves in conflict with prevailing ethical values in an organization. Positive deviants, when supported and encouraged, can influence the ethical values of an organization in a positive way.

Arguably, it is Spirit-led leadership that has the deeply adaptive capacity to seek out and engage with positive deviants in the organization. Adaptive capacity has resilience at its core.

Robert Gibbs lays a foundation for the praxis of leadership that this dissertation seeks to explore. Gibbs offers a series of questions, the responses to which press us to consider all human responses to critical issues. He puts forward:

An ethics of responsibility, arises out of the need to think: to give an account to others of why we should respond for other people. Having found itself in question, philosophy requires an ethical justification through an ethics—an extreme ethics for thinking that has so much to answer for today . . . This [work] offers an ethics whose center is responsibility and not principles of autonomy or rational deliberation or optimal benefits. I distinguish here between the ethical exigency of bearing a *responsibility* and the corresponding *responsive* performance in the following manner: I can be responsible for doing something, even when I fail to act responsibly. Responsiveness is thus the fulfillment of a responsibility, but my bearing of that responsibility is independent of whether I act ethically or not.<sup>35</sup>

Among many human dilemmas, Gibbs discusses Jesus' instruction in the Sermon on the Mount that no one can serve two masters (cf. Matt 6:25ff). From the perspective of vocation this presents a dilemma that can only be resolved when we recognize work as a contribution to the Kingdom. Ethics, and perceptions of ethical behaviour and norms pervade our politics and culture. A respondent writes, "I know that all work, regardless of its value on Earth, should be done with the same passion as if working for Jesus

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<sup>34</sup> During a consulting assignment in the financial services industry in Latin America, I learned that finding and engaging a positive deviant would prove to be a critical element of change leadership. This discovery may have accelerated the adoption of new approaches by months, if not years.

<sup>35</sup> Gibbs, *Why Ethics*, 3.

directly.”<sup>36</sup> Another writes, “My role is fulfilling. I was raised to believe that kindness to one will be passed on to another. I have seen how a calm approach can spread with others in the room. I’m not sure if my coworkers share the same views.”<sup>37</sup> It is clear that the respondents broadly recognize the presence or absence of positive, and constructive ethical values and standards.

The findings of the survey indicate that dissonance, mild to severe, is a frequent theme among respondents. Class structure, merit-based or socially-based, is an element of economics and in turn organizational structure and behaviour. Joyce Mercer discusses practical theology’s turn to class and economics. She writes:

Historically sociology has been a primary academic location for studies of the relations between social groups, including economic systems and class relations . . . As scholars of pastoral care gradually shifted their attention more fully to groups, communities, organizations and congregations, sociology achieved a wider embrace, particularly among those practical theologians searching for theoretical frameworks and research methods more adequate for making sense of social relations between groups . . . A second influence on practical theologies turn to economics and class relationships has to do with current global economic conditions. There is a sense of urgency to understand and account for the role of the economy in human experience.<sup>38</sup>

Secularization in our economic endeavours, the distancing of work from its spiritual value, and the decline in church attendance as a part of the rhythm of life, all come together to leave important conversations incomplete. Mercer writes:

[A] definitive aspect of practical theology is its transformational impulse: practical theology is concerned not simply to describe reality and to make sense of it, but to seek transformation toward the love and justice of God for all people . . . Practical theologians must address economic and class-based contexts in which people are embedded, as part of the normative dimension of our work.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Verbatim respondent 7.

<sup>37</sup> Verbatim respondent 7.

<sup>38</sup> Mercer, “Economics, Class, and Classism,” 435.

<sup>39</sup> Mercer, “Economics, Class, and Classism,” 436.



There are two dimensions to this: pastoral counselling, and activism. It is possible that activism will lead to greater opportunities for pastoral counselling. Joining with others in activist endeavours in the community creates strong new bonds upon which deeper conversation may begin. Activism can be community-based or workplace based.

Richard Osmer writes:

Phenomenological research seeks to describe the essence of a particular type of event or activity for a group of people. For example, it might ask: Among hospital patients, what is the essence of their experience of a caring interaction with a nurse? A guiding assumption of phenomenology is the ‘intentionality’ of consciousness, that is, that consciousness is always directed toward an object. Researchers attempt to bracket out their own preconceptions and to allow individuals’ lived experience (their consciousness) of events or activities to disclose themselves. After gathering many instances of lived experience, they then analyze them to identify their common structure or ‘essence.’<sup>40</sup>

Analysis of lived experiences provides rich information for activism. A respondent writes, “I can’t say that I’ve had a conversation with a spiritual advisor that I can remember. I’ve studied a lot of spiritual material.”<sup>41</sup> Others made similar comments. Exploring these views provides a strong field for social activism and engagement.<sup>42</sup>

Community and workplace research should inform leadership and ministry. Organizations such as local Boards of Trade<sup>43</sup> offer myriad opportunities through networking events and special purpose committees. Becoming involved in such networks will provide broad and rich knowledge of community issues and will lead to opportunities for activism. Conversations will ensue. Craig Dykstra and Dorothy Bass write:

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<sup>40</sup> Osmer, *Practical Theology*, 52.

<sup>41</sup> Verbatim respondent 17.

<sup>42</sup> I have witnessed workplace-based community activities, such as the *United Way*, effectively become community wide activism efforts.

<sup>43</sup> The Toronto Board of Trade offers a number of committees, for example the Young Professionals’ Network.

When an overstressed worker takes one day every week to worship, feast, and play, he [sic] is renewed in relation to God, other people, and work that he does on the other days of the week. Because these people have done certain things together in the light of and in response to God's active presence, they have in a sense shared in the practices of God, who has also honoured the human body, embraced death, and rested, calling creation good.<sup>44</sup>

Such activities enable us to ponder the path that we are travelling, often leading to a re-set and perhaps a change in career focus.

### **Changed Career Expectations**

The findings of the survey indicate that there is a change in the way people navigate careers. The 'one-career-for-life' expectation appears to be gone completely, sometimes resulting in a radical departure. For example the rise of the gig economy is where individuals have come to view multiple concurrent jobs as the norm. As the writing of this dissertation reaches its conclusion, the world grapples with the massive social and work changes wrought by the Covid 19 pandemic. Treated as independent contractors, individuals such as ride-sharing drivers find themselves, overnight, without compensation.<sup>45</sup>

Max Depree asserts, "In addition to all of the ratios and goals and parameters and bottom lines, it is fundamental that leaders endorse a concept of persons."<sup>46</sup> This may be one of the most tangible ways that leaders can act out their faith in the workplace—simply walking around, saying hello, and getting to know colleagues as

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<sup>44</sup> Dykstra and Bass, "A Theological Understanding," 22–23.

<sup>45</sup> The post Covid 19 could see a rapid increase in contract labour over permanent salaried positions as organizations seek greater flexibility in labour costs.

<sup>46</sup> Depree, *Leadership Is an Art*, 9.

persons.<sup>47</sup> In the postmodern era this may be more critical than ever. Nicholas Rescher writes:

Thought-implementation—the capacity to act in response to and under the direction of thought—is the crux of personhood . . . Persons are first and foremost cognitive agents . . . Persons are bound to have beliefs about how matters stand in the world . . . Persons are intelligent beings who see themselves—reciprocally—as having the capacity for self-controlled choice-implementation and who insist on viewing themselves as something other than robots or mere naturally evolved mechanisms without the ability of choice or self-inaugurated agency.<sup>48</sup>

Grounded theory asserts that there is an awareness that spirituality has a role to play in terms of respondents' sense of purpose. A respondent writes, "Because I work with palliative patients, I find myself asking why these people are suffering. On the other hand I feel my faith has been strengthened because I don't know all the answers and find myself praying."<sup>49</sup> Another respondent writes, "I don't feel a high degree of meaningfulness – but to some degree, yes."<sup>50</sup> Depree writes, "For many of us who work, there exists an exasperating discontinuity between how we see ourselves as persons and how we see ourselves as workers."<sup>51</sup> The potential economic impact of this internal tension is staggering. The loss of human dignity is greater. Ronald Heifetz writes, "[L]eadership engages our values . . . When we call for leadership in our organizations and politics, we call for something we prize."<sup>52</sup> A respondent writes, "First career gave a sense of deep meaningfulness. Able to leverage my gifts and

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<sup>47</sup> This may be one of the most critical of personal lessons. In today's environment of email and text-messaging, the discipline of actually walking to a colleague's desk has a major effect on relationship-building.

<sup>48</sup> Rescher, "Personhood," 173–74.

<sup>49</sup> Verbatim respondent 30.

<sup>50</sup> Verbatim respondent 31.

<sup>51</sup> Depree, *Leadership Is an Art*, 32.

<sup>52</sup> Heifetz, *Leadership without Easy Answers*, 13.

honouring a family career tradition. Second career - what I am meant and called to do.”<sup>53</sup> People will change careers to ameliorate the dissonance they experience.

Grounded theory suggests that structural changes in society have narrowed workplace discussion primarily to economic output and success against tangible metrics.

Heifetz writes:

Authorities commonly have the power to choose the decision-making process. In essence, they must decide on the presence and relevance of conflict, and whether and how to unleash it. Deciding which process to use—autocratic, consultative, participative, or consensual—requires judgment . . . Where the authority has the expertise to define and solve the problem, people generally opt for autocratic or consultative decision making . . . Adaptive situations, however, tend to demand a more participative mode of operating.<sup>54</sup>

The choice of approach is a complicated matter, however. These choices rest with those in leadership roles.

Distinct from hierarchical organization structures, networked environments, including research conglomerates and consulting consortia, are now a significant organization structure. Leadership among peers is the model for these structures. Heifetz writes:

Because we are not used to distinguishing between leadership and authority, the idea of leadership without authority is new and perplexing. As a result, the person without authority gets few relevant pointers from scholarship. Analysts have generally neglected the distinctive problems and opportunities of mobilizing work from positions of little or no authority.<sup>55</sup>

Once again, it is leadership from alongside this required. In effect, this is paracletic leadership.

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<sup>53</sup> Verbatim respondent 15.

<sup>54</sup> Heifetz, *Leadership without Easy Answers*, 121.

<sup>55</sup> Heifetz, *Leadership without Easy Answers*, 184.

Several research responses imply that traditions that influence our workplace expectations appear to be under duress, in some cases extremely so, particularly for those employed in the ‘gig’ economy. Butler Bass speaks of people experiencing “cultural distortion.”<sup>56</sup> A respondent writes, “The industry changed and, in my view, became less ethical.”<sup>57</sup> Peter Drucker offers, “The first sign of the decline of an industry is its loss of appeal to qualified, able, and ambitious people . . . [We must ask] what do our jobs have to be to attract and hold the kind of people we need and want?”<sup>58</sup>

As industries become altered in terms, for example, of worker benefits, workers sense significant changes in the perceived ethical traditions of their profession. This is an exceptional change in tradition.<sup>59</sup> An example is the rise in ride-sharing enterprises that compete with traditional taxi businesses. Ride sharing companies frequently treat drivers as independent contractors rather than employees, effectively eschewing employee benefits of any kind.

In other situations, the adjustment to new societal norms can bring tension as new traditions of community, gender identity, and faith expression come alongside existing traditions. When such changes are rapid in a workplace that involves several generations, such tensions can be extreme, requiring great care on the part of leadership. Adjusting to multiculturalism and other community dynamics is occurring at a time when mentorship appears to be declining.

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<sup>56</sup> Butler Bass, *Christianity after Religion*, 33.

<sup>57</sup> Verbatim respondent 3.

<sup>58</sup> Drucker, *Management*, 109.

<sup>59</sup> To complicate this, some organizations have preserved certain benefits for long-standing employees while offer minimal benefits to new employees.

### **A Decline in Mentorship Creates a New Form of Loneliness**

A respondent writes, “I spoke with a supervisor – very loving, trusting and humble.”<sup>60</sup>

Such views were not expressed by the majority of the respondents. The findings of the survey indicate that there appears to be a decline in the existence of institutionalized mentorship, with the resulting development of attitudes of 'going it alone.' The elimination of middle management in a number of organizations brings significant reduction in mentorship. Mintzberg writes:

The overriding purpose of managing is to ensure that the unit serves *its* basic purpose, whether that be to sell products in a retail chain or care for the elderly in a nursing home. This, of course, requires the taking of effective *actions*. Mostly other people in the unit do that, each a specialist in his or her own right. But sometimes a manager gets close to this *action*. More commonly, however, the manager takes one or two steps back from the action. One step back, he or she encourages other *people* to take action—the manager gets things done through other people by coaching, motivation, building teams, strengthening culture, and so forth. Two steps back, the manager gets things done by using information to drive other people to take action. He or she imposes a target on a sales team, or carries a comment from a government official to a staff specialist.<sup>61</sup>

This model seems to assume that some form of mentorship is in place, perhaps underscoring the changes that have occurred just in the decade since Mintzberg’s book was published. As stated, this may no longer be the case. In particular, Mintzberg’s model alludes to the value of “curbside coaching.”<sup>62</sup> Grounded theory asserts that the desire for interaction with others that is ethical and caring is pervasive. As implied earlier, gender-based income inequality would seem to be the simplest issue to resolve.

Jeffrey Pfeffer writes:

Some of the most problematic, stress-causing aspects of work environments include low wages, shift work, and the absence of job control. For example, low

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<sup>60</sup> Verbatim respondent 7.

<sup>61</sup> Mintzberg, *Managing*, 49 [emphasis original].

<sup>62</sup> Bates, *Sales Force Management*, 100.

wages produce stress from having to survive with little income. Not surprisingly, a number of research studies find that low wages predict obesity, anxiety and depression, low birth weights, and hypertension.<sup>63</sup>

The findings of the survey indicate that for several respondents, finding greater purpose required economic sacrifice. This suggests evidence of resignation in the face of not finding greater purpose. A respondent writes, “In terms of fully satisfying a sense of calling, that is more difficult. I’m still trying to figure it all out.”<sup>64</sup> There is tension here. Richard Booth offers the perspective that, “Loneliness occurs when a person’s network of social relationships is small or less satisfying than the person desires.”<sup>65</sup> A loss of mentorship may destroy a worker’s sense of rootedness in the organization. They become “lost in the system.”<sup>66</sup>

### **Dissonance**

The findings of the survey indicate that there is dissonance in the workplace. Sometimes this dissonance is internal to organizational situations, i.e. generated by practices and circumstances embedded in the structure of organizations. In other cases this dissonance is external to the organization, including shifting marketplace attitudes and expectations, changing community structures, changing family characteristics, and changing approaches and attitudes to the concept of faith. Pfeffer writes:

The aptly named *American Institute of Stress* has collated numerous studies of stress. Some highlights from these data are:

- Job stress is far and away the major source of stress for American adults and . . . it has escalated progressively over the past few decades.

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<sup>63</sup> Pfeffer, *Dying for a Paycheck*, 10.

<sup>64</sup> Verbatim respondent 17.

<sup>65</sup> Booth, “Toward an Understanding of Loneliness,” 116.

<sup>66</sup> “Toward an Understanding of Loneliness,” 116.

- 80 percent of workers in the Attitudes in the American Workplace survey reported feeling stress on the job.
- Two separate studies reported that about 10 percent of employees said there was physical violence or an assault in the workplace because of job stress.<sup>67</sup>

Stress may be extreme.<sup>68</sup> A respondent writes, “Some co-workers are driven only by money, lifestyle, or power.”<sup>69</sup> This is at odds with an environment of collaboration.

While this, at first blush, may not seem like an extremely stressful situation, the lack of a perceived path to resolve the anxiety-causing phenomenon, results in anxiety rising to extreme levels. Pfeffer writes, “[T]he adverse effects of work environments on people’s health may be getting worse. One reason is the changing nature of work and specifically the rising prevalence of precarious employment—the contract and freelance work of the so-called gig economy.<sup>70</sup> People are putting in long hours, often at multiple jobs. Yet, productivity may be waning and home life is fractured.<sup>71</sup>

If dissonance and its concomitant state, unhappiness, are as broad as this research suggests, then dissonance—in this context a mild to severe state of mental discord or conflict—could be construed as an economic agent. I.e. dissonance is an agent acting upon the worker. Thus dissonance counteracts feelings of achievement and fulfillment, negatively impacting the output of the worker. Output becomes less than

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<sup>67</sup> Pfeffer, *Dying for a Paycheck*, 13.

<sup>68</sup> Funded by Health Canada, the Mental Health Commission of Canada is providing workplace volunteers with Mental Health First Aid training. The training is designed to recognize and provide help to a person developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. Just as physical first aid is administered to an injured person before medical treatment can be obtained, Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) is given until appropriate treatment is found or until the crisis is resolved.

<sup>69</sup> Verbatim respondent 29.

<sup>70</sup> Pfeffer, *Dying for a Paycheck*, 14.

<sup>71</sup> Some years ago I witnessed a moving speech. A middle school principal implored the men in the audience to devote volunteer time to reading to young boys in her inner city school, due to the fact that these boys were often being brought up by single mothers who were holding down two or three jobs in order to make enough to support their family; leaving their sons without home schooling time. In addition, a lack of male influence in their sons’ lives, was perceived as significant. These single mothers face a stress-inducing choice. They must choose between time with their children or giving that time to multiple jobs in order to make ends meet financially.



optimal. Gwartney and Stroup state, “Economics is about people and the choices they make.”<sup>72</sup> They also go on to affirm that “economic theory [is] developed from basic postulates of human behaviour.”<sup>73</sup> Gwartney and Stroup assert, “Economics deals with people as they are—not as we would like to remake them. Should people act more charitably? Perhaps so. But this is not the subject matter of economics.”<sup>74</sup> Perhaps it is. Turning specifically to behavioural economics, James Allison forms much his work on the *contingency rule*: “Event *B* will occur only if event *A* occurs beforehand.”<sup>75</sup> Allison uses a well-known colloquial expression to illustrate: ‘Publish or Perish.’ In other words “if the newly hired university instructor wishes permanent employment in the form of academic tenure, the instructor must start a program of research and publish its results in the scholarly press.”<sup>76</sup> Allison concedes, however, “Perhaps we face a difficulty in predicting the behavior of the factory worker, the grocery shopper.”<sup>77</sup> Indeed, Allison appears to leave morality as a factor in behaviour to one side. Betsy Stevenson takes a deeper behavioural approach. She states:

Economists are concerned with human welfare. For a very long time, we believed the best thing to do was just look at what people do and infer their preferences from their behaviour. But we’ve started to learn that there are some domains where that is hard to do, and simply asking people about their well-being can shed light on the situation . . . I think one of the richest potential areas for happiness data is in the area of behavioural economics—in situations where the way people behave may not actually reflect their true, underlying preferences . . . perhaps we’re missing a sense of greater purpose or fulfillment.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Gwartney and Stroup, *Economics*, 4.

<sup>73</sup> Gwartney and Stroup, *Economics*, 7.

<sup>74</sup> Gwartney and Stroup, *Economics*, 12.

<sup>75</sup> Allison, *Behavioural Economics*, 5 [emphasis original].

<sup>76</sup> Allison, *Behavioural Economics*, 5.

<sup>77</sup> Allison, *Behavioural Economics*, 194.

<sup>78</sup> Stevenson, “What are the Economics of Happiness?” [n.d.].

This is critical. The findings of the survey indicate that desire for interaction with others that is ethical and caring is quite pervasive. We do not appear to be responding fully to this fundamental desire.

### **Loss of Meaningfulness**

A respondent asserts, “My work does provide a deep sense of meaningfulness. I find it very satisfying to know I had a positive impact.”<sup>79</sup> Abraham Maslow asserts the importance of motivated people. He writes, “Almost every leader we interviewed made mention of the competitive advantage that lies within the people of an organization.”<sup>80</sup> This becomes a poignant observation when viewed in the light of the pervasiveness of dissonance experienced by the respondents to the research questionnaires. For emphasis, note that four fifths of the respondents expressed work circumstances that range from moderately dissonant to severely dissonant. Annie McKee writes:

Happy people are better workers. Those who are engaged with their jobs and colleagues work harder—and smarter. And yet, there is an alarmingly high number of people who aren’t engaged. According to a sobering 2013 Gallup report, only 30% of the U.S. Workforce is engaged. This echoes what I’ve seen in my work. Not many people are truly ‘emotionally and intellectually committed’ to their organizations. Far too many couldn’t care less about what’s happening around them. For them, Wednesday is ‘hump day’ and they’re just working to get to Friday. And then there’s the other end of the bell curve—nearly one out of five employees is actively *disengaged*, according to the same Gallup report. These people are sabotaging projects, backstabbing colleagues, and generally wreaking havoc in their workplaces . . . Disengaged, unhappy people aren’t any fun to work with, don’t add much value, and impact our organizations (and our economy) in profoundly negative ways . . . Their emotions and mindset impact others’ moods and performance tremendously.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Verbatim respondent 13.

<sup>80</sup> Maslow, *On Management*, 99.

<sup>81</sup> McKee, “Being Happy,” para. 2–6.

This is one of the most puzzling elements of this research. It seems clear that a high level of engagement delivers high output, yet so many organizations seem to fail to grasp this. A respondent states:

I actually need to feel a deep sense of purpose. I want to pay my bills but I also have a deep sense of justice. My ‘calling’ has changed a lot. I feel called to this time and place for a reason. He is still revealing. I think my peers and coworkers want that deep sense of meaningfulness, but I’m not sure everyone knows how to get that.<sup>82</sup>

Another respondent writes, “I am blessed to continually receive what I need. [However], many events have placed a sense of doubt in my job security; e.g. others not being supported.”<sup>83</sup> As meaningfulness wanes, loneliness ensues, productivity declines.

A respondent writes tentatively, “I feel secure for now.”<sup>84</sup> Responding to changing marketplace values is neither new nor novel. A lack of feeling secure can result in real loneliness. It requires being centred in our values while at the same time that we cope with loneliness and what can be profound uncertainty. This is particularly relevant for those in leadership positions during times of change and inflection.<sup>85</sup>

Heifetz asks:

Why is it lonely on the point? Because those who lead take responsibility for the holding environment of the enterprise. They themselves are not expected to be held. They do the holding, often quite alone. They run the risk of moral regret.<sup>86</sup>

This is a very real issue. People, especially leaders, going through such times search for sources of hope. A respondent writes, “I no longer fear the unknown and feel confident that spiritual guides as well as the support network I have in my life will help me reach

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<sup>82</sup> Verbatim respondent 2.

<sup>83</sup> Verbatim respondent 22.

<sup>84</sup> Verbatim respondent 7.

<sup>85</sup> My first corporate presidency occurred following a stock market crash. I spent many sleepless nights wrestling with strategic choices being contemplated to preserve profit for the company. It was a time of loneliness.

<sup>86</sup> Heifetz, *Leadership without Easy Answers*, 250.

my goals. I will be ok no matter what.”<sup>87</sup> This is a moving declaration of hope. The findings of the research indicate that hope is stronger than lived experiences in many cases. The findings of the research indicate also that among people of professed faith or spirituality there is a sense that their spirituality anchors them and strengthens them; providing then with meaningfulness, vocational fulfillment, and joy, thus counteracting isolation. It is important, also, to note the importance of spiritual guidance.

The findings of the survey indicate that there appears to be a decline in the existence of mentorship. This lack of mentorship—the loss of a caring agent with whom to discuss workplace challenges—erodes a person’s ability to maintain hope. A lack of mentorship also erodes one’s sense of fulfillment and may lead to deep loneliness. A respondent writes:

My career was stressful and at times very political and demanding. I was compensated well but job security was not guaranteed. Performance was key. Even though I sometimes worked under great distress and pressure I felt that this was my calling. I believe I was a strong but compassionate leader. I don't believe my coworkers shared my views. Competition was their belief to success.<sup>88</sup>

Working in an environment where competition between workers is significant brings loneliness and isolation. Human resources consulting firm, Mercer states:

In our latest norms, we found that just 67% of leaders and managers think the level of stress they experience at work is manageable; the other third was unsure or overwhelmed. A similar percentage said they struggle to maintain work-life balance. Just half of leaders and managers feel they have enough time to do a quality job, and only 48% feel they can detach from work. These results suggest that anywhere from a third to a half of leaders and managers are struggling to cope with the challenges of their job.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Verbatim respondent 28.

<sup>88</sup> Verbatim respondent 21.

<sup>89</sup> Mercer, “Leadership, Stress, and the Importance of Self-Care,” [n.d.].

These are astonishing observations. Loneliness is, arguably, exacerbated when people are not aware of the opportunity or value of speaking with a minister or counsellor regarding workplace challenges.

### **Power, and Its Abuse**

If the workplace is rife with interpersonal competition, then power is a dominant element.<sup>90</sup> On the phenomenon of power, Mary Jo Hatch writes:

[P]ower is always exercised in the context of relationships between actors. Power never resides in actors; it is always relational . . . formal authority is only one source of individual level power and the others do not work in strictly top-down ways, they also work up the hierarchy, laterally, or cross-organizationally, and may work in all directions at once. There are many forms of power individuals can draw on in addition to formal authority. They include: personal characteristics (a charismatic personality), expertise (skills, knowledge, or information needed by others), coercive force (the threat or use of fear), control of scarce and critical material resources, ability to apply normative sanctions, and opportunity.<sup>91</sup>

According to this research, the inappropriate exercise of power impacts industry, government, the not-for-profit sector, and the church. A respondent working in faith based environment writes, “This is not how the body of Christ should behave.”<sup>92</sup>

Maslow turns to the perversion of leadership by the drive for power. He writes:

[T]he one who seeks for power is the one who is just exactly likely to be the one who shouldn't have it, because he [sic] neurotically and compulsively needs power. Such people are apt to use power very badly; that is, use it for overcoming, overpowering, hurting people, or to say it in other words, they use it for their own selfish gratifications . . . the one who is therefore most selfless in the situation—just that person, because by definition he [sic] is psychologically healthier, gets absolutely no kick out of being able to order people around or to boss them.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> In my experience, there were several occasions where inappropriate power, even control, was being exercised by a superior over a subordinate.

<sup>91</sup> Hatch and Cunliffe, *Organization Theory* 231.

<sup>92</sup> Verbatim respondent 1.

<sup>93</sup> Maslow, *On Management*, 155.

A respondent asserts, “I find it hard to have honest, open conversations without fear of reprisal.”<sup>94</sup> This is significant when we consider Hatch’s view of the postmodern organization as a “site for enacting power relations.”<sup>95</sup> Generally, we cannot easily escape the inappropriate exercise of power. Jacques Ellul states, “Never before has the human race as a whole had to exert such efforts in its daily labors as it does today as a result of its absorption into the monstrous technical mechanism.”<sup>96</sup> This brings to mind the environment of near drudgery that we will find on the floor of an automotive assembly plant floor or the parcel shipping floor of an online order distribution centre. This may be an emerging factor also for people who telecommute; spending most of their time working at home, alone. A respondent writes, “I am not [currently] doing the work that I would feel is more my calling.”<sup>97</sup>

Abuse of power by superiors, as well as per-to-peer aggression, may lead to burn-out. We are, clearly, witnessing increased absenteeism. Statistics Canada reports that total days lost per worker in a year were 10 in 2018, up from 8.8 in 2014. Some regional data were dramatically worse. R. H. Hall discusses the relationship between job satisfaction and absenteeism. He writes, “[A]mong workers who are most likely to exhibit absenteeism (young workers for example), the more satisfied workers will be absent less frequently than the less satisfied workers.”<sup>98</sup> The findings of the survey indicate that among people of professed faith or spirituality there is a sense that their spirituality grounds them and strengthens them; providing them with meaningfulness,

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<sup>94</sup> Verbatim respondent 1.

<sup>95</sup> Hatch and Cunliffe, *Organization Theory*, 15.

<sup>96</sup> Ellul, *The Technological Society*, 319.

<sup>97</sup> Verbatim respondent 4.

<sup>98</sup> Hall, *Dimensions of Work*, 93.

vocational fulfillment and joy. Thus, a strong sense of flourishing leads to improved productivity. Once again, we are reminded of the changes brought by Spirit-led leadership. Hall writes:

Job satisfaction has been found to be positively related to a host of work dimensions that may be considered indicative of a ‘good job’; autonomy and freedom from close supervision, good pay and other economic benefits, job security, promotional opportunities, use of valued skills and abilities, variety and interesting work. Job satisfaction is also related to occupational prestige, with research consistently showing higher satisfaction among professional, technical, and managerial workers, and lower satisfaction in the blue-collar and semi-skilled and unskilled ranks, and among service workers.<sup>99</sup>

While there are many causes of absenteeism, it is clear from research that people will respond to the opportunity to safely express their faith and spirituality in the workplace. A respondent writes, “I seek first if there is room for the conversation.”<sup>100</sup> The findings of the survey indicate that introducing ‘places’ for interfaith and spiritual practices to occur may be useful, together with broad communication of recognition of multiple faith events. Some efforts may ameliorate the effects of lost meaningfulness, by introducing work environments which implicitly offer hope.

### **Leadership**

The foregoing commentaries, bring us to leadership, which is the major focus of Chapter 4.

Warren Bennis’ work on leadership became a reference source for aspiring leaders in virtually all fields of endeavour. It is frequently a starting point for other

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<sup>99</sup> Hall, *Dimensions of Work*, 93.

<sup>100</sup> Verbatim respondent 6.

authors on the topic of leadership. Bennis focuses particularly on the leader's task in situations of change. He writes:

Leaders are, by definition, innovators. They do things other people have not done or dare not do. They do things in advance of other people. They make new things. They make old things new. Having learned from the past, they live in the present, with one eye on the future.<sup>101</sup>

By implication, leadership involves participating in and sometimes creating chaotic environments. Bennis offers that “one of a leader's principal gifts is to grow in office.”<sup>102</sup> This suggests that leadership involves a significant degree of “pain and reflection.”<sup>103</sup> Bennis lays an important foundation for understanding and interpreting the dynamics of the workplace. This leads to an articulation of several critical elements of behaviour if leaders are to be broadly effective.

A respondent writes, “It is meaningful to me to work alongside people to help them explore their lives and life circumstances and how these things affect their well-being.”<sup>104</sup> Some leadership situations require deep domain knowledge and experience from industry ‘insiders.’ Other situations require expertise in bringing insights from non-related settings. A lack of fundamental, circumstance-required, knowledge on the part of the leader can lead to indecisiveness and stuck-ness. Indecisiveness can stultify.

Frost writes:

The pain that incompetent managers create takes a number of forms. Some vacillate too much, driving staff ‘up the wall’ with their inability to make a decision or to stick to one once they have made it. Managers’ indecisiveness can leave staff exasperated and even immobilized.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader*, 35.

<sup>102</sup> Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader*, 138.

<sup>103</sup> Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader*, 138.

<sup>104</sup> Verbatim respondent 12.

<sup>105</sup> Frost, *Toxic Emotions*, 39.



Critical are openness and discretion in conversations. A respondent writes, “I find it hard to have honest, open conversations without fear of reprisal.”<sup>106</sup> Closing down opportunities and encouragement for dialogue is another example of creating severe dissonance.

Leadership, almost by definition, brings change. Indeed change might be vitally important. Situations are never static. Change, however, can bring destabilization, sometimes pain, sometimes violence.<sup>107</sup> The findings of the survey indicate that there is dissonance in the workplace. Peter Frost writes:

Pain is a fact of organizational life. Companies will merge, bosses will make unrealistic demands, and people will lose their jobs. The pain that accompanies events like these isn’t in itself toxic; rather, it’s how that pain is handled throughout the organization that determines whether its long-term effects are positive or negative. What turns emotional pain into toxicity, especially in organized settings, is when others respond to that pain in a harmful, rather than healing, way.<sup>108</sup>

A respondent writes, “I earn a very good living, but . . . job security is always an issue.”<sup>109</sup> This may not affect everyone in the same way.<sup>110</sup> Frost writes:

[A]n unfeeling response [from a superior] undermines people’s confidence, esteem, dignity, and sense of connection to others. It *disconnects* them from the capacity to respond competently to their painful situation. It removes the desire and the ability to do their jobs. Perhaps most problematic, a toxic response decreases people’s sense of hope—a critical component in feeling connected to life around them.<sup>111</sup>

It is important to reflect on the reality that leadership actions and decisions may not be the direct cause of pain. Frequently in today’s organizational structure, it is peer-to-peer

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<sup>106</sup> Verbatim respondent 1.

<sup>107</sup> I have experienced threats from individuals during times of significant change.

<sup>108</sup> Frost, *Toxic Emotions*, 12.

<sup>109</sup> Verbatim respondent 29.

<sup>110</sup> I spent many decades in the capital markets. I accepted this environment knowing the personal insecurity of the capital markets industry.

<sup>111</sup> Frost, *Toxic Emotions*, 18.

competition and aggression that creates pain. In times of rapid transition to an environment of multiculturalism, it is possible that racial micro-aggression may occur.<sup>112</sup> It is the leader's task to recognize such phenomena and to respond appropriately. The research findings indicate that dissonance, mild to severe, is a frequently experienced phenomenon. Some simply live with it, some compartmentalize it. One respondent describes seeking a completely new environment where they could create the environment they truly sought. The respondent writes, "I changed careers 16 years ago to start an agriculture business. It has become my calling."<sup>113</sup> Frost writes, "Other sources [of toxicity] can be traced to a company's policies and practices; sometimes there's a direct connection between how individuals create toxicity and the way the corporation conducts its business."<sup>114</sup> The findings of the survey indicate that desire for interaction with others that is ethical and caring is quite pervasive. People watch how leaders respond to situations that require correction. They will emulate the behaviour they observe.<sup>115</sup> Frost writes:

Some bosses develop grudges toward particular individuals and direct most of their vindictiveness to encounters with them. A manager may not like a staff member who has been transferred into his [sic] unit, even if highly recommended. The staff member may find herself [sic] picked on, her [sic] performance criticized at every turn.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> There are many examples of racial micro-aggression. One example is assigning intelligence to a person of colour on the basis of their race, using such expressions as, 'You are so articulate.'

<sup>113</sup> Verbatim respondent 8.

<sup>114</sup> Frost, *Toxic Emotions*, 35.

<sup>115</sup> In my own experience I recall a time when I discovered that, when dealing with a client complaint letter, some investment brokerage firms would send a stern legalistic letter worded in such a way as to encourage the client simply to drop their complaint. I instructed our team to assume that the client was telling the truth. The way that our team responded to clients became a truly effective client retention effort, and I believe strengthened the way that our customer care team viewed themselves and their work. I also advertised that I would sit on the trading desk at a certain time each week to take calls directly from clients. Interesting, while some calls were to register a concern with me, the vast majority of the calls yielded wonderful ideas for new services.

<sup>116</sup> Frost, *Toxic Emotions*, 36.

Gender inequality, and indeed all forms of inequality, should be first-order leadership actions. A respondent writes:

Many events have placed a sense of doubt in my job security. E.g. others not being supported; not being assigned to a position that I felt qualified to do; being assigned to a role that suited the company, but which impeded my development; being reprimanded for something I did not do.<sup>117</sup>

In language that has become vernacular to some workplace environments Kim Scott introduces the concept of *Radical Candor*. She writes, “The first dimension [of developing trust] is about being more than ‘just professional.’ It’s about giving a damn [sic], sharing more than just your work self, and encouraging everyone who reports to you to do the same . . . The second dimension involves telling people when their work isn’t good enough—and when it is.”<sup>118</sup> Scott asserts, “Radical Candor is what happens when you put ‘Care Personally’ and ‘Challenge Directly’ together.”<sup>119</sup> The full title of her book is *Radical Candor: Be a Kick-Ass Boss without Losing Your Humanity*.<sup>120</sup> The goal of Scott’s book, essentially, is to bring about change in behaviour. To be fair, Scott presents some valuable situational leadership observations and suggestions, particularly the need to care for a subordinate as precursor to candid feedback. Here is the concern, however: Scott seems to present this pairing of care and candour in an almost transactional sense. Caring and candour cannot be exercised in a transactional manner. Caring and candour must be viewed as elements of a deliberate transformational process, for both subordinate and boss. Transformational experiences take time, sometimes months. The research findings emphasize acting our faith over professing our

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<sup>117</sup> Verbatim respondent 22.

<sup>118</sup> Scott, *Radical Candor*, 9.

<sup>119</sup> Scott, *Radical Candor*, 9.

<sup>120</sup> This book became a NY Times bestseller in 2018, thus widely read, although ultimately it became the object of scorn in some quarters.

faith. Offering candid feedback, if it is actually to be useful, requires earning the right to be candid. Earning that right can take several cycles of interaction. Imagine an upward evolving spiral, with each upward iteration marked with a caring exchange that earns the right to move to a deeper conversation.<sup>121</sup> This caring effort is by its nature intensive, requiring a level of engrossment in the aspirations, concerns and values of a subordinate colleague that we may not realize. There is another critical element of earning the right to be candid: we need to prove that we actually know what we are talking about. We all have witnessed new managers wading into their work with surprisingly little effort actually to understand the dynamics of the environment and the critical success metrics for their unit.

To take this to a higher plane, we may be well reminded of the exhortation found in Prov 9: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom.” Bartholomew and O’Dowd state:

Wisdom and knowledge are indeed the product of a human search, but one conducted in a deep communal and spiritual abiding in God . . . Wisdom is concerned with the general order and patterns of living in God’s creation . . . Wisdom provides discernment for the particular order and circumstances of our lives.<sup>122</sup>

The research findings indicate that it is possible that an epistemological social foundation is emerging. Most seek to fulfill a deep sense of spiritual purpose in their work. A respondent writes, “Everyone wants to feel ‘needed’ at their workplace.”<sup>123</sup> Earnest workers sacrifice much in order to build their career and to contribute. Wayne Alderson and Nancy McDonnell offer:

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<sup>121</sup> This conversation once took six months to mature to the point where I could have a meaningful and guiding relationship with a colleague.

<sup>122</sup> Bartholomew and O’Dowd, *Old Testament*, 25–27.

<sup>123</sup> Verbatim respondent 9.

What is so right about valuing another person? Every person has the need to be valued . . . There's not a person in any organization—executive, manager, supervisor, worker—who doesn't have that need. We generally don't, however, recognize that everybody has certain intangible, emotional, human needs, or admit them openly to one another. [These are] love, dignity, and respect.<sup>124</sup>

To be sure, leadership often requires corrective, even disruptive, conversations.

However, blundering into a radically candid feedback session can be catastrophic.

Subordinates who may actually know more about the critical success metrics for their unit, grounded in a more developed understanding of the fundamental mission of the enterprise than the manager are going to leave.<sup>125</sup> Incompetent supervisors cover their incompetence by taking credit for a subordinate's work. A respondent writes, “[I feel] that I have been put in a position of being taken advantage of.”<sup>126</sup> This is an example of severe dissonance. To be taken advantage of while being compelled to carry out specific tasks is abuse. It can get worse. Frost writes:

The purpose of malice is to deliberately harm someone else. Its reasons are many and varied: a need to control or dominate; a dislike of individuals from a particular gender or ethnic background; past experiences with staff who were themselves painful, leaving the abusive boss distrustful of his [sic] current staff. Or the malice may stem from a belief that this is how to motivate people and get the best out of them. Whatever the reason, the typical emotional response from those on the receiving end of malicious behaviour are fear, anger, confusion, and resentment.<sup>127</sup>

The research findings indicate that among people who expressed meaningfulness, vocational fulfillment and joy, there was also expression of a degree of fatigue and powerlessness. Such phenomena are a net cost to organizations and are debilitating to

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<sup>124</sup> Sitting on the commuter train and listening to conversations has provided insight into numerous such blunders. Sometimes it is more than blunder.

<sup>125</sup> Alderson and McDonnell, *Theory R Management*, 54–55.

<sup>126</sup> Verbatim respondent 22.

<sup>127</sup> Frost, *Toxic Emotions*, 37.

employees.<sup>128</sup> Inflicted pain may not be deliberate, but rather circumstantial. A respondent writes, “My chosen industry was not at all secure.”<sup>129</sup> Industries can be in flux for many reasons. Structural change can impact entire workforces. Providing coaching in the development of adaptive capacity is critical.

### **Adaptability**

Leadership, at its core, is a profession of adaptability. Bennis writes, “[U]nless the leader continues to evolve, to adapt and adjust to external change, the organization will sooner or later stall. In other words, one of a leader’s principal gifts is the ability to use his or her experiences to grow in office.”<sup>130</sup> One respondent details a decision to leave an organization due to its perceived negative change. A Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) investigation exposed a significant issue for bicycle food delivery personnel and workplace injury protection. The news story reads:

On any given day in downtown Toronto, you'll see a flurry of bike couriers pedalling their way through traffic, bags strapped to their backs, on their way to deliver your next meal. Food delivery apps operate in nearly every Canadian city and they're changing the way we eat by offering convenient access to a wider range of takeout options. A few taps on your phone and food from your favourite restaurant will be delivered to your door. But if those couriers get hurt on the job, a [CBC] Marketplace investigation has found their eligibility for work-related compensation depends on the province they work in and which app they deliver for.<sup>131</sup>

Thus, the food delivery service company provides workers’ compensation insurance coverage only when explicitly required by law. Where is empathy in this situation? Bing

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<sup>128</sup> I recall a personal experience, during which my superior said the following to me, “I hired you despite your CV!” I can only assume that he believed this invective language, which he used frequently and with many, would spur me on. It didn’t.

<sup>129</sup> Verbatim respondent 3.

<sup>130</sup> Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader*, 137.

<sup>131</sup> Ghebreslassie et al., “Ontario Workplace Safety,” para. 1.

Feng et al state, “Many organizations fail to make behaviour change happen due to a fundamental empathy gap.”<sup>132</sup> The findings of the survey indicate that hope is stronger than actual lived experiences, yet hope may be harder to cling to in the postmodern work environment. Bennis writes:

A major challenge that all leaders are now facing is an epidemic of institutional malfeasance, as we read nearly every day in the news. And if there is anything that undermines trust, it is the feeling that the people at the top lack integrity, are without a solid sense of ethics. The characteristics of empathy and trust are reflected not just in codes of ethics, but in organizational cultures that support ethical conduct.<sup>133</sup>

This is the narrow road that Jesus implores us to take. The narrow road is the road that calls for conduct becoming the leader with integrity.<sup>134</sup> There may be few who choose the narrow road, and those that do may suffer ridicule.

Adaptability requires intensive listening. This is hard work. Leading will be made more effective through focussed listening. It takes time. Relevant and non-threatening questions will lead to deep conversation regarding shared concerns. By example, Dykstra and Bass write:

Both individual and human failings and unjust social structures set countless obstacles in the way of practices that are good for all people. Moreover, in history and in the present day, practitioners who bear the name of Christ have participated in shared activities that are distorted, damaging, and manifestly not embodied responses to the active presence of God for the life of the world. Egregious examples leap to mind, but the quieter damage that can be wrought in

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<sup>132</sup> Feng et al, “Harnessing Behavioural Insights,” 7.

<sup>133</sup> Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader*, 155–56. This challenge was evident in the many regulatory tribunals that I participated in as a Commissioner with the Ontario Securities Commission. I have witnessed egregious and deliberate actions whereby principals of enterprises enriched themselves while blatantly ignoring the wellbeing of employees.

<sup>134</sup> Two graduate students once approached me to advise that they presented an outline for a potential academic publication to their supervisor. The supervisor told them that publication of their proposed paper would be unlikely. Following this, their supervisor took the idea and published a paper. Sadly, I could not convince the students to file a complaint. This is an egregious example of malfeasance.

the course of everyday life also evokes this problem, as people who bear the name of Christ fail to practise forgiveness, discernment, or hospitality.<sup>135</sup>

We must move away from radical candour to radical listening, founded in a deep awareness of lived experiences. We must see the other, even as we offer to the other that new approaches are required. Being present, and candid is key. When information ceases, gossip begins. Today, social media is a significant issue in terms of misinformation. By example, Tom Nichols writes:

Did you know that chocolate can help you lose weight? Sure you do. You read it in the paper. In fact, you might have read it in several papers, and woe to any expert, including a doctor, who might have told you otherwise. After all, hiding the miraculous weight-decreasing qualities of the tastiest thing in the world is just the kind of thing experts would do. Thankfully, a German scientist, Johannes Bohannon of the Institute of Diet and Health, wrote a paper that was published in a journal and then joyfully covered in press throughout the world, and he verified what we have all suspected all along: chocolate is really good for you. Except Johannes Bohannon doesn't exist. Neither does the Institute of Diet and Health.<sup>136</sup>

When leaders stop communicating, dis-organization emerges, and politics begins. Social media and gossip fills the space left when deep, relevant, and timely communication is lacking.

New forms of supervision emerge where leadership without conferred authority is required. Richard Pascale and Jerry Sternin state:

Some business problems—employees working at half their potential, endlessly escalating health care costs, conflicts between departments—never seem to get fixed, no matter how hard people try. But if you look closely, you'll find that the tyranny of averages always conceals sparkling exceptions to the rule. Somehow, a few isolated groups and individuals, operating with the same constraints and resources as everyone else, prevail against the odds. Bridging the gap between what is happening and what is possible is what change management is all about. The traditional process for creating organizational change involves digging deep to uncover the root causes of problems, hiring experts or importing best-of-breed practices, and assigning a strong role to leaders as champions of change.

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<sup>135</sup> Dykstra and Bass, "A Theological Understanding," 27.

<sup>136</sup> Nichols, *The Death of Expertise*, 134.



We believe there is a better method, one that looks for indigenous sources of change. There are people in your company or group who are already doing things in a radically better way. The process we advocate seeks to bring the isolated success strategies of these ‘positive deviants’ into the mainstream.<sup>137</sup>

Heifetz writes that, “Leadership is dangerous, with or without authority, because the stresses of adaptive work can be severe.”<sup>138</sup> This is particularly true when individuals offer leadership without authority because they are stepping outside the hierarchy of authority within their environments. Senior leaders must, in fact, seek such individuals out and find ways to support their efforts within the organization’s structure.

### **Flourishing**

If one accepts the premise that human flourishing positively impacts productivity and profitability, then human flourishing, on its grandest economic scale, affects a nation’s gross domestic product.<sup>139</sup> Leadership that results in a workplace that nourishes human flourishing is nation building. This call should be responded to. Speaking specifically of the United States, Bennis states:

Since the organization is now the primary social, economic, and political form, and since business is a dominant cultural force in America, organizations in general and business in particular [must respond to sweeping changes in society] . . . Clearly it is time for a [new] transformation, and the key to such a transformation is the organization’s attitude toward its workers. Because the organization is the primary form of the era, it is also the primary shaper. The organization is, or should be, a social architect—but this means that its executives must be social architects too.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Pascale and Sternin, “Your Company’s Secret Change Agents,” para. 2.

<sup>138</sup> Heifetz, *Leadership without Easy Answers*, 235.

<sup>139</sup> Gross domestic product is a monetary measure of the market value of all the final goods and services produced in a specific time period, usually annually.

<sup>140</sup> Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader*, 173–74.

Our focus should be on achieving pervasive flourishing, which may be interpreted as growing, succeeding, thriving, and prospering.<sup>141</sup> These descriptors apply to one's emotional and psychological wellbeing as well as one's economic wellbeing. As a result we ask, what can we do in terms of influencing organizational structure and leadership methods that will be *catalytic* in promoting vitality and flourishing? If we consider that a sense of *vocation* is linked to flourishing, what can we do to enhance/equip employees' identification of their vocation and their progress toward feeling that they are achieving their goals and desires as related to vocation? Mary Grey writes:

If we are to nurture (and resource) the spirit, a renewal of hope is needed. Hope stretches the limits of what is possible. It is linked with that basic trust in life without which we could not get from one day to the next . . . Conversely, to be without hope is to be trapped. It is to be helpless, to have no sense that it is worth getting out of bed, taking a decision.<sup>142</sup>

Hope, then, is at the heart of flourishing.

A respondent writes, "I truly experience and enjoy a sense of deep meaningfulness at work. I feel trusted. . . . My views, which stem from a deep-rooted belief in Christian life, are not popular amongst peers."<sup>143</sup> Colleen Capper explores a multitude of epistemologies which may have bearing on workplace dynamics. In the preface to her work on organization theory, Capper writes:

[T]his text addresses a range of critically oriented epistemologies, including critical theories; Critical Race Theory and Black Crit; LatCrit, Asian, Tribal Crit; Disability Studies theories, feminist theories, Queer Theory, poststructural epistemology, feminist poststructuralism, and theories of intersectionality . . . This book also considers how these critically oriented epistemologies can inform fresh theorizing about organizations and leadership toward equitable ends.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> I have brought forward the notion of setting 'flourishing' as the goal of an organizational human resources strategy, to find that this goal seemed too lofty to achieve.

<sup>142</sup> Grey, "Survive or Thrive?" 396.

<sup>143</sup> Verbatim respondent 6.

<sup>144</sup> Capper, *Organization Theory*, x.

Capper covers an appropriately broad range of organizational issues, including perspectives on leadership, motivation, plus specific implications for such areas as sensitivity training. However, there appears to be little essential discussion of faith or spirituality as a critical epistemology to be explored from an organizational and leadership point of view.

The findings of the survey indicate that there is an awareness of spirituality in the lives of the majority of respondents.

Recognizing that behaviour is undergirded by spirituality is critically important. As suggested by Souba earlier in this dissertation, ontological foundations to the ethics espoused by medical professionals may be under siege. Their purpose, the reason they responded to their vocational call, whether consciously spiritual in nature, may be overwhelmed by the structure and nature of their environments. Clearly this is alluded to in several respondent narratives. This is foundational. The research findings suggest that for most respondents there is an expression of faith or spirituality. This appears to be significant. A statement by Miroslav Volf underscores this. He writes, “The significance of secular work depends on the value of creation, and the value of creation depends on its final destiny. If its destiny is eschatological transformation, then . . . we *must* ascribe inherent value to human work.”<sup>145</sup> This cannot be overemphasized. If work is eschatological, then human flourishing must be the goal of the workplace. If human flourishing is the goal, then organizations that focus solely on material output irrespective of this deeper imperative are simply missing the mark: this would be unethical.

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<sup>145</sup> Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 93 [emphasis original].

### **People Seek an Ethical Workplace**

A respondent writes, “I used to wear rose-coloured glasses and then get crushed when people weren't as justice minded or compassionate as I was.”<sup>146</sup> The findings of the survey indicate that desire for interaction with others that is ethical and caring is pervasive. Bennis continues:

Since the release and full use of the individual's potential is the organization's true task, all organizations *must* provide for the growth and development of their members and find ways of offering them opportunities for such growth and development. *This is the one true mission of all organizations and the principal challenge to today's organizations.*<sup>147</sup>

While Bennis does not link mission to spiritual purpose, Volf goes straight to the point. He writes, “I believe that it is possible to align desires, commitments, talents, and efforts with God as revealed in Jesus Christ no matter what situation we find ourselves in.”<sup>148</sup> The research findings indicate that largely, people are not aware of the opportunity or value associated with speaking with a minister or counsellor regarding workplace challenges, and/or ministers may not, it appears, frequently approach people with offers of such conversation.

### **Leadership as Spirituality In Practice**

This dissertation emphasizes and calls for the recognition that it is the supremacy of the Spirit over the temporal and mundane that truly enables leadership. In terms of concepts of spirituality in the workplace, Ian Mitroff and Elizabeth Denton write:

‘Spirituality’ is defined as ‘the basic feeling of being connected with one's complete self, others, and the entire universe.’ If a single word best captures the meaning of spirituality and the vital role that it plays in people's lives, that word is ‘interconnectedness.’ Those associated with organizations they perceived as

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<sup>146</sup> Verbatim respondent 2.

<sup>147</sup> Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader*, 184 [emphasis added].

<sup>148</sup> Volf, *Flourishing*, 17.

‘more spiritual’ also saw their organizations as ‘more profitable.’ They reported that they were able to bring more of their ‘complete selves’ to work. They could deploy more of their full creativity, emotions, and intelligence; in short, organizations viewed as more spiritual get more from their participants, and vice versa. People are hungry for ways in which to practise spirituality in the workplace without offending their coworkers or causing acrimony. They believe strongly that unless organizations learn how to harness the ‘whole person’ and the immense spiritual energy that is at the core of everyone, they will not be able to produce world-class products and services.<sup>149</sup>

This links to, and emphasizes the rationale for the choice of research questions posed which sought to bring to light views on work as a source of meaning and purpose, together the role of faith in the carrying out of the workplace duties of the respondents.

To arrive at a cogent and encompassing approach to a practical theology of work and the resulting implications for leadership, this dissertation, of necessity, has turned to a range of expertise from fields of research that are seldom brought together in one study.

In order to argue that leadership may be perceived in theological terms, it must be established that work is part of God’s created order, as perceived throughout both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament.

If the workplace can be a place of aggression, then it is also a place to practise forgiveness. Forgiveness is a critical practice, leading to trust and inclusiveness. A respondent writes, “I believe that we are all connected and that the energy we bring to our interactions affect the quality of connection, and other things like loyalty, trust, etc.”<sup>150</sup> David Whyte states:

Forgiveness is a heartache and difficult to achieve because strangely, it not only refuses to eliminate the original wound, but actually draws us closer to its

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<sup>149</sup> Mitroff and Denton, “Study of Spirituality,” para. 5.

<sup>150</sup> Verbatim respondent 4.

source. To approach forgiveness is to close in on the nature of the hurt itself, the only remedy being, as we approach its raw centre, to imagine our relation to it.<sup>151</sup>

Change happens in an organization, resulting in job loss, fear and anger, sometimes together with an entrenched sense of being wronged by a former employer. This can be overwhelming, and can result in a massive personal challenge that can take many years to cope with. Indeed sometimes the best we can do is to compartmentalize the issue, and set it aside.

Every workplace reflects the diversity of the community around it. Kyle Patterson asserts, “Leaders work together to restore families, churches, cities and communities.”<sup>152</sup> Our workplaces are diverse in every possible way. Capper develops a broad dialogue in the areas of equity and diversity. While focused on leadership in the education environment, her views have meaning for all workplace circumstances. Capper writes, “While the structural functional epistemology focuses on how organizations operate with a goal of efficiency, interpretivists are concerned mainly with how people experience the organization with a goal of understanding.”<sup>153</sup> This is an emerging leadership skill requirement. Capper states:

Educators who adopt the interpretivist epistemology posit that schools as organizations are socially constructed and exist only in the perceptions of people. Individuals are viewed as interdependent, dependent on one another, dependent on others.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Whyte, *Consolations*, 67.

<sup>152</sup> Patterson, *Transformational*, 106.

<sup>153</sup> Epistemology seeks to distinguish belief from opinion, i.e. the nature, sources, and limits of knowledge. Structural functionalism is a sociological theory that offers an explanation of the functioning of society by focussing on the relationship between social institutions as defined historically. Interpretivism in epistemology considers knowledge as a social development involving many points of view and influences of various types of meaning determining the subject’s knowledge of reality which is then an interpretation of reality, not a strict definition of reality.

<sup>154</sup> Capper, *Organization Theory*, 55.

People need their organization. Organizations need their people. Matching is critical for both to succeed. A respondent writes:

I work in the long-term care sector. I feel I have always been called to work with older adults. I have dedicated my life to working with this demographic in NFP organizations. I started working directly with patients, and now I find I miss the patient interaction. I feel a very deep sense of intrinsic meaning.<sup>155</sup>

Our response to the world in adulthood, potentially in large part, is derived from workplace experiences, which create for us an interpretation of reality. This interpreted reality shapes our approach to situations beyond the workplace. Capper writes:

Leaders leading from an interpretivist epistemology emphasize personal awareness, the significance of relationships, and having a purpose or mission. From the interpretivist epistemology, the education leader serves as a facilitator and collaborator . . . Other leadership practices aligned with the interpretive epistemology include the work on emotional intelligence, distributed leadership, *spirituality and leadership*, the reflective practitioner, leading for learning, and the learning organization.<sup>156</sup>

Leaders operate within a structure, even when they have little or no control over that structure. However, they always have control over themselves. For example an attitude of forgiveness and a willingness to support and come alongside subordinates will develop skills as well as trust and commitment. Capper writes:

The differences between the interpretivist epistemology and critically oriented epistemologies . . . These may be summed up by the phrase ‘Charity, not justice.’ As such, educators with an interpretivist epistemology focus on charity and sympathy but not on changing the systems and practices [that might prevent or change situations].<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Verbatim respondent 30.

<sup>156</sup> Capper, *Organizational Theory*, 59 [emphasis added].

<sup>157</sup> Capper, *Organizational Theory*, 59. Capper offers that theories of social justice, equity, and critical qualitative research methods originate out of critical theory (a philosophical approach that confronts social, historical, and cultural ideologies).

Leadership, by contrast, cannot be satisfied with a focus on charity and sympathy, but must be prepared to lead change of systems and practices in addition to acting charitably.

Jesus presents the role of shepherd as loving, caring, and trustworthy. Leaders are called to be shepherds. They are called not only to lead, but to tend to, and care for followers.

Philip Selznick states:

Group leadership is far more than the capacity to mobilize personal support; it is more than the maintenance of equilibrium through the routine solution of everyday problems; it is the function of the leader/statesman [sic]—whether of a nation or a private association—to define the ends of group existence, to design an enterprise distinctly adapted to these ends, and to see that that design becomes a living reality.<sup>158</sup>

At times of inflection in an organization or an entire industry, this can be especially difficult. Entrenched individuals perceive a loss of control. A respondent writes:

It was as a leader that I gained most satisfaction: working with colleagues to improve the institution. I believe that I built bridges. If I am honest, there was no sense of vocation in the early days. It has grown, almost imperceptibly.<sup>159</sup>

This is painstaking work. It is no light commitment. Much time is required to articulate vision, and the path toward that vision.

### **Post-Religion Spirituality**

The findings of the survey indicate that it is possible that an epistemological social foundation is emerging from this group of respondents which ministers may not be fully aware of. This emerging phenomenon appears to be a thirst for spirituality that eschews traditional religion. A respondent writes, “I believe that there is something higher, but

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<sup>158</sup> Selznick, *Leadership in Administration*, 37.

<sup>159</sup> Verbatim respondent 14.



not through the lens of religious faith.”<sup>160</sup> Another writes, “I do not subscribe to an organized religion, however I do hold to my own spiritual beliefs. I believe that my work's meaning is driven by my desire to contribute to others' growth and development.”<sup>161</sup> Reggie McNeal writes:

Spiritual leaders exercise a significant stewardship in their response to culture. Through their choices, they instruct those they lead. What they accept, their followers accept. What they reject, others do too. What they change casts their shadow, through others, through history . . . Understanding the role of culture in the heart-shaping process involves more complex analysis than merely treating the culture as something outside the leader to be accepted or rejected. It also involves learning to appreciate the gifts of culture as one of the forces God has used and continues to use in forming the leader. Ultimately, leaders integrate these insights into their life mission.<sup>162</sup>

This is leadership as caring and nurturing—responding to peoples’ search for calling and connection. The findings of the survey indicate that the person and model of Jesus is valued by many. It is reasonable to believe that people of other faiths find their values central also. All give a sense of belonging and of being needed. A respondent writes, “Everyone wants to feel ‘needed’ at their workplace.”<sup>163</sup> Our need for acceptance and belonging, to be believed in and valued—these are root elements of meaningfulness and fulfillment. We need this in our home and community lives, and we need it at work.

McNeal writes:

People are increasingly engaged in a search for meaning, purpose, love, self-worth, compassion, dignity, and transcendence, a sense of unity with others and with the universe, along with a means to express these things . . . To assume that people are not in church because they are not interested in spiritual truth demonstrates denial regarding attitudes about spiritual matters . . . Post moderns can speak about spirituality without ever mentioning God . . . The challenge for the church involves helping spiritually hungry people speak with church leaders

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<sup>160</sup> Verbatim respondent 4.

<sup>161</sup> Verbatim respondent 5.

<sup>162</sup> McNeal, *A Work of Heart*, 75.

<sup>163</sup> Verbatim respondent 9.

about *their* lack of cultural relevance rather than an accurate reading of people's experience of classic Christian truth.<sup>164</sup>

This dissertation has already argued that organizational mentorship is in decline. In addition, the findings of the survey indicate that, largely, people are not aware of the opportunity or value associated with speaking with a minister or advisor regarding workplace challenges. A significant percentage of respondents to the research questionnaire express faith or spirituality yet a very small percentage confirm that they have spoken with a minister of spiritual counsellor regarding workplace issues or challenges. For example, one respondent writes, "I pray most nights that I am making the right/best decisions."<sup>165</sup> However, this same respondent's reply to the question, 'Have you ever spoken with a minister or counsellor?' is simply, "none."<sup>166</sup>

A respondent writes, "I believe that God has designed each person uniquely with a role to play."<sup>167</sup> For a significant number of respondents, work is biblical, yet they are reticent to raise this in the workplace. We must seek appropriate methods to respond.

Goran Agrell writes:

What is the relationship between 'man [sic] works' and 'man [sic] serves God? In a number of OT texts, it is held that man's [sic] work is part of God's created order, or derives its strength and inspiration from God. To say that man [sic] is appointed to rule the rest of creation (Gen 1:26–28; Ps. 8:7–9) is not a clear statement that work is a divinely appointed task, but it can certainly be given that interpretation . . . According to the wisdom poem in Isa 28:23–29, the farmer is taught by the Lord so that he [sic] can carry out his [sic] various tasks in the right order . . . But 'man [sic] serves God' includes as well such things as restrictions on work. The Sabbath command (Ex 20:8–11; Deut 5:12–15) shows this. It states that all work is to be conducted on six days of the week.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> McNeal, *A Work of Heart*, 80–81.

<sup>165</sup> Verbatim respondent 18.

<sup>166</sup> Verbatim respondent 18.

<sup>167</sup> Verbatim respondent 1.

<sup>168</sup> Agrell, *Work, Toil and Sustenance*, 16.

Work brings toil and exhaustion, yet work also provides for stewardship, creativity, and pride in a craft well done. Work provides the means for sustenance, and work also provides for the joy of caring for another.<sup>169</sup> Work frequently creates joy and angst together. A respondent writes:

I experience very deep joy and meaningfulness in my work. In my mid-thirties I followed God's leading toward a career using more of my gifts and a desire to help/serve. My views, which stem from a deep-rooted belief in Christian life, are not popular amongst peers. I feel quite powerless at times. I have chosen to work in a non-Christian environment where I can model Christ.<sup>170</sup>

The majority of respondents confirm a view that spirituality in some form pervades their life and work. Volf asserts, "In the past few centuries Christian theologians have come to view human work as cooperation with God."<sup>171</sup> A respondent writes, "We have been called upon to use our talents to the best of our ability."<sup>172</sup> It is unclear whether leaders actually notice this depth of calling among their co-workers. Research suggests that it is lacking.

Agrell writes:

Many OT texts express the thought that it is the Lord's blessing and man's [sic] work which together provide man [sic] with his [sic] sustenance. In Gen 8:21ff., it is ordained that the Lord, by his [sic] promise never again to curse the earth, will allow sowing and harvest to remain and the changes of the seasons always to continue.<sup>173</sup>

We should seek to re-introduce a biblical rhythm of work, rest, play, worship. This is not simply an exhortation to individuals. Those who minister to the workplace should

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<sup>169</sup> I viewed my role as Dean of a Business School as shepherding role for our students. It brought great joy, made all the more intense as the years have passed and I receive emails and messages from former students as they tell me about their unfolding careers—around the globe.

<sup>170</sup> Verbatim respondent 6.

<sup>171</sup> Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 98.

<sup>172</sup> Verbatim respondent 9.

<sup>173</sup> Agrell, *Work, Toil and Sustenance*, 16.

encourage this. God calls for Sabbath rest. God also provides for relaxation and festivity! That said, work will never be easy. Agrell continues:

Work for a living is, according to the OT, most often toil, involving such suffering that man [sic] even needs rest from it and comfort for being compelled to do it. Especially slave labour is seen as painful, since it is done under compulsion, is hard, yields poor results or results the worker cannot enjoy, and since it can keep the worker from believing in the possibility of liberation from slavery . . . But the OT can also look on work more favourably. Work done for oneself, yielding results the worker himself [sic] enjoys, is something positive, blessed, a cause of joy for the worker.<sup>174</sup>

Toil does not involve purely physical demands and exhaustion. Toil can also bring emotional and psychological pain. The findings of the survey indicate that people care about one another, but are sometimes unsure of who to trust, or when to engage. This indicates a fragility in terms of true security in the workplace. This fragile sense of feeling secure may be exacerbated by two conditions of work today. One is the growing need for more than one job in order to meet personal and family economic needs. In this circumstance one is exposed to, and required to navigate, sometimes very different workplace cultures which confuse the worker and distance them from deep engagement with each workplace. The other is the situation of the telecommuter—the worker who rarely physically enters a traditional workplace where co-workers are gathered together. This worker operates primarily at home and is culturally uninvolved with others working for the same organization.

The findings of the survey indicate that desire for interaction with others that is ethical and caring is quite pervasive. This is particularly evident among respondents for whom faith, or spirituality, is declared. We should find ways to introduce, or reintroduce, the biblical notion of work and calling. God acknowledges that work brings

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<sup>174</sup> Agrell, *Work, Toil and Sustenance*, 31.

toil. However, as Frederik Schiøtz states, “The God who works, commissions man [sic], his creature, to work.”<sup>175</sup> Thus toil is an element of vocation.

Agrell writes:

According to the synoptics, work for a living, for Jesus and his disciples, was opposed to their special commission. Since the synoptic Jesus is assumed to associate himself with the OT view of work, one can draw the conclusion that he shares its ambivalent outlook. In certain layers of the synoptic tradition, however, it is suggested that those who do not receive a special calling to be Jesus’ disciples remain at their work; but such work has secondary significance, even when it results (Like those of Martha’s work, according to Lk. 10:38-42) are intended to provide for the proclaimers of the kingdom . . . Still, it is implicit in the synoptics that work is necessary in this age until the kingdom of God comes in its fullness.<sup>176</sup>

Here, Agrell’s view might be too narrow. The disciples were most assuredly working—in the same way that ministry today is work. The work of evangelism that the disciples are called to do is very different from the work that Jesus found them doing before he called them to ministry. In the same way we are called to new vocational tasks as our careers unfold—in many cases each phase becoming the foundation for the next.

The Apostle Paul is the model for evangelism and ministry combined with carrying out a task aimed at sustenance. Paul adds, however, the critical element of God’s call for all work to be done for the Kingdom. Agrell writes:

Paul’s only real teaching on work is found in 1 Thessalonians 4: 9-12 . . . The Thessalonians are urged to conduct their lives even more assiduously according to what Paul has taught them . . . Paul exhorts the Thessalonians not to exploit their brothers [sic] in matters of business . . . [Believers] are to maintain a positive contact with the world.<sup>177</sup>

There is pride in a job well done when we recognize the divine value of work. We just have to notice and acknowledge it.

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<sup>175</sup> Schiøtz, “A Christian Concept of Vocation,” 3.

<sup>176</sup> Agrell, *Work, Toil and Sustenance*, 92.

<sup>177</sup> Agrell, *Work, Toil and Sustenance*, 103–4.

Peace and security are themes in the Old Testament (cf. Jer 33:6). Today, as we have seen, job security is far from certain. A respondent writes, “Many events have placed a sense of doubt in my job security.”<sup>178</sup> Another respondent writes, “Job security is always a concern.”<sup>179</sup> Hatch adds:

A growth strategy for an organization leads to increases in size and differentiation . . . If growth involves mergers, acquisitions, or joint ventures, then adaptation to new units and the cultures they bring with them will put strains on the organization that can lead to conflict. Strategies involving downsizing contribute to conflict by creating the perception of shrinking resources, which provokes competition over what remains to be divided. When jobs are on the line, competition becomes fierce.<sup>180</sup>

Trust does not have to be lost. It must be preserved and strengthened. This is a critical task of leadership. Robert Hurley states:

[A] distrustful environment leads to expensive and sometimes terminal problems. We hardly need reminding of the recent wave of scandals that shattered the public’s faith in corporate leaders. And although you’ll never see a financial statement with a line item labeled ‘distrust,’ the WorldCom fiasco underscores just how expensive broken trust can be.<sup>181</sup>

The findings of the survey indicate that acting our faith—being guided by our faith, may be the most important way to bring faith into our workplaces.

The findings of the survey indicate that among people of professed faith or spirituality there is a sense that their spirituality grounds them and strengthens them. This grounding provides them with meaningfulness, vocational fulfillment, and joy. David McLean states, “Relational resonance, intentionality, and agility co-existed [in the stories he heard in his research].”<sup>182</sup> These are gifts which are honed and shaped over

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<sup>178</sup> Verbatim respondent 22.

<sup>179</sup> Verbatim respondent 29.

<sup>180</sup> Hatch and Cunliffe, *Organization Theory*, 258–59.

<sup>181</sup> Hurley, “The Decision to Trust,” para. 4.

<sup>182</sup> McLean, “Understanding Relational Agility,” 90.

time. We can respond by inspiring environments with a culture that will allow this to occur. Wilfred Drath writes:

The tasks of leadership [may be] articulated as setting direction, creating and maintaining commitment, and facing adaptive challenge. It is the need to accomplish these tasks that call forth leadership based on whatever principle people in the community or organization hold in common.<sup>183</sup>

Engaged and connected leaders hold people together in times of deep inflection, or turning points in an enterprise. There is not always an easy solution to workplace dilemmas. As stated earlier, a respondent writes:

I learned a ‘trade’ but learned it is so much more than that. People rely on a person’s expertise. Money was what drove me at first, but then I realized a sense of helping others in need. I have noticed lately that people are losing their sense of good of skilled workmanship [sic]. Instead it’s all about speed and price.<sup>184</sup>

This is a particularly poignant situation. Here is a self-employed craftsperson. Such environments no longer have a ‘guild’ that they can turn to for guidance and discussion. It presents a challenge in terms of securing what could be valuable mentorship.

Where are we today in terms of spiritual conversations? The findings of the survey indicate that, largely, people are not aware of the opportunity or value associated with speaking with a minister or advisor regarding workplace challenges, or/and ministers do not approach people with offers of such conversations. Perhaps they lack the lexicon to have such a conversation. One respondent writes, “[I have had] annual visits with our church elders. These conversations help with applying our faith to our everyday lives.”<sup>185</sup> Another respondent writes, “I can’t say that I’ve had a conversation with a

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<sup>183</sup> Drath, *The Deep Blue Sea*, 18–19.

<sup>184</sup> Verbatim respondent 16.

<sup>185</sup> Verbatim respondent 9.

spiritual advisor that I can remember. I've studied a lot of spiritual material.”<sup>186</sup> Meeks writes:

No household will survive without work. Unless what is necessary for human life is made available by human effort we cannot even speak of an economy. Work, moreover, far from being simply the means of producing what is necessary for life, is also a means of access to household and a means of shaping the household. Thus a community constitutes itself in answering the questions, who gets what kind of work? Who owns the tools and product of work? . . . Some say that work is the deepest satisfaction of their lives and has made them who they are; others say that work has destroyed their health and their family life. Some say technology has overcome back-breaking work; others say machine work and the division of labour have caused social fragmentation and boring and demeaning work.<sup>187</sup>

What Meeks is getting at here is the type of conversation that might be approached from a spiritual perspective. If work is central to our lives, and those in ministry wish, indeed, to bring the message of the Gospel as a central element of our lives, then these elements must be connected explicitly, either through the messages delivered through our sermons, or through forms of workplace-related chaplaincy and ministry, perhaps especially to young adults. Other methods include activism, direct involvement with communities, for example engagement with LGBTQ+ groups and recent immigrant communities.<sup>188</sup> This should, where possible, enforce the eschatological value of work. A respondent writes, “We are all broken. We are all in need of salvation. I’m able to give a little more grace to people and a little more grace to myself.”<sup>189</sup> The findings of the survey indicate that acting our faith—being guided by our faith, may be the most important way to bring faith into our workplaces. Volf states:

We will have to insist (against Thomas Aquinas, for instance) that perfect happiness does depend on the resurrected body. And if the concept of ‘body’ is

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<sup>186</sup> Verbatim respondent 17.

<sup>187</sup> Meeks, *God the Economist*, 127–28.

<sup>188</sup> The Canadian Mission to seafarers is a wonderful example. Visiting seafarers can obtain support and comfort through the staff and volunteers of the Mission.

<sup>189</sup> Verbatim respondent 2.



not to become unintelligible by being indistinguishable from the concept of the ‘pure spirit’ we must also insist that ‘external goods’ are necessary to perfect happiness. The resurrection of the body demands a glorified but nevertheless material environment. The future *material* existence therefore belongs inalienably to the Christian eschatological expectation.<sup>190</sup>

Do leaders contemplate this eschatological dimension of work? A respondent cites a verse from Paul’s letter to the Colossians (Col 4:24) and offers “My life is one of witness and testimony.”<sup>191</sup> Work is part, arguably a critical part, of creation. Darrell

Cosden writes:

A theology of work is not merely a discussion of how one should carry out work, or a discussion of how to resolve specific difficulties and problems faced in the working world. This would essentially be an ethics of work. Nor it is a theology of work satisfied with only making theological comments about work as they arise within a discussion of some other point of doctrine. This would constitute a theological reflection on work. A theology of work is a much broader concept. It is a recent methodology developed for comprehensively exploring the phenomenon of work itself as part of created reality.<sup>192</sup>

Volf adds, “Since a theology of work has normative ethical implications, its task is not merely to interpret the world of work in a particular way, but to lead the present world of work toward the promised and hoped-for transformation in the new creation.”<sup>193</sup> This is a critical theological perspective that appears to be largely missing in postmodern environments. Yet, leadership is stewardship. Cosden writes, “A fundamental question is whether the gifts and talents used by everyone in ordinary work are really the same as the specifically ‘spiritual’ gifts in the New Testament.”<sup>194</sup> This was Moses’ task. It was God’s call that resulted in the enactment of Moses’ practice of leadership. His was a practical theology. Craig Dykstra and Dorothy Bass write:

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<sup>190</sup> Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 95 [emphasis original].

<sup>191</sup> Verbatim respondent 27.

<sup>192</sup> Cosden, *A Theology of Work*, 5.

<sup>193</sup> Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 82.

<sup>194</sup> Cosden, *A Theology of Work*, 5.

Awareness of the possibility of a way of life shaped by a positive response to God pervades the Bible and Christian history—as do examples of the human tendency to fall short of God’s invitation to such a life . . . It is vital that those who seek to walk in such a way learn to recognize the lived wisdom of Christian people over time and across cultures as a constructive resource.<sup>195</sup>

This walk, when fully understood and embraced fills us with the strength and encouragement of all the saints that walked before us. With a foundational premise of work as a response to God’s call, and for leadership to be an enabler and facilitator of work as service to the Kingdom, leadership is presented in this dissertation as a theological practice. In order to arrive at this assertion, it is critical to incorporate and discuss prevailing disciplines of economics, organization theory, ethics, management and leadership theory that broadly undergird work structure and practices.

### **Focus on The Worker**

Organizational humanism in the second half of the twentieth century emerged to bring a “new focus on man [sic] and his [sic] varied needs, on work as a means of fulfillment, and on the process rather than the structure of activities.”<sup>196</sup> Thus, by the 1960s, great thought was developing in terms of the psychic income of the worker. This issue of psychic income is significant. Lea Zagorin’s research argues:

[E]vidence to support that the residents of Chapel Hill, NC receive a positive psychic income from Carolina Athletics. Of particular interest is that psychic income sub-categories [included] pride from increased visibility, opportunities for social bonding, [and] civic pride . . . In conducting this study, I would suggest that the term ‘psychic income’ be renamed ‘emotional impact.’<sup>197</sup>

While Zagorin’s research is focussed on the ‘emotional impact’ on a community of having a successful sports team, her work has relevance. Zagorin gives voice to the

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<sup>195</sup> Dykstra and Bass, “A Theological Understanding,” 16.

<sup>196</sup> Wren, *Evolution of Management*, 445.

<sup>197</sup> Zagorin, “Beyond Economic Impact,” 49–52.

breadth of psychic income—emotional impact not only for the direct participant in a given endeavour, but to the community at large. Arguably, this concept holds true also for an emotionally healthy worker, in a respected enterprise, which in turn positively impacts an entire community. Hope becomes infectious.

A respondent writes: “I used to wear rose-coloured glasses and then get crushed when people weren't as justice minded or compassionate as I was.”<sup>198</sup> Another respondent writes, “I have a quiet faith and hope I am humble in all my actions.”<sup>199</sup> The research findings suggest that hope is stronger than lived experiences. Spirit-led leadership, either through words or actions, will give others freedom to be guided by their own spirituality. Faith will bring insight. Gene Veith writes:

In that mysterious exchange upon the cross, Jesus bore all of our sins, received the punishment that we deserve, and imputed to us all of His righteousness. We come to God as sinners, not as doers of good works, and what we receive from him is pure, free, and unconditional forgiveness [cf. Eph. 2:8-9] . . . Though our relationship with God has nothing to do with our works, good or bad, and is, indeed, totally God's work, St. Paul continues, ‘For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them’ (2:10). By virtue of our creation, our *purpose* in life is to do good works, which God Himself ‘prepared’ for us to do . . . Our relationship to God, then, has nothing to do with our works. Our relationships to other people, though, in the world that God has placed us in, *do* involve our works.<sup>200</sup>

The findings of the survey indicate that acting our faith and being guided by faith may be the most important way to bring faith into the workplace. A number of respondents echo the desire to bring their faith into their workplace, but may not know how to do so. Veith discusses the notion of giving and receiving in God's economic design when he writes:

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<sup>198</sup> Verbatim respondent 2.

<sup>199</sup> Verbatim respondent 21.

<sup>200</sup> Veith, *God at Work*, 37–38 [emphasis original].

[I]f it is true that we are supposed to be dependent on other people, it is also true that other people are supposed to dependent on us. There is no lazy, welfare-state dependence, but an active exchange: my gifts for yours; my vocation for your vocation. This is why St. Paul could make the seemingly harsh statement, ‘If anyone is not willing to work, let him [sic] not eat’ (cf. 2 Thess. 3:10).<sup>201</sup>

Leadership involves interdependency. This is what allows the leader to delegate. Veith points out that, “Our vocation is not one single occupation; we have callings in different realms—the workplace, yes, but also the family, the society, and the church . . . Callings change . . . Vocation is in the here and now.”<sup>202</sup> When our economic circumstances demand that two incomes in the family are needed, or that more than one job is the required norm, other vocational aspirations are infringed upon. The findings of the survey indicate that there is a change in the way people navigate careers. As already stated, the one-career-for-life expectation appears to be gone completely, sometimes resulting in a radical departure in favour of the gig economy. These are stressors that the current generation of workers may be experiencing which previous generations may have had to deal with far less.

### **Spirituality in The Workplace**

Maslow turns to the issue of spirituality in the workplace. He writes:

Enlightened management is one way of taking religion seriously, profoundly, deeply and earnestly. Of course, for those who define religion just as going to a particular building on Sunday and hearing a particular kind of formula repeated, this is all irrelevant. But for those who define religion not necessarily in terms of the supernatural, or ceremonies, or rituals, but in terms of deep concern with the problems of human beings, with the problems of ethics, of the future of man [sic], then this kind of philosophy, translated into the work life, turns out to be very much like the new style of management and of organizations.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> Veith, *God at Work*, 41.

<sup>202</sup> Veith, *God at Work*, 47–49.

<sup>203</sup> Maslow, *On Management*, 83.

The findings of the survey indicate that there is a wide range of perspectives in terms of what it means to be spiritual. A respondent writes, “I believe that my work's meaning is driven by my desire to contribute to others' growth and development. I am also deriving meaningfulness from volunteering.”<sup>204</sup>

Ellul writes, “Man [sic] was made to do his [sic] daily work with his [sic]; but see him [sic] now, like a fly on flypaper, seated for eight hours, motionless at a desk.”<sup>205</sup> While working life may seldom be as dramatic or severe as Ellul portrays, often we are captive to our circumstances. The research findings indicate that introducing places for interfaith dialogue and spiritual practices to occur may be useful.<sup>206</sup> Miller and Ngunjiri write, “As a part of spirituality at work, corporate chaplaincy can be considered an extension or articulation of organizational leaders’ perspectives on the integration of faith and work.”<sup>207</sup> Simply providing an interfaith prayer room will make a difference.

Ellul writes:

I believe in God’s secret presence in the world. God sometimes leaves us in silence, but God always tells us to remember. That is, God recalls us to the world which God has spoken and which is always new if we rebuild the path from the word written to the world lived out and actualized. God is a God incognito who does not manifest in great organ music or sublime ceremonies but who hides in the surprising face of the poor, in suffering (as in Jesus Christ), in the neighbour I meet, in fragility. We need to lay hold again of the elementary truth that God reveals Godself by the fleeting method of the word, and in an appearance of weakness, because everything would be shattered if God revealed Godself in power and glory and absoluteness, for nothing can contain God or God’s presence. God cannot be known directly, but only through that which is in the realm of human possibilities.<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> Verbatim respondent 9.

<sup>205</sup> Ellul, *The Technological Society*, 322.

<sup>206</sup> By example, King Bay Chaplaincy is a non-denominational Christian ministry serving people of all faiths or no faith, located in the heart of Toronto's financial district in the Toronto Dominion Centre at King St. & Bay St.

<sup>207</sup> Miller and Ngunjiri, “Leadership View,” 131.

<sup>208</sup> Ellul, *Essential Spiritual Writings*, 21.

Many respondents expressed their belief in God and sought greater purpose in their work. At the same time, finding greater purpose frequently required economic sacrifice.

Cosden explores a threefold nature of work. He writes:

[T]he normative theological understanding of work is best construed threefold as a dynamic inter-relationship of instrumental, relational, and ontological aspects. In fact herein lies a double hypothesis. The first part says that truly human work, i.e. work as it ought to be, is constituted with each of these three aspects (instrumental, relational, and ontological). They exist together in a mutual and interdependent relationship . . . The second part of the hypothesis, the part that will require particular attention theologically is that work is, and must be construed as, ontological.<sup>209</sup>

Instrumentally, work is designed around a product, either a profit-related product or a public good product. The relational element of work centres on the creation of a community, while the ontological element of work centres on the achievement of meaning and purpose.

Bringing spirituality to the workplace conversation means bringing everyone to their best. Thelma Hall writes, “Prayer can never be dissociated from our everyday life.”<sup>210</sup> Many respondents confirm this. A respondent writes, “I believe that I am doing good works, utilizing God-given talents.”<sup>211</sup> Another respondent writes, “We have been called upon to use our talents to the best of our ability.”<sup>212</sup>

The platonic perspective is that, metaphysically, work—as a fundamental component of our worldly activities—is focussed on ends or purposes. With this in mind, this dissertation argues that work is teleological in nature. Thus ontology, the nature of being, may be viewed as existence, but with a teleological trajectory. Cosden

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<sup>209</sup> Cosden, *A Theology of Work*, 5.

<sup>210</sup> Hall, *Too Deep for Words*, 33.

<sup>211</sup> Verbatim respondent 8.

<sup>212</sup> Verbatim respondent 9.

argues for a more explicit and theologically shaped ontology of work. To work is part of our nature of being, and relationships are generally central to our nature of being, therefore our work. There are very few professions that occur outside of relationships.

Steven Covey states:

There is one thing that is common to every individual, relationship, team, family, organization, nation, economy and civilization throughout the world—one thing, if removed, will destroy the most powerful government, the most successful business, the most thriving economy, the most influential leadership, the greatest friendship, the strongest character, the deepest love . . . On the other hand, if developed and leveraged, that one thing has the potential to create unparalleled success and prosperity in every dimension of life. Yet, it is the least understood, most neglected, and most underestimated possibility of our time . . . That one thing is trust.<sup>213</sup>

Thus, while talent is critical to the success of any enterprise, it is trust—the ability to rely on co-workers—that allows talent to be employed.

### Trust

The argument above leads to the assertion that the workplace is a mission field. A respondent writes, “I am not [currently] doing the work that I would feel is more my calling.”<sup>214</sup> The findings of the survey indicate that people are not aware of the opportunity or value associated with speaking with a minister. Covey writes, “We can increase trust—much faster than we might think—and doing so will have a huge impact, both in the quality of our lives and in the results we’re able to achieve.”<sup>215</sup>

Trust is a foundational requirement for people to achieve meaningfulness. A respondent writes, “My work does provide a deep sense of meaningfulness. I find it very satisfying to know I have had a positive impact.”<sup>216</sup> People will disagree. Sometimes

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<sup>213</sup> Covey, *Speed of Trust*, 1.

<sup>214</sup> Verbatim respondent 4.

<sup>215</sup> Covey, *Speed of Trust*, [emphasis original] 3.

<sup>216</sup> Verbatim respondent 13.

disagreement is irreconcilable. This does not have to descend into bitterness. Covey writes, “The number one reason people leave their job is a bad relationship with their boss.”<sup>217</sup> Such unsatisfactory relationships, frequently, are the catalyst for entrepreneurship. In other situations, a divine encounter strengthens a person and sustains them. A respondent writes, “I have a sense of meaningfulness, but it is not deep and has grown over time. I also experienced a stressful environment. As I walked into the fog and did all I could, God met me and journeyed with me.”<sup>218</sup>

Trust in others can ameliorate stress. Groups of workers that act together as teams with a common goal overcome stress. Trust is an outcome of an environment that is ethical and caring. Covey writes:

In our workshops and presentations, participants typically say that in a low-trust organization, they see cultural behaviours such as the following:

- People manipulate or distort facts
- People withhold and hoard information
- Getting the credit is very important
- People spin the truth to their advantage
- New ideas are openly resisted and stifled
- Mistakes are covered up
- Most people are involved in a blame game, bad-mouthing others
- There is an abundance of water cooler talk
- There are numerous ‘meetings after the meetings’
- There are a lot of violated expectations, for which people try to make excuses
- The energy level is low
- People often feel unproductive tension—sometimes even fear

Participants say that in high-trust organizations they typically see different behaviours, such as these:

- Information is shared openly
- Mistakes are tolerated and encouraged as a way of learning
- The culture is innovative and creative

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<sup>217</sup> Covey, *Speed of Trust*, 12.

<sup>218</sup> Verbatim respondent 7.



- People are loyal to those who are absent
- People talk straight and confront real issues
- There is real communication and real collaboration
- People share credit abundantly
- There are few ‘meetings after the meetings’
- Transparency is a practiced value
- People are candid and authentic
- There is a high degree of accountability
- There is a palpable vitality and energy—people can feel the positive momentum<sup>219</sup>

These points provide a valuable leadership checklist for periodic review if one wishes to create an environment of trust.<sup>220</sup> This is critical if our mission is to bring strength, courage, hope, and wisdom to the workplace.

### **Wisdom as Divine Endowment**

Understanding wisdom as a divine endowment leads to a cohesive workplace. Robert Sternberg provides a definition of wisdom:

The application of intelligence, creativity, and knowledge as mediated by values toward the achievement of a common good through a balance among (a) intrapersonal, (b) interpersonal, and (c) extrapersonal interests over the (a) short- and (b) long-terms, in order to achieve a balance among (a) adaption to existing environments, (b) shaping of existing environments, and (c) selection of new environments.<sup>221</sup>

Applying Sternberg’s lens, we observe an entirely different perspective of a functional, Spirit-led leadership.

A respondent writes, “I have noticed lately that people are losing their sense of good' or 'skilled' workmanship - instead it is all about speed and price.”<sup>222</sup> Traditions are

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<sup>219</sup> Covey, *Speed of Trust*, 245.

<sup>220</sup> In my experience, the outcome of candid and authentic discussion, in particular, is one of the most creative forces in the workplace.

<sup>221</sup> Sternberg, “Foolishness,” 331–52.

<sup>222</sup> Verbatim respondent 16.

being eroded. While the circumstance above may seem mundane, one may quickly realise that this observation goes to the heart of the respondent's sense of worth and purpose. Structural changes in society have broadly pressed workplace discussion toward narrow economic output (price) and success against narrow tangible metrics (speed). These phenomena lead to the theory that most avoid a conversation regarding deeper matters, perhaps out of a desire to be polite, or of a sense of awkwardness, or a fear of conflict. The workplace generally, then, is not a place for a discussion of faith. It does not have to be this way. The findings of the survey indicate that introducing 'places' for interfaith and spiritual practices to occur may be useful, together with broad communication of recognition of multiple faith events.<sup>223</sup> This may produce the impetus for broader discussions sagacity around our responses to a changing marketplace.

### **Pastoral Care**

With a foundation for leadership that has divine purpose in mind, this dissertation will turn its attention to the task of pastoral engagement with the worker and the workplace.

Glenn Asquith states:

The first curriculum at CTS [Chicago Theological Seminary] provided that, during several months each year, students would be scattered throughout the Midwest to learn about community life and church needs in the experimental culture . . . Graham Taylor established the first distinct department of Christian sociology.<sup>224</sup>

Case studies were developed based upon several of such *in-situ* experiences, leading to new methods of pastoral care and counselling, and are instructive today. These CTS

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<sup>223</sup> I had the opportunity to create an Interfaith Room in the heart of the DeGroote School of Business the *Paul & Sally Bates Interfaith Centre* is a space for meditation, prayer or quiet reflection. The room is open to all students, faculty and staff. <https://rjc.degroote.mcmaster.ca/services/interfaith-centre/>.

<sup>224</sup> Asquith, "An Experiential Theology," 23.

works were instrumental in the development of the research questions supporting this dissertation. The resulting analysis of responses created the further secondary research conducted, together with a framework and approach to the resulting recommendations.

Henri Nouwen's entire corpus deals with human engagement with the divine, focussed not only on his own travails, but also on those of whom he encounters. In a number of his works, Nouwen offers to us that his own faith walk often seems barren. Although his domain is quite different, he is contemplating circumstances that are similar our contractor above. Nouwen's letters are to his nephew, who at the time of writing his work, was an eighteen year-old. In these seven letters to Marc, Nouwen is, at the same time that he is assisting and nudging his nephew to find a moral compass in faith, exposing Marc—and us—to his own challenges in maintaining a strong and assured faith walk. Nouwen affirms:

The spiritual life has to do with the heart of existence. This is a good word. By heart I do not mean the seat of our feelings as opposed to the seat of our thoughts; I mean the center of our being, that place where we are most ourselves, where we are most human.<sup>225</sup>

Nouwen is situating his ministry to Marc in the context of this young man's life. He is acting out his calling as a shepherd and as a spiritual guide to Marc. Nouwen affirms that it is at the contemplative centre of our existence that we will find Jesus. Nouwen is also asserting that prayer is the means of moving to this centre. Nouwen is encouraging his nephew to spend time secretly in the presence of God to allow his faith to mature away from the world. These pieces of advice are strongly reminiscent of Nouwen's use of polarities: in the world but not of the world, of downward mobility, of withdrawal and solitude. Nouwen is urging Marc to eschew the temptation to become well-known

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<sup>225</sup> Nouwen, *Letters to Marc*, 5.

too quickly; risking hubris over humility.<sup>226</sup> These are critical perspectives upon which to contemplate the deep value of developing leadership practices that are Spirit-led, which leads us to a sense of calling. This is mentorship.

Each of the thirty-two respondents who completed the questionnaires that, together, are central to this dissertation are very much normal individuals, in a range of professional pursuits in three countries. Each response reflects careers of earnest endeavour, fulfilling a goal for themselves, their loved ones, for the enterprises they are working with, for their communities and for civil society. Jean-Francois Lyotard proposes:

[N]o self is an island; each exists in a fabric of relations that is now more complex and mobile than ever before. Young or old, man or woman, rich or poor, a person is always located at ‘nodal points’ of specific communication circuits, however tiny these may be. Or better: one is always located at a post through which various kinds of messages pass. No one, not even the least privileged among us, is ever entirely powerless over the messages that traverse and position him [sic] at the post of sender, addressee, or referent.<sup>227</sup>

Lyotard’s analogy of each ‘self’ being located at a nodal point is apt. The research respondents, like all of us, work in a network of communication pathways, reporting relationships, and shared tasks. They also are located in a network of hopes, fears, ambitions, needs, and aspirational goals. We each are enmeshed in numerous networks—they exist inside one’s employment environment, one’s family, one’s community, one’s professional affiliations, and so on. Each brings different and sometimes conflicting sets of hopes, fears, ambitions, and needs. A respondent writes, “I

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<sup>226</sup> This was a constant theme for my interactions in various fora with business school students.

<sup>227</sup> Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, 15.

believe that God has designed each person uniquely with a role to play.”<sup>228</sup> It is the task of leadership to *fit* a person in the role that allows them to fulfill their vocational call.

In the broadest sense, society functions on the backs of its workers. As Y. R.

Simon writes:

The daily life of man [sic] is composed of things whose meaning is in the mystery of their familiarity. Work is one of these. Other examples would be love, companionship, sincerity, honour, sport, ennui, and community-feeling.<sup>229</sup>

A respondent writes, “I am not [currently] doing the work that I feel is more my calling.” Dissonance exists when work does not fully satisfy a person’s search for meaning. Simon writes, “[M]odern society actually exalts work, which is in sharp contrast with the attitudes prevalent in classical culture.”<sup>230</sup> Maurice Balme writes, “Aristotle is quite clear that work is not an end in itself. The end which man [sic] aims at is happiness.”<sup>231</sup> The research findings indicate that dissonance, mild to severe, is a frequent theme among research respondents. Few explicitly expressed real and sustained happiness.

Oddly, while we exalt work, there are many who have a narrow view when it comes to addressing the needs of workers, which results in a risk of actually stifling potential output. This seems particularly strange when enterprises are focussed on ‘speed-to-market’ and ‘just-in-time’ approaches to supply-chain management, while the spiritual health of employees seems to be unnoticed or ignored.

Even speculators work. Simon writes, “The mark of a true speculator is that he [sic] produces absolutely nothing.”<sup>232</sup> This dissertation disagrees with this statement.

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<sup>228</sup> Verbatim respondent 1.

<sup>229</sup> Simon, *Work, Society and Culture*, 1.

<sup>230</sup> Simon, *Work, Society and Culture*, 3.

<sup>231</sup> Balme, “Attitudes to Work and Leisure,” 140.

<sup>232</sup> Simon, *Work, Society and Culture*, 3.

The speculator's work is to be the arbiter of value. The speculator identifies unrecognized or under-recognized value—sometimes over-recognized value—and through investment activity creates new value.

With work comes management (although not, necessarily, leadership). Daniel Wren reminds us “the exodus from Egyptian bondage was quite a managerial task.”<sup>233</sup> Wren points out, however, that clear and overt “divine intervention at perilous points is rarely available to today's managers.”<sup>234</sup>

The findings of the survey indicate that there is a wide range of perspectives in terms of what it means to be spiritual. Anthony Kenney and Geraldine Smyth observe that, “The century of the reformation . . . [Was] succeeded by two centuries of secularisation.”<sup>235</sup> We can assume that secularization in the workplace followed this trend. It was science and technology that spawned a wave of industrial progress. Consider Johann Gutenberg's achievement in the development of the first metallic moveable type for a printing press.

Critical for this dissertation's enquiry is the denouement of the substitution of machine power for human power in industries from hay-baling to robotic surgery; ushering in the era of economics, financial modelling, and capital formation together with management theory, and leadership as a profession. Wren points out:

Pre-industrialized societies are characterized by low per capita income, economic stagnation, dependence on agriculture, a low degree of specialization of labour, and a widespread geographical integration of markets.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> Wren, *Evolution of Management*, 15.

<sup>234</sup> Wren, *Evolution of Management*, 15.

<sup>235</sup> Kenny and Smyth, *Secularism and Secularisation*, 317.

<sup>236</sup> Wren, *Evolution of Management*, 37.

These environmental changes brought about changes in society. Wren describes the emergence of “a willingness to innovate, to place trust in one’s own capacity. And to perceive oneself as a thinking and emotion-feeling organism.”<sup>237</sup> Concurrently, the farmer-entrepreneur was becoming the owner of a larger enterprise, requiring delegation of the oversight of the enterprise to professional managers. Efficiency, productivity, sound use of capital and profitability were the new overarching requirements. By the early nineteenth century, Britain saw the emergence of texts devoted to management theory. These texts focussed on maximizing quantity and quality of work, repairing equipment and managing costs. Wren points out that a new challenge quickly emerged. He states, “The Labour problem . . . broadly [has] three aspects: recruitment, training, and discipline.”<sup>238</sup> Customs of craft were being replaced by “punctuality, regular attendance, supervision, and the mechanical pacing of work effort.”<sup>239</sup> The beginning of the erosion of long-standing traditions was under way. This may be more extreme today. A respondent writes, “I have noticed lately that people are losing their sense of good or skilled workmanship [sic]—instead it’s all about speed and price.”<sup>240</sup>

Interestingly, in the early years of the industrial revolution in Britain, a key method for creating a new workplace ethos was the *in situ* teaching of religious morals and values. Wren writes:

The encouragement of moral education, even on company time and in early company towns, reading of the ‘good book,’ regular church attendance, and exhortation to avoid the deadly sins of laziness, sloth, and avarice were methods of inculcating in the working population the right habits of industry.<sup>241</sup>

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<sup>237</sup> Wren, *Evolution of Management*, 39.

<sup>238</sup> Wren, *Evolution of Management*, 47.

<sup>239</sup> Wren, *Evolution of Management*, 50.

<sup>240</sup> Verbatim respondent 16.

<sup>241</sup> Wren, *Evolution of Management*, 52.

We could argue, however, that these efforts were aimed less at the promulgation of human flourishing, but more at discipline on the shop floor. Of further interest is that some argued against buying the most expensive machines while hiring the cheapest labour, making virtually no investment in the human resources of the enterprise.

By the middle of the twentieth century, several voices were being raised in criticism of the “neglect of a focus on the nature of work and the satisfactions in work for man [sic].”<sup>242</sup> While some articulated a “*Protestant ethic* [that] saw work as an end in itself, not necessarily to be enjoyed but to serve as a sign of election and a means to achieving the grace of God.”<sup>243</sup> It appears that Wren suggests an interpretation of ‘toil’ as the path to salvation, rather than seeing our work as a contribution to God’s Kingdom. Critics such as Karl Marx had seen the industrial revolution as an “imposition of power of the exploiting capital class upon the working class.”<sup>244</sup> The emerging modern era developed a “view of work, of man [sic], and how to achieve organizational harmony by designing organizations to allow expression of what was assumed to be a natural urge to find satisfaction in work.”<sup>245</sup> Thus, this was a realization that people need to be motivated. According to the qualitative research herein, however, conversations of faith appear unwelcome. A respondent writes: “I seek first if there is room for the conversation, [but] I barely hear the word God, let alone discussion about who Jesus is.”<sup>246</sup> John Macken offers that, in pastoral care we should ask first, “whether something

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<sup>242</sup> Wren, *Evolution of Management*, 444.

<sup>243</sup> Wren, *Evolution of Management*, 444 [emphasis original].

<sup>244</sup> Wren, *Evolution of Management*, 444.

<sup>245</sup> Wren, *Evolution of Management*, 445.

<sup>246</sup> Verbatim respondent 6.



has the marks of enhancing life and justice, peace and well-being.”<sup>247</sup> It is this question that should be in our mind as we open a pastoral dialogue with leaders.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has examined and drawn from the fields of economics, organization theory, ethics, pastoral theology and leadership theory both from an historical and contemporary perspective. These fields are viewed through the lens of societal change, and dramatic change in workplace structure. There has been a deliberate interpretation of the interdisciplinary dynamics that have shaped and continue to shape the workplace conducted in this chapter, in the sense that the instruction given by one domain of practice has been interpreted through the language of another field of study. The interaction between these domains, woven together with the grounded theory developed by the qualitative research undertaken, has resulted in a specific, adaptive, framework for Spirit-led leadership. Thus, what will be harnessed in the next chapter will be leadership practices that are the encompassing engagement of multiple techniques—methods of procedure in planning, equipping, executing, motivating, assessing, rewarding and correcting that comprise the task of leadership.

This examination captures leadership fully within a spiritual construct that creates a cohesion between workplace behaviours and those moral principles that should govern and inspire such behaviours. Power becomes yoked with nurturing. Work becomes joyful, even when it involves toil. From this an assertion is made that leadership should be perceived as having the spiritual depth required to imbue an

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<sup>247</sup> Macken, “Theological Reflection,” 577.

organization with its ethos—the organization’s ethical and distinguishing characteristics.

Work is restored as a part, perhaps the central part, of God’s created order.

## CHAPTER 4: SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP IN A SECULAR WORLD

Leadership in the postmodern era appears to be focussed largely on the expedient imperatives of organizational structure, i.e. output-related metrics. This dissertation asserts that leadership is frequently lacking what is right or just in terms of creating an environment for human flourishing. Stott writes, “Our model of leadership is often shaped more by culture than by Christ. Yet many cultural models of leadership are incompatible with the servant imagery taught and exhibited by the Lord Jesus.”<sup>1</sup> This observation is certainly underscored by many of the testimonies provided by research respondents presented in this dissertation. Jesus instructs his disciples that the path to leadership is servanthood. In the Gospel of Matthew we read:

Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favor of him. "What is it you want?" he asked. She said, "Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom." "You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said to them. "Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?" "We can," they answered. Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink from my cup, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father." When the ten heard about this, they were indignant with the two brothers. Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave-- just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Matt 20:20–28).”

Robert Russell argues:

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<sup>1</sup> Stott, *Basic Christian Leadership*, 113.

These passages include three critical components that support the concept of servant leadership. First, Jesus identifies the nature of worldly, human leadership [which] implies the tendency towards holding followers in subjection . . . The second major statement of Jesus is His specification of the prerequisite in the Kingdom of God . . . The third critical part is Jesus' identification of His own servant nature.<sup>2</sup>

Jesus also instructs his disciples to let their "light shine before others (Matt 5:16)." This presents a perfect circumstance for the promulgation of human flourishing. This chapter presents a practice of leadership that reflects Jesus' message to his disciples. Shaped by research, this dissertation asserts that leaders who are of Christian faith must be leaders of people of all faiths as well as people of no professed faith. These are what Thiessen calls "religious nones."<sup>3</sup> The common ground is modelling and assuring ethical behaviour, and care for the other person. Leaders can make a massive difference simply by assuring an ethical and caring workplace. The foundation for ethical behaviour is love. Paul Ramsey states:

Christian love is the source from which men [sic] learn to *attribute* value to human persons. From Christian love, men [sic] have life and have it abundantly (John 10:10). The creation and preservation of community is in fact the same thing as persistent attribution of worth to another human being.<sup>4</sup>

Management is about organization of work, assignment of work, selection of the worker, communication of tasks, and measurement of the results of work. Leadership may well include all these roles but, above all of them, leadership is about ethos. Miller and Ngunjiri write:

Spiritual leadership taps into the fundamental needs of both leader and follower for spiritual survival so they become more organizationally committed and productive . . . This entails creating a vision where organizational members experience a sense of calling, and establishing a social/organizational culture

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<sup>2</sup> Russell, "A Practical Theology of Servant Leadership," 2.

<sup>3</sup> Thiessen, *Meaning of Sunday*, 94.

<sup>4</sup> Ramsey, *Basic Christian Ethics*, 246 [emphasis original].

based on altruistic love whereby leaders and followers have genuine care, concern, and appreciation for both self and others.<sup>5</sup>

This chapter is about practices of Spirit-led leadership. This chapter brings into focus a number of leadership activities and imperatives. These are enumerated under the key elements of the grounded theory articulated in chapter 2, as follows:

**Responding to Desire for Purpose and Meaningfulness; Leaders Should:**

- Be focussed on ethos.
- Be forgiving.
- Be trustworthy.
- Maintain high levels of communication.

**Recognizing the Person; Leaders Should:**

- Recognize the ways that work impacts lives.
- Nurture workers.
- Be mentors.
- Recognize and celebrate good work.

**Upholding Values and Lived Experiences; Leaders Should:**

- Have the words of their mission and values in front of them every morning.
- Encourage dissenting views.
- Align work expectations with values.
- Exercise discernment.
- Focus on legacy.

**Responding to Changing Ethics; Leaders Should:**

- Identify Power Dynamics
- Advocate for workers.
- Be students of organizational structure.
- Build community.
- Respond to disruptive market forces.

**Espousing Spirituality and Hope; Leaders Should:**

- Respond to errors in a way that is restorative.
- Create conversations.
- Choose words prayerfully.

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<sup>5</sup> Miller and Ngunjiri, “Leadership View,” 131.

- Allow faith to guide.
- Retain humility.
- Be present.

### **Promoting Fairness, Equity, and Justice; Leaders Should**

- Reflect constantly on the assurance of justice and fairness.
- Recognize and correct corrupt behaviour.
- Be hospitable.
- Confront destructive situations.
- Consult, and then act.
- Remove inequities.

These topics are about the obligations and challenges of leadership, and will be addressed in this chapter. These are all elements of *Spirit-led* leadership.

The right to spiritual fulfillment in one's labour is a social justice issue. Ruth Yeoman declares:

Work is either a source of expressive human action . . . fulfilled in a correctly ordered society which enables all persons to do decent, humane and dignified work; or it is an experience of oppressive degradation, from which we must escape . . . Meaningful work is a fundamental human need because it satisfies our inescapable interests in being able to experience the constitutive values of autonomy, freedom and dignity.<sup>6</sup>

Leadership, if it is about ethos, must champion social justice, specifically fair and just treatment. Achieving this in the workplace will change entire communities. Phipps writes that God is “nudging us into alertness, to take notice and respond.”<sup>7</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer lays it bare when he writes, “One is distressed by the failure of *reasonable* people to perceive either the depths of evil or the depths of the holy. With the best of intentions they believe that a little reason will suffice them to clamp together the parting timbers of the building.”<sup>8</sup> We need to be cautious that we may be taking an early step

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<sup>6</sup> Yeoman, “Conceptualizing Meaningful Work,” 235–36.

<sup>7</sup> Phipps, *God on Monday*, 27.

<sup>8</sup> Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, 67 [emphasis original].

onto a slippery slope in the decisions and choices that we make. In other words, the words of our mission and values should be in front of us every morning to remind us of our fundamental obligation to see that the values and mission that underpin our actions and decisions will be pristine. A respondent writes, “I changed careers 16 years ago to start a [new] business. It has become my calling. It can be scary and overwhelming at times. All my efforts and funds go into the business. My workers and family are my peers.”<sup>9</sup> This is the pinnacle of ethics-driven leadership. We are exhorted to be a light to the world (cf. Matt 5:14–16). We are called to let our faith be experienced by others through our actions, decisions, and by the way we come alongside them as we move forward together.

Badrinarayan Shanker Pawar discusses Southwest Airlines’ initiative to adopt spiritual values in its culture. Pawar writes:

[T]he relationship between employee experiences of altruistic love which includes spiritual values and resulting development in the employees of the aspects of spiritual leadership can also suggest that spiritual values of an organization can induce positive or spiritually oriented behaviours from employees in the organization.<sup>10</sup>

The majority of respondents to the research questionnaire supporting this dissertation make reference to faith or spirituality, and go on to articulate how their faith orientation is interwoven with their work and their feelings about work. Those respondents who assert no faith orientation also articulate a focus on ethics and care for others. They seek meaningfulness in their work. They seek avoidance of conflict. They value the opinions of others. Grenz writes:

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<sup>9</sup> Verbatim respondent 8.

<sup>10</sup> Pawar, “Leader Spiritual Behaviours Toward Subordinates,” 42.

For Christians, faith is by nature immediate. It arises out of the human encounter with the person of God in Christ, mediated by the community's testimony to the divine revelation in Jesus. Personal faith, therefore, is our response to the call of God, which involves participation in the believing community. Personal faith extends to all aspects of our psyche. It includes our intellect. In the faith-response we accept as true certain assertions concerning reality, and as a result we view the world in a specific way. Faith includes our will. It entails the volitional commitment of ourselves to another - to the God revealed in Jesus Christ - and consequently we enter into a commitment with the disciples of Jesus. And faith includes the emotions, for it is the heartfelt love for the one who saves us, which translates into affection for others.<sup>11</sup>

Grenz affirms that for people of expressed faith, there is a vocational imperative in the way that they carry out their work, and treat their co-workers. Grenz also speaks of volition and emotion. This is about investing ourselves completely in the work that we do. This dissertation presents leadership as both a divine gift and a sacred obligation to be exercised in a demeanour of servanthood. A critical element of this is the recognition of persons. This chapter is not designed specifically to use leadership roles to proselytize, although such opportunities may present themselves. Rather it is designed to create an environment where people will flourish, and where applicable, to enable people of faith to experience harmony between their faith and their work. If people come to faith as a result of their work experiences, that is the work of the Spirit. Ira Sankey writes a wonderful story which illustrates this:

One day, while the children in a Mission Chapel were singing 'One more day's work for Jesus,' a woman passing by stopped outside to listen. She went home with this words fixed in her mind. The next day, the words of the hymn came to her again and aroused the question, 'Have I ever done one day's work for Jesus in all my life?' That marked the turning point. Then and there she began to work for Jesus . . . A new light came into her life.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 8.

<sup>12</sup> Sankey, *Sankey's Story of the Gospel*, 160.



The poignancy of this story is that the children singing in the church were not even aware of the woman's existence. It was the Spirit that used their work to reach this woman. So it will be with our leadership as the Spirit moves. This is crucial. This wonderful, simple story exemplifies the mystery of God's action. Paul Johnson introduces a fictional situation in which the Holy Spirit enters the life of a corporate CEO. He writes:

Rare were the times when you actually listened to your workers. At Board of Directors meetings you looked at those around you. They were all men. You gave the impression of listening to them, but you knew what you wanted to do before the meeting began. You had already decided . . . Apparently you really listened to the lunchroom group . . . Most employees 'worked' for you, but after listening to the folks at the lunchroom table you felt you were actually working with them to solve a problem.<sup>13</sup>

To paraphrase Johnson, grace had entered the room. God calls to us in the secular world—the temporal earthly world. Grace *demand*s that we do what is right and proper. This is not a negotiation. It is an absolute requirement. Phipps writes:

[Moses] goes away to Midian, and there a whole welter of experiences are churning in his mind—a sense of social responsibility, a sense of despair at those for whom he feels responsible, a realisation that he has set about it wrongly . . . Though he is not yet aware of it, in and through all that is pressing upon him, God is *speaking*, raising his awareness. Thus, when he goes off into the desert and comes upon the burning bush, he is already alerted and aware. Here, a purely secular phenomenon arrests his attention. 'I will turn aside,' he says, 'and see this great sight.' God called him out of the bush, 'Moses, Moses.' Alerted by the secular to its inner significance—the ethical outrage of his people's bondage, and his own responsibility in the face of it—he is now ready for God's personal call.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Johnson, *Grace for the Workplace*, 43.

<sup>14</sup> Phipps, *God on Monday*, 19.

## Justice and Fairness

A respondent writes, “I have always questioned my salary. I have been put in a position of being taken advantage of, reducing my drive and loyalty.”<sup>15</sup> The assurance of justice and fairness is critical. Justice requires confronting corrupt behaviour. Among the various interpretations of the word ‘corrupt’ are: to break; change from a sound condition to an unsound one; spoiled; contaminated. If an awareness of the spiritual dimension of one’s daily economic endeavour, has been lost, a restorative response is required. Restorative effort should begin by understanding the root causes of corruption of the environment in which we find ourselves. Restoration brings new hope. The findings of the survey indicate that hope is stronger than actual lived experiences.<sup>16</sup>

Ignoring people is a fundamental injustice. Gerald Blakely et al. assert:

Organizational Citizenship Behaviours may include helping a co-worker who has been absent from work, volunteering for extra duty when needed, representing the company enthusiastically at public functions, and acting in ways that improve morale, and resolving unconstructive interpersonal conflict . . . Perceptions of fairness tapped into employee beliefs about the fairness of [employees’] social and economic exchanges with organizations. If exchanges were deemed fair, the employees would be more likely to reciprocate the fairness by performing in ways that benefit the organization.<sup>17</sup>

Thus fairness engenders hope. Hope is nurtured when we notice people. Buber writes:

When I confront a human being as my You and speak the basic word I-You to him [sic], then he [sic] is no thing among things nor does he [sic] consist of

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<sup>15</sup> Verbatim respondent 19.

<sup>16</sup> A poignant example of this occurred at the end of a lecture that I had given to a second year undergraduate commerce class, just about two weeks before exams. There were some two hundred and fifty students seated in a steeply banked auditorium. The goal of the lecture, among other things, was to inspire these young people to be encouraged, dedicated in their studies, and prepared for the world. The lecture continued as an encouragement to seek one’s own path, concluding by affirming that every human being is a unique and special person. My time came to an end and I made my way out of the auditorium, looking at my watch and thinking about where I needed to be next. As I made my way to the exit, a student moved into my path and asked me a question. The student went on to say that she did not feel very special, and became quite emotional. I knew right away that nothing else in my day mattered more than stopping to talk with her. I saw her. We stood there together in the entrance to the lecture hall for some time. She told me about her studies, her aspirations, and her challenges.

<sup>17</sup> Blakely et al, “The Moderating Effects of Equity Sensitivity,” 259–60.

things. He [sic] is no longer He or She, limited by other Hes and Shes, a dot in the world grid of space and time, nor a condition that can be experienced and described, a loose bundle of named qualities. Neighbourless and seamless he [sic] is You and fills the firmament. Not as if there were nothing but he [sic]; but everything else lives in his [sic] light.<sup>18</sup>

Buber is saying, fundamentally, that when we see another person as a whole, uninjured, sound, complete, human being—truly an entire person rather than an object—they *become* a whole person: an ‘I’ rather than an ‘it.’ Butler-Bass provides an important addition to the concept of wholeness. She writes that that the Latin root of the word salvation is “*salvus*, meaning ‘whole,’ ‘sound,’ ‘healed,’ ‘safe,’ ‘well,’ or ‘unharméd.”<sup>19</sup> Thus *seeing* people is a critical and fundamental act of leadership. It is, perhaps, the first act of leadership. When another person realizes that we have seen them, we are going to notice an overwhelming, and almost immediate, change in that person’s entire demeanour. Robert Gibbs introduces a powerful additional thought here. He writes, “To become ‘I’ is to become responsible.”<sup>20</sup> What Gibbs may be suggesting is that as we recognize someone, we also draw them into full stature. In so doing we equip, and at the same time *obligate*, them to be in full participation with us as-co-leaders. They become accountable.

In fully seeing, as leaders we are also uplifted by the testimony of those we encounter. We learn to listen deeply to testimonies, and to respond to them with affection and intensity. We are reminded that everyone has a story, and every story deserves to be heard. In a world where we seem to have little time to engage in a

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<sup>18</sup> Buber, *I and Thou*, 59.

<sup>19</sup> Butler Bass, *Christianity after Religion*, 183.

<sup>20</sup> Gibbs, *Why Ethics*, 331.

conversation, *hearing* is paired with *seeing*. A respondent writes, “I don't offer my opinions unless asked, but will discuss my viewpoints openly.”<sup>21</sup>

Here is another outcome of learning to see whole people. The people that we see, as they become whole people in front us, take up space in our lives that we may have previously risked filling with our own self-importance. We act our faith. As the findings of the survey indicate, acting our faith—being guided by our faith, may be the most important way to bring faith into the workplace. In simple terms, we lead by example.

Rosemary Vogt adds another dimension of the impact of *seeing* people. She writes:

Spiritual well-being and loneliness are easily overlooked by supervisors . . . Now there is a growing body of empirical research showing spiritual approaches can influence the workplace, impacting employee well-being, organizational performance and profitability.<sup>22</sup>

Simply seeing people fully; recognizing good work, leads to restoration of purpose. This is at the heart of the ‘master-apprentice’ relationship. Pauer adds a broader perspective, stating that, “Spiritual values of an organization can induce positive or spiritually oriented behaviours from employees in the organization.”<sup>23</sup>

If we are to spend the greatest portion of our days at work it is impossible to separate the various purposes for which we work from our fundamental cooperative role in the narrative of redemption. A respondent writes, “I learned a 'trade' but learned that it is so much more than that.”<sup>24</sup> Work experiences impact our lives.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Verbatim respondent 22.

<sup>22</sup> Vogt, “Workplace Loneliness,” 24.

<sup>23</sup> Pawar, “Leadership Spiritual Behaviours Toward Subordinates,” 442.

<sup>24</sup> Verbatim respondent 17.

<sup>25</sup> During the writing of this dissertation, I received a telephone call from a colleague and former student who is agonizing over the manner in which his employer recently terminated a fellow employee—in a way that the person’s self-esteem was left in shreds. We cannot run away from these situations. The findings of the survey indicate that dissonance; mild to severe, is a frequent theme. Here is a situation where this individual is completely arrested by what he has witnessed. I learned that Leaders need to correct missteps. As a securities regulator, participating in adjudicative panels, I found, with a reasonably high degree of accuracy, that my colleagues and I could work our way backwards through the financial

Leadership involves saying no, regardless of the cost. However, it does not require belligerence. Jesus says, “Let your word be ‘Yes, Yes’ or ‘No, No.’” (cf. Mt. 5:37). Leadership calls for deep contemplation of potential outcomes of one’s considered actions and words. Prayerful choice of words is paramount. Rowan Williams writes:

We haven’t understood Jesus’ warning that we shall be called to account for every word we waste (Matthew 12:36) – which presumably means every word that does not in some way contribute to the building up of myself and my neighbour as persons maturing in the life of grace.<sup>26</sup>

Regulators speak of the *guiding minds* of an organization. These minds are there to guide. Guiding calls for a discipline, figuratively, of standing a year or more beyond a critical decision before it is made. Yet we see, time after time, the evidence that this really important work has not been done. People stumble from one bad decision to another when foresight is missing.

For the most part there is little expression from the respondents on how to change or improve their environments. There are occasions when concern is expressed by someone further ‘down’ in an organization, but they do not speak up for whatever reason, often fear, or simply the view that no one will listen. Sometimes it is simple disengagement that causes people not to speak up. It can take courage and the inspiration to act. This is also why we should be willing to draw out and embrace contrary perspectives around the table when key decisions are being contemplated. We

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transactions given in evidence in cases of alleged malfeasance, to arrive at the specific moment when the wrong path was taken. Our task then was to determine the cause for the path taken from that point forward to the issue that brought the respondent in front of the tribunal. Had this been a deliberate act? Had it been negligence, or a really bad, unfortunate, error? Why had someone in the organization not played out in their minds the probable outcome from the path that was being chosen? This may be an example of malfeasance through disengagement or ennui.

<sup>26</sup> Williams, *Silence and Honey Cakes*, 76.

must seek out the positive deviants. Bennis writes, “Leaders embrace error; Leaders encourage reflective backtalk; Leaders need people around them who have contrary views—who can tell them the difference between what is expected and what is really going on.”<sup>27</sup> By encouraging dissenting views we can resolve dissonance.

We often describe those that have a laser-like vision on a future unseen by others as brilliant, or visionary. Leonard Doohan describes this as, “seeing beyond the immediate.”<sup>28</sup> This may be a *learned* brilliance through the practice of discernment. The findings of the survey indicate that it is possible that a new epistemological social foundation is emerging. Thus, those for whom faith and spirituality are emerging, the response to the work of the Spirit may bring forward the courage to be brilliant. A respondent writes, “Most people either believe in nothing, or believe in something so rigid and prescriptive that there is no point in discussing it.”<sup>29</sup> A nurturing approach opens the possibility for meaningful dialogue. This also deepens the opportunity for dialogue regarding factors of work that encourage expression of perceptions of meaningfulness. Further, such dialogue amplifies awareness and cognizance of the spiritual orientation of coworkers. A respondent writes, “My faith enables me to see all as equals, full of potential gifts that need to be exercised in order for them to find deeper reward.”<sup>30</sup> Notwithstanding the pressure to normalize with the prevailing ‘worldly’ view, sooner or later, a great number of us seek to answer the questions: How might we know what to do with the days that have been given us? May we find sanctification in our work? In what way will we be held to account for that work? What will be our

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<sup>27</sup> Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader*, 190–1.

<sup>28</sup> Doohan, *Spiritual Leadership*, 85.

<sup>29</sup> Verbatim respondent 24.

<sup>30</sup> Verbatim respondent 6.

legacy?<sup>31</sup> Some find these questions daunting, because deep reflection is required. The findings of the survey indicate that introducing ‘places’ for interfaith and spiritual practices to occur may be useful, together with broad communication of recognition of multiple faith events.

### **Deep Focus on Ethos**

Maintaining a focus on the ethos of the organization in all situations leads to even-handedness and ultimately greater trust. Tracy Wilcox writes:

Within organizations, accounting and financial control systems are seen as the legitimate definers of reality. The logic of accounting can be seen to dominate organizational thinking, and ground much of management action. It is embedded in organizational life to the extent that it is rarely questioned. One of the more significant manifestations of this changing set of values is the growing short-term imperatives faced by many managers. In corporations, this has risen partially in responses to demands from increasingly influential investors, as well as fears of hostile takeovers. For public sector organizations, this short-termism has reflected political considerations and shifting ideologies. Within organizations themselves, new ethical issues have arisen. These include the dilemmas associated with downsizing, executive remuneration, the outsourcing of work, the employment of contractors, [and] sourcing of materials.<sup>32</sup>

Resulting dilemmas have consequences. A respondent writes, “I was given HR responsibilities that afforded me the opportunity to learn and grow. It also mean firing people although it was always difficult. It was done as kindly as possible.”<sup>33</sup> Change is, by design, disruptive, sometimes to the point of fracture. Our personal reputations as leaders will be built, or destroyed, at points of inflection—when we must respond to, and sometimes introduce, disruptive events.<sup>34</sup> Unfortunately, we have, perhaps,

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<sup>31</sup> The concept of legacy, for me, has become an overarching imperative as I age.

<sup>32</sup> Wilcox, “Ethics as Strategic Thinking,” 75–76.

<sup>33</sup> Verbatim respondent 3.

<sup>34</sup> A colleague who had a long career in her chosen vocation, described being let go by her employer. She described the dark day when she was handed an envelope and told that, after some three decades, her services were no longer required. My colleague handled that day with grace and dignity.

witnessed someone who became angry or combative in these moments. Inflection is described as a turning point. Turning points come in many forms—some chosen, some imposed. Turning points can occur in the form of turning back when we realize that we are on the wrong path and need to get back to the place where the decision was made so that we can choose the right path (cf. Jer 6:16).<sup>35</sup> Leadership decisions become clear in solitude. Jesus chose solitude many times.

In leadership, we are frequently called upon to be a change agent. Change can bring violence, either in the form of an inward struggle to cope with change, or sometimes an outward violence that seeks to halt, or reverse the change. The findings of the survey indicate that dissonance, mild to severe, is a frequent theme. These moments can be searing experiences for us. They can also require what is perhaps a key cognitive discipline upon which self-awareness grows. This discipline is reflection and contemplation. Hall writes, “*Contemplation* is variously described as a ‘resting’ in God, or a loving gaze upon him, or a knowing beyond knowing, or a rapt attention to God.”<sup>36</sup> Such contemplative practice may be a path to a deeper understanding of the ethos we are called to. Our language, demeanour, tone and cadence are all outward manifestations of our inner self-regulation and reflection. A respondent states, “I find myself challenged from time to time on specific incidents, and I pray most nights that I am making the right/best decisions.”<sup>37</sup> Spirit-led leaders that navigate through inevitable inflection points by using this mechanism of self-regulation, founded in prayer, are noticed for their caring, moral judgment and stability (cf. Neh 8: 9-12).

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<sup>35</sup> In my experience, these ‘wrong-path’ realizations usually occur around two A.M.

<sup>36</sup> Hall, *Too Deep for Words*, 9.

<sup>37</sup> Verbatim respondent 18.



If leadership is fundamentally about ethos, can we tie our analysis of corporate financial results to ethos? Financial analysts can find trace evidence of concern about ethos in elements of the valuation of corporations. There are many approaches to enterprise valuation, many of them building off the standard discounted cash flow model—in other words, what are the future returns from the enterprise and how should those returns be valued in today’s dollars? This is known in financial terms as calculating ‘Net Present Value’ (NPV). Analysts look at stock price to book ratios, price to earnings ratios, price to sales ratios, price to earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) ratios, *beta*<sup>38</sup> comparisons and price to you-name-it ratios. Studying the difference between the accounting enterprise value of a publicly traded company and its total market capitalization, investors make buy or sell decisions based on a perceived future that is better (or worse) than the present situation of a company. Responsible Investing (RI) adds a dimension to this. RI is a movement that espouses the incorporation of environmental, social and governance factors and embeds these criteria in investment decisions. Thomas Berry writes, “[The] dominant profit motivation of the corporation endeavour [must] be replaced with a dominant concern for the integral life of a community.”<sup>39</sup> Arguably, primary focus on community will bring in its wake reasonable profits.

Could we have a price to ethos ratio? Such analysis would shine a light on the enduring ability of leadership to make the proverbial whole bigger than the sum-of-the-parts. We can find traces of this when the current market price seems to elude all of the tried and true valuation calculations. There is an improvement, or deterioration, in value

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<sup>38</sup> Beta is a measure of a stock’s volatility relative to the market.

<sup>39</sup> Berry, *The Great Work*, 118.

that we cannot fully explain mathematically. How the company conducts itself may provide the answer. Meeks writes, “No other characteristic so clearly marks the separation of the modern economy from the economics of antiquity and the medieval age as the absence of God from the former. It is not only that God is not desired, God is also not needed in the modern market.”<sup>40</sup> As leaders rediscover the importance of faith as a centering of understanding of their calling and, in turn its effect on ethos, a new epistemology becomes apparent. Indeed, Mitroff and Denton assert that “at our current stage of human development, we face a new challenge. We have gone too far in separating the key elements. We need to integrate spirituality into management. No organization can survive for long without spirituality and soul.”<sup>41</sup>

A focus on ethos involves myriad elements of work. Thus leadership involves complexity. Complex challenges require complex thinking. Roger Martin writes:

As comforting as simplification can be, however, it impairs every step of the integrative thinking process. It encourages us to edit out salient features rather than consider the question of salience broadly. Editing, in turn, leads to unsatisfactory resolution of the dilemma that business throws at us . . . Simplification makes us favour linear, unidirectional causal relationships, even if reality is more complex and multidirectional.<sup>42</sup>

Integrative thinking demands attention to the spiritual. The Spirit-led leader has additional help—prayer. Stevens adds, “Pray continuously to be in constant communication with the Guide.”<sup>43</sup> The findings of the survey indicate that among people of professed faith or spirituality there is a sense that their spirituality grounds them and strengthens them, providing them with meaningfulness, vocational fulfillment

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<sup>40</sup> Meeks, *God the Economist*, 47.

<sup>41</sup> Mitroff and Denton, “Study of Spirituality,” para. 10.

<sup>42</sup> Martin, *The Opposable Mind*, 76–77.

<sup>43</sup> Stevens, *Doing God’s Business*, 206.

and joy. This may be a sound response to complexity. A respondent writes, “I pray for the wisdom to make the most of every day.”<sup>44</sup> Another states, “I frequently use meditation, reflection, and prayer as a means to resolve issues in my mind.”<sup>45</sup> Another writes, “I spend time praying for discernment.”<sup>46</sup> Could we introduce a period for contemplation into the workplace routine?

### **Adaptive Capacity**

The relatively new digital environment in which operate has become accelerated in a world struggling with new physical distancing measures required by the Covid 19 pandemic. Bennis states:

Every development you get in the digital world that we are living in can be our enemy or can be our best friend, and leaders have got to understand that it has got to be our best friend . . . One of the things that is most important in effective leaders is their *adaptive capacity*—and the digital environment can enhance adaptive capacity.<sup>47</sup>

Analyzing and responding to complex situations requires robust adaptive capacity.

Adaptive capacity is at the heart of leadership. Bennis writes about adaptive capacity as being perhaps the key competence of leadership. Leaders are called upon to create an adaptive culture. John Kotter suggests that this is critical for organizations on the threshold of rapid change. Kotter writes:

Cultures can facilitate change adaptation if they value performing well for organizational constituencies, if they really support competent leadership and

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<sup>44</sup> Verbatim respondent 9.

<sup>45</sup> Verbatim respondent 14.

<sup>46</sup> Verbatim respondent 18. At a key time in development of a company—a service business—for which I held a leadership role, we chose to introduce an unconditional service guarantee. Simply, we stated that ‘If for any reason you are not satisfied, we will refund our fee.’ We worried that many would take advantage of us: using our services and then simply ask for their money back. Not one client did.

<sup>47</sup> Bennis, “Leadership in a Digital World,” 635.

management, if they encourage teamwork at the top, and if they demand a minimum of layers, bureaucracies and interdependencies.<sup>48</sup>

The thread that weaves this adaptive culture together is leadership that is fully invested in the people in the organization—each one, individually! When each person holds a depth of caring for each other, trust becomes instinctive, communication is pervasive, and the ethos of the organization is unquestioned. Workplace engagement soars. An example is the seeking out and support of *intrapreneurship*.<sup>49</sup>

How can we help our colleagues develop the ability to understand and share the feelings of others?<sup>50</sup> The leader’s foundational job is to ensure safety. Our colleagues have safety-related questions, particularly about the security of their job and about their prospects. They ask, ‘What’s expected of me?’ and ‘How am I doing?’ Also, they frequently want to help, if only we invite them.

### **Mentorship**

Building adaptive capacity, and the feedback loop that supports it, requires self-awareness. A respondent writes, “I pray for the wisdom to make the most of every day.”<sup>51</sup> We constantly witness situations at work where a misinterpretation or misunderstanding escalates into intransigence, even hatred. Jesus teaches us to reflect

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<sup>48</sup> Kotter, *Leading Change*, 179.

<sup>49</sup> Known as the act of behaving like an entrepreneur while inside a company, intrapreneurship can nurture critical elements of change and new approaches.

<sup>50</sup> Several leadership programs incorporate the use of horses. These training programs build self-awareness skills through human-horse interactions. Tom Widdicombe writes: Communication is a remarkably powerful thing: if the horse knows that you know, then you’re on your way. Look at it from the other point of view: if the horse knows that you don’t know, then he [sic] has every right to worry. He [sic] is basically ‘on his own,’ and that is the one place the horse does not want to be. If you can show the horse that you are with him [sic, taking care of him [sic] and you are not going to let him [sic] down, then he [sic] will put his [sic] trust in you.” (Widdicombe, *Be*, 17). Horses live in the moment. They are concerned about safety and leadership. We may not choose to participate in programs involving horses, but we must deepen our sensitivity toward others.

<sup>51</sup> Verbatim respondent 9.

on our own record, to de-escalate the situation where we can seek change, not revenge. Grenz writes, “God is love—the divine essence is the love that binds together the Trinity.”<sup>52</sup>

It is crucial, if we are to seek the presence of the Holy Spirit in our work, that we must love our enemies. We should not respond to aggression with aggression but, rather, forgiveness. We should, simply, put the situation squarely in God’s hands. When we do this, paradoxically, we become genuine, we become someone whom others can put their trust in. We become authentic. At the same time, we find new inner peace. Forgiveness, then, is an indicator of adaptive capacity.

Mentorship is the selfless act of passing along knowledge, which itself is a gift from God, and skill in the service of others. For people of faith, this act, following invitation, is central to all that we do. Mentorship begins with responding to a call to engage. Susan Phillips observe that, “All Christians are called to the ministry of listening.”<sup>53</sup> We cannot listen simply to the words we hear, but the emotions within them. Radical listening frees us from our own agenda, and deepens our ability to respond.

As stated earlier in this dissertation, there have been significant, and in some cases dramatic, reductions in institutionalized mentorship in the workplace. This includes a reduction in formal apprenticeship programs, on-the-job training and development. In their place we are witnessing a demand for ‘just-in-time’ expertise, similar to ‘just-in-time’ material and parts. As stated, a significant reason for this loss in

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<sup>52</sup> Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God*, 69.

<sup>53</sup> Phillips, “Spiritual Direction,” 163.

mentorship has been the widespread reduction in middle-management ranks. Sydney Finkelstein states:

The sad truth is that middle management is on its way to becoming virtually extinct. While there will always be some people supervising the work of other people, changes in technology, business culture and demographics are all conspiring to upend what has long been standard practice in companies. We should no longer expect traditional job ladders for managers to move up the ranks, or even retaining the notion that middle managers are the glue that connects workers and ensures goal alignment up and down the hierarchy.<sup>54</sup>

With the dissolution of middle management comes a dramatic erosion in mentorship. At the centre of mentorship is both skills development and encouragement. Pollard says, “It is not just what we are doing, but what we are *becoming* in the process that gives us our distinct value and is uniquely human.”<sup>55</sup> This calls for a constant search for new methods and structures that promote mentorship.

### **Transformative Leadership**

A vigorous approach to identifying new methods and tools is foundational to transformation. Hope is at the heart of transformation. Bill Cosgrave writes:

[A]s one develops a hopeful outlook and disposition over time one is thereby strengthening the virtue of hope as a vital dimension of one’s moral character . . . Hope provides us with dynamism for action . . . Hope looks to the future, not as the end or a threat to what is, but as an open field of possibilities of human fulfilment and achievement.<sup>56</sup>

Moving from managing to leading implies bringing transformative, hopeful, change. This brings about a complete conversion from one state of practice to another. The word ‘transform’ has several interpretations: change, sometimes dramatic change, in form, function, appearance, and value. Indeed one interpretation of the word transformation

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<sup>54</sup> Finkelstein, “The End,” para.1.

<sup>55</sup> Pollard, *The Soul of the Firm*, [emphasis original] 26.

<sup>56</sup> Cosgrave, “Hope, Human and Christian,” 490.

suggests that the degree of change is close to *miraculous*. Peter Northouse writes, “Transformational Leadership is a process that changes, and transforms people. It is concerned with emotions, values, ethics, standards and long-term goals.”<sup>57</sup>

Bringing about transformative change is not going to happen in a workshop, but in deep, sometimes challenging dialogue. The findings of the survey indicate that it is possible that an epistemological social foundation is emerging to which we must respond. This suggests that in preparing for transformative change, a thorough understanding of value-sets must be explored and understood. For example, the breadth of spiritual perspectives may be considered in this exercise. Thiessen writes, “There are different types of religious nones, from atheists to agnostics, to unchurched believers.”<sup>58</sup> Indeed, essentially all of these perspectives, and more, were expressed by various respondents.

Transformative change may awaken the emotions, values and deeply held morality of a person in such a way that they are moved to a new plane of consciousness and ability in their work. To be a transformational leader is to become completely engrossed in the lives of one’s staff; in their motivations and emotions; in their purpose at work. Thus, leaders are called to provide an environment that is intentional. This requires a deep level of permission and trust. There is an iterative dimension to this. These iterations cannot be condensed or skipped. This requires discipline. We need to know when to leave people alone; to be absent—to let them process and work through lessons on their own. Transformative change simply cannot occur while we are standing there, with someone; in the moment. Transformative change requires us to create a

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<sup>57</sup> Northouse, *Leadership Theory and Practice*, 185.

<sup>58</sup> Thiessen, *Meaning of Sunday*, 95.

movement or flow in a new direction. This is where we move into a discussion that introduces new concepts, and offers alignment with personal goals and values. Then we must leave people alone. Noddings writes, “The receptive mode seems to be an essential component of intellectual work. We do not pass into it under stress . . . Indeed, we must settle ourselves, clear our minds, and reduce the racket around us.”<sup>59</sup>

Whenever we re-engage we should begin by seeking permission to move the dialogue ahead.<sup>60</sup> It will be clear when the transformation has occurred. Teams and leaders will be working at levels that they have not experienced before. Much of the change will have occurred when the leader is not around. Noddings asserts, “The one-caring, in caring, is *present* in her acts of caring. Even in physical absence, acts at a distance bear the signs of presence: engrossment in the other, regard, desire for the other’s well-being.”<sup>61</sup> A respondent writes, “I try to communicate my faith through action and had the opportunity to foster an environment that treated people kindly, fairly and honestly. I also spoke up when people wanted to bend the truth.”<sup>62</sup> Advocating for workers implies that we cannot ignore dissonance among workers. We must identify the source of dissonance, and respond to it.

### **Responding to Dissonance**

The research findings indicate that dissonance—a lack of fulfillment, sometimes mild, sometimes severe, is prevalent among the respondents. This dissonance is generally accompanied by the expression of a lack of control or ability to improve the situation.

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<sup>59</sup> Noddings, *Caring*, 34.

<sup>60</sup> As a colleague once opined, we learn to sail in the winter and we learn to ski in the summer.

<sup>61</sup> Noddings, *Caring*, 19 [emphasis original].

<sup>62</sup> Verbatim respondent 3.



There are infrequent opportunities to discuss workplace challenges in a constructive way with co-workers, supervisors, counsellors or ministers. With the virtual disappearance of middle management, resulting in an erosion of mentorship, this leads to many instances of feeling adrift. A respondent writes:

There is also always the gender question in terms of pay. There is little transparency around pay. But, I am creating something—it is tangible and meaningful, something I can hopefully be proud of. Some co-workers are driven only by money, 'lifestyle,' or power.<sup>63</sup>

Work expectations are received well when they align with expressed values, Timely and regular communication is critical, especially in times of change.

A non-leader respondent writes, “I pray for the wisdom to make the most of every day.”<sup>64</sup> Prayer and meditation are expressed by respondents, both leaders and non-leaders, as means to cope with challenges, yet most organizations eschew the opportunity to offer a place or a means to do this in the workplace. It is leadership that is called upon to engage with such phenomena, and to create workplace environments that respond to them. It is leadership, when Spirit-called and equipped, which can find resolutions to these challenges. Through resolving these challenges leaders and workers will perceive a sense of meaningfulness, a sense of energy, and a sense of well-being. Enterprises will experience a significant increase in productivity and reputation as workers feel uplifted and valued as individuals. Families and communities will flourish.

Volf writes:

The two most potent images of human flourishing in the Western cultural traditions come from the Bible, from the opening chapters of its first book and from the final chapters of its last. For those who embrace them, these images aren't merely dream-clouds, floating around in the sky of religious fancy. They are part of a grand narrative arc starting with the world's creation and ending

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<sup>63</sup> Verbatim respondent 29.

<sup>64</sup> Verbatim respondent 9.

with new heavens and the new earth of which the Hebrew Bible and the Christian Scriptures tell; and both, the grand arc and the visions of flourishing, are rooted in the convictions about the reality of the One who dwells in light.<sup>65</sup>

Throughout the biblical narrative we find individuals, called up at critical moments, often reluctantly at first, to step into leadership (cf. Jonah 1:3). A respondent writes, “I enjoy a sense of fulfillment and vocation.”<sup>66</sup> Leadership is a sacred calling, not a path to self-aggrandizement, power, or status. Spirit-led leaders influence, they do not seek power. Allowing one’s faith to guide us through difficult decisions is valuable.<sup>67</sup> A respondent writes, “I strive to be more like Jesus in the way I work and interact with my colleagues.”<sup>68</sup>

### **The Safest Place in The Organization**

How can we demonstrate that we strive to be more like Jesus? The expression, ‘being called on the carpet’ is a common idiom. Getting summoned to the boss’ office seems seldom to be equated with something good happening. More generally we anticipate a reprimand. Imagine the empowerment that flows from a workforce where literally everyone feels they can walk into their superior’s office, offer an idea, or make a point about something and feel not only truly embraced, but that they will likely see the outcome of their contribution as it becomes a reality. We can prove that our office is the safest place in the organization by showing our own vulnerability. Vulnerability is at the root of authenticity and authenticity is the foundation for leadership. The findings of the survey indicate that the person and model of Jesus is valued by many. Are we safe to be

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<sup>65</sup> Volf, *Flourishing*, x–xi.

<sup>66</sup> Verbatim respondent 25.

<sup>67</sup> I have learned the value of causing a break in dialogue, of following Jesus model of separating oneself from others for prayer and contemplation.

<sup>68</sup> Verbatim respondent 8.

with? Are we fit to be a leader? Will we serve those that seek to serve the organization, and to grow in the process? We are the custodians of the organization's ethics and values. Right and wrong are truly powerful concepts and are borne aloft in the culture that we permit, uphold, and celebrate! An entrepreneur respondent writes, "It can be scary and overwhelming at times. All my efforts and funds go into the business. My workers and family are my peers."<sup>69</sup> Treating coworkers as peers is empowering. Safety and empowerment are the antithesis of mistreatment. Marie Hutchinson et al. assert:

Workplace bullying, mobbing, incivility, and emotional abuse are increasingly recognized as features of the modern workplace . . . Exposure can result in severe psychological trauma, lowered self-esteem, depression, anxiety, and posttraumatic stress disorder . . . Traditional models of power and conflict have theorized that conflict creates a situation where the personal power of one actor over another is sought and increased through bullying behaviours.<sup>70</sup>

Presenting the leader's office as the safest place in the organization creates, in effect, a sanctuary where critical conversations can take place.

A respondent writes, "I believe that good engenders good."<sup>71</sup> Making our environment a safe place demands hospitality. The beginning of commerce in the ancient world provides us with a critical clue for the essence of enduring leadership, which is hospitality. Some prefer opaqueness over transparency. Some find it easy to put the proverbial thumb on the scale, to get a little more than they deserve. So where do we draw the line? It is the moment we sense that we are on the slippery slope toward a quest for power over an obligation to serve. If work is eschatological, then leadership is about legacy. A respondent writes, "My work satisfies my economic needs, and that does lead

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<sup>69</sup> Verbatim respondent 8.

<sup>70</sup> Hutchinson et al., "Bullying as Circuits of Power," 25–26.

<sup>71</sup> Verbatim respondent 24.

to a sense of calling as we are able to contribute money to causes important to us.”<sup>72</sup>

Gary Hamel writes:

Imagine a retailer where frontline employees decide what to stock; where the pressure to perform comes from peers rather than from bosses; where teams, not managers, have veto power over new hires; and where virtually every employee feels like he or she is running a small business. Try to envision a company where everyone knows what everyone else gets paid, and where senior execs limit their pay to 19 times the average wage. Picture, if you can, a company that doesn't think of itself as a company, but as a community of people working to make a difference in the world, where the mission matters as much as the bottom line. Conjure up all this, and you'll have a portrait of Whole Foods market.<sup>73</sup>

This is an impressive vignette which has, at its core, the recognition of good work.

These are acts of hospitality in the sense that people feel included and welcome.

### **Recognizing Good Work**

Fundamental to leadership is the recognition and celebration of good work. Pawar states, “[L]eadership that adopts personal spiritual values and practices in its own conduct can contribute to workplace spiritual facilitation.”<sup>74</sup> Recognition of good work assures a person that they are valued and needed. A respondent writes, “Everyone wants to feel 'needed' at their workplace.”<sup>75</sup> Recognition of good work is caring. Dell reminds us that the Book of Proverbs asserts the slothful/diligent comparison. She writes, “Careful, steady work is better than chasing rainbows, ‘A slothful man [sic] will not catch his [sic] prey, but the diligent man [sic] will get precious wealth’ (Prov 12:27).”<sup>76</sup> Leadership has the means to embed the crafting of tasks within a vocational framework, thus raising

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<sup>72</sup> Verbatim respondent 17.

<sup>73</sup> Hamel, *The Future of Management*, 69.

<sup>74</sup> Pawar, “Workplace Spiritual Facilitation,” 384.

<sup>75</sup> Verbatim respondent 9.

<sup>76</sup> Dell, *Seeking a Life*, 35.

work up to spiritual meaningfulness.<sup>77</sup> Noddings writes, “The cared-for is free to be more fully himself [sic] in the caring relationship.”<sup>78</sup> When people become aware that they are cared for, freedom replaces a sense of being stuck. The person blossoms with confidence and renewed vigour. Jay Lombard writes, “God knits us human beings together in love. It is a memory that goes back to the creation of the universe. And it is in love that we live forever.”<sup>79</sup> Leadership shines when it brings these thoughts—truths, one might argue—to our daily work, in a world where our work may be at risk of being stripped of its greater value to our sense of vocation, and of its divine purpose.

Lombard asserts that our existence is made complete by our deep awareness and knowledge of our purpose. He writes:

True freedom is a key to a seemingly locked door. We are all handed the key and invited to open the door. But it’s our choice whether or not to progress. Once through the doorway, we find on the other side a wide open expanse of possibility. We embrace true freedom, we are free to live the lives we were meant to live. We can live lives of real purpose.<sup>80</sup>

This allows us to make decisions that are *moral in nature*, without contingencies. It is supposed to be this way. From the earliest of the ancient Hebrew texts, the people of Israel were expected to conduct their daily lives in an attitude of obedience to the Law. Leviticus tells us this, as does Deuteronomy. All aspects of life were considered to be integral to a covenantal relationship with God (cf. Deut 6:4–9). Tremper Longman and Raymond Dillard write, “In some respects, Deuteronomy portrays what an ideal Israel

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<sup>77</sup> Some decades ago, I was given a role that was designed as remedial in nature. I spent a few days with a person struggling a little in terms of achieving assigned goals. At the end of a day together, I asked the person, ‘What do you like to do?’ The person replied, ‘Well I like this, and I like that.’ I said, ‘Why don’t you take the next couple of weeks off—I won’t tell anyone—see if you can find work that includes this and that. At the end of the two weeks the person resigned. I got a call to tell me that the person had found a job that included this and that!

<sup>78</sup> Noddings, *Caring*, 73.

<sup>79</sup> Lombard, *The Mind of God*, 179.

<sup>80</sup> Lombard, *The Mind of God*, 113.

would be. It presents an Israel with ‘one God, one people, one land, one sanctuary, and one law.’”<sup>81</sup> A person’s attitude toward their labour in those days was central to a virtuous life. Leadership can recreate this centrality.

### **An Inflection Point**

Research conducted for this dissertation suggests that the workplace is at a significant inflection point as social, technological, economic, and market forces converge to result in significant organizational restructuring. This requires that we are students of organizational theory and are conscious of the human impact of organizational structure in our particular environments. The demands on leaders and workers alike are often overwhelming. Frictional unemployment is dramatic and is often debilitating as those laid off frequently experience an employment hiatus of six to twelve months and often take new work at compensation levels well below their prior experience.<sup>82</sup> The ‘gig’ economy appears to be more debilitating than empowering. Workplaces experience high levels of absenteeism. In addition, substance abuse seems to be increasing.<sup>83</sup>

The way that we treat one person will shape the expectation of others, creating inflection. A respondent writes, “Many events have placed a sense of doubt in my job security; e.g. others not being supported; not being assigned to a position that I felt qualified to do; being assigned a role that suited the company, but which impeded my

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<sup>81</sup> Longman and Dillard, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, 114.

<sup>82</sup> Frictional unemployment is the unemployment in an economy due to people in process moving from one job to another.

<sup>83</sup> Many Canadian provincial governments have sponsored special training for the recognition and amelioration of substance abuse in the workplace. For example, *Health Newfoundland* states that problematic substances include: Cannabis, Alcohol, sleeping medications, sedatives, tranquilizers, solvents, gasoline, numerous opiates and stimulants. Problem gambling is also referenced. See: [https://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/publications/addiction\\_substance\\_abuse\\_workplace\\_toolkit.pdf](https://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/publications/addiction_substance_abuse_workplace_toolkit.pdf).

development.”<sup>84</sup> In a previous work, I have stated that our colleagues at work “have two simple questions to which they deserve answers: ‘What are the standards against which I will be measured?’ and ‘Where do I stand?’”<sup>85</sup> These questions are central to the leadership approach that is presented in this dissertation. People want to understand what is expected of them, and how their results will be measured and rewarded. Thus knowing the answers to these questions lies at the very beginning of flourishing, the definitions of which include: to grow vigorously, to succeed, to thrive, and to prosper. What can we do in terms of influencing organizational structure and leadership that will be catalytic in promoting vitality and flourishing? If we consider that a true sense of vocation is linked to flourishing, what can we do to enhance/equip employees’ identification of their vocation and their progress toward feeling that they are achieving their goals and desires as related to vocation? How might we identify an optimal range of human functioning in the environments within our organizations and then how might we quantify, and measure progress in reaching that optimal range? Beyond fair pay, job security and equitable treatment, what can we build into our leadership activities matrix to promote dignity generativity, growth and resilience? Providing employees with a clear vision and a sense of security in their work seems fundamental to these goals.

A respondent writes:

My chosen industry was not at all ‘secure.’ I believe that it was my calling. I was given human resources responsibilities that afforded me the opportunity to learn and grow. It also meant firing people—although it was always difficult, it was done as kindly as possible.<sup>86</sup>

Another respondent states:

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<sup>84</sup> Verbatim respondent 22.

<sup>85</sup> Bates, *Sales Force Management*, 93.

<sup>86</sup> Verbatim respondent 3.

My work does provide a deep sense of meaningfulness. I find it very satisfying to know I have had a positive impact. I have also worked in the not-for-profit sector. [That said] I will be working out of financial necessity until I am at least seventy. My work is a calling.<sup>87</sup>

Is it possible to create environments that provide for a deep sense of meaningfulness? Is it possible that *agape* and economically satisfying work should be tied together? Veith writes:

Good works, for the most part, are done in vocation. Sin, too, takes place in vocation, in the myriad ways we violate our callings. Approaching moral issues from the perspective of vocation can illuminate *why* certain actions are right or wrong. The vocational angle can also help us understand what our duties are in our various jobs and social roles and, just as important, what the limits are in what we are called to do. It also illuminates what we are *not* called to do.<sup>88</sup>

Ethical, loving treatment of subordinates and co-workers will lead to an ethos upon which human flourishing is sustained.

### **Connecting the Present to the Future**

In organizations, inflection points occur when a sharp bending away from a positive trajectory for the enterprise arises. Overcoming inflection involves creating a contiguous linkage from present to future. When we are about to respond to a difficult issue, it would be best to go and figuratively stand about a half-year down the road from what we are about to say or write, and see if it still feels like the right thing to do or say. In a time when we can reach for Twitter, regardless of our frame of mind and alertness, this decision to pause can be crucial. We are remembered most for how we behave in times of challenge – as an old proverb states, ‘anyone can sail the ship when the sea is calm.’ In a Conference Board of Canada article, I wrote:

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<sup>87</sup> Verbatim respondent 13.

<sup>88</sup> Veith, *God at Work*, 133 [emphasis original].



Do you really understand the financials? Have you scrutinized the balance sheet? If your organization needs cash, what is its borrowing and capital-raising capacity? What are the tough decisions to be made? In what order are they to be made, and who will execute on them? How can you determine if some of the choices being considered could cripple the organization's ability to recover and grow? If personnel changes are to be made, how will you ensure they are carried out without damaging the values of the organization—both for those that will be leaving and for those that will be staying? How can the organization reposition itself for a more stable and successful future? Are you ensuring that your management team has the tools it needs to get the job done? What are the expectations that need to be established for all stakeholders? Is there risk of disconnect between what is being stated and how those in management are actually behaving?<sup>89</sup>

This commentary is focused ultimately on arriving at the correct organization structure for the tasks ahead.

### **Organizational Structure Has an Impact**

How does organizational structure affect meaningfulness and a sense of belonging?

Hatch discusses varying structures. Functional organizations, which are known well, “are so called because they group activities according to a logic of similarity in work functions (the nature of the work people perform).”<sup>90</sup> Departmental structures maximize economies of scale, and focus control at the top of the organization. Hatch points out that this structure also leads “to greater loyalty [among employees] to their function rather than the organization as a whole, leading to the problem of organizational silos.”<sup>91</sup>

Hatch goes on to describe M-form organizations, which “group people, positions, and units in one of three ways: by similarities in products or production processes, customer type, or geographic region of activity.”<sup>92</sup> Hatch writes, “When they are treated as profit

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<sup>89</sup> Bates, “The Corporation with Integrity,” 2.

<sup>90</sup> Hatch and Cunliffe, *Organization Theory*, 273.

<sup>91</sup> Hatch and Cunliffe, *Organization Theory*, 273.

<sup>92</sup> Hatch and Cunliffe, *Organization Theory*, 274.

centres, multi-division designs allow for a type of accountability that is not possible in functional designs.”<sup>93</sup> Further organization designs include matrix organizations, designed to “combine the efficiency of the functional design with the flexibility and responsiveness of the M-form.”<sup>94</sup> Hatch goes on to describe hybrid organization designs. She writes:

A research and development division may use a matrix, while other divisions are organized functionally. Hybrids may occur either because designers deliberately mix forms in an attempt to blend the advantages of two or more different types, or because the organization is changing and is only part way to realizing its new structure.<sup>95</sup>

There are a number of organizational structures in use. These include strategic alliances and joint ventures. For example, the mining industry is an environment where exploration companies form joint venture partnerships with extraction and production companies.<sup>96</sup> Yet another structure involves networks and virtual organizations. Many communications and marketing services businesses, as well as consulting businesses operate this way. A growing number of people work alone, remotely. Erica Lenti writes, “Loneliness is emerging as a public health crisis. When workers feel lonely, it can affect their productivity.”<sup>97</sup> Loneliness can leave one spiritually bereft.

Hatch points out, “Non-hierarchical relationships comprised of human points of contact, called nodes, form a network structure.”<sup>98</sup> Frequently virtual companies are

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<sup>93</sup> Hatch and Cunliffe, *Organization Theory*, 275.

<sup>94</sup> Hatch and Cunliffe, *Organization Theory*, 275.

<sup>95</sup> Hatch and Cunliffe, *Organization Theory*, 275.

<sup>96</sup> Such partnerships can be particularly challenging. Large, structured extraction and production companies are frequently in strategic partnerships with small, entrepreneurial exploration companies. Cultures and operating structures can be completely different.

<sup>97</sup> Lenti, “All the Lonely People,” 18.

<sup>98</sup> Hatch and Cunliffe, *Organization Theory*, 275.

networks whose connections take place primarily or entirely via electronic media, as opposed to face-to-face interactions.<sup>99</sup> Autry writes:

Here's the conundrum: as more and more of our businesses become driven by knowledge, information and service, thus absolutely dependent on people for success, [many will] think of themselves as free agents of their own careers . . . What happens to loyalty in this scenario?<sup>100</sup>

Fractured, networked, and remote organization structures require intentionality of caring. Autry writes:

Loyalty in the community of work has both personal and professional aspects: There must be a balance between a loyalty to one's peers and team members, one's colleagues, one's manager, and one's employees, and the loyalty extended to the community itself, including the organization and its vision.<sup>101</sup>

Hatch writes, "[T]he beliefs of organizational members determine not only how a leader will be regarded, but who will be regarded as a leader."<sup>102</sup> Leaders are embedded.

Leaders are not above. Stanley McChrystal writes, "As an enabler of the system, leaders are nodes in a network, rather than being the top of the apex of [the organization or department]."<sup>103</sup>

### **Situational Leadership**

Leaders are in the community that is the organization. It is leadership more than structure that is key to human flourishing. A clear response to situations is one way to build community. In a stark narrative regarding very different situational responses.

Nicholas Christakis chronicles very different outcomes for survivors of two shipwrecks in 1864. He writes:

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<sup>99</sup> Hatch and Cunliffe, *Organization Theory*, 281.

<sup>100</sup> Autry, *The Servant Leader*, 161.

<sup>101</sup> Autry, *The Servant Leader*, 161.

<sup>102</sup> Hatch and Cunliffe, *Organization Theory*, 293.

<sup>103</sup> McChrystal, *Leaders*, 399.

Two ships, the *Invercauld* and the *Grafton*, were wrecked on opposite sides of Auckland Island, two hundred and ninety miles south of New Zealand . . . Although they struggled for their lives on the same island at the same time, the crews of the *Invercauld* and the *Grafton* were not aware of each other. In the case of the *Invercauld*, nineteen of twenty-five crew members made it ashore, and only three survived. In the case of the *Grafton*, all five people on board made it ashore and all five made it off the island nearly two years later . . . The crew of the *Invercauld* landed on a rocky beach at the foot of tall cliffs . . . They climbed to the top with great difficulty, leaving one weaker man behind to die. [As they] crossed the island . . . members of the party who were too weak or injured to go on were left behind or, in one case, eaten. All of the lower-ranked seamen, except for one, had died. [The small crew of the *Grafton*] were able to salvage more supplies from their wreck. The men stuck together and worked collaboratively. The leadership and communal spirit of the crew of the *Grafton* were also superior. The experienced captain was extraordinarily resourceful.<sup>104</sup>

The apparent difference in the outcomes of these two situations, was leadership— leadership that focussed on community, and on flourishing. Trebesch states:

When we flourish, we experience emotional, psychological, and social well-being. We are full of life—peaceful, cheerful, satisfied and productive. We accept ourselves as we are, knowing our strengths and weaknesses. We engage challenges, enjoy learning and embrace an overall sense of purpose. We expect our days to be useful and hopeful. Flourishing people have strong relationships and connectedness to community, contributing as well as receiving.<sup>105</sup>

To be clear, leading explicitly from faith will bring challenge. Being a solely task-oriented leader, even when acting in a kind manner, will likely bring short-term results.

To be explicit that our leadership approach is grounded in faith may be problematic— there is a cost to discipleship. Linda Brook writes:

Though there may be some, I have personally not heard any leaders address the real cost of going public as Christians at work. In fact, I have not heard it so much as hinted at that there is or *might* be a cost, when there most assuredly is, and most often, it is a high one . . . This is the whole truth. There is a cross and a cost to following Jesus no matter what field one may be in or how much favour one may have. While salvation is free, *following* Jesus is not.<sup>106</sup>

Some are noticing the value of faith-led leadership. Patricia Best writes:

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<sup>104</sup> Christakis, *Blueprint*, 40–42.

<sup>105</sup> Trebesch, *Made to Flourish*, 12.

<sup>106</sup> Brook, *Frontline Christians*, 190 [emphasis original].

You can with impunity on Bay Street give self-serving advice to your clients, or you can be a foul-mouthed, back-stabbing, son of a bitch to your colleagues in the office. But you cannot, in the normal course events, talk about loving your fellow human being, and you cannot talk about the tragedy of layoffs or the responsibility of the CEO to the mail-room clerk. And you certainly cannot wonder aloud about the role of spirituality in the hard-edged canyons of the financial diocese.<sup>107</sup>

It's time we did.<sup>108</sup>

A respondent writes, "Everyone wants to feel needed."<sup>109</sup> Responding to this call in a deep, authentic, way is the grounding of leadership. We should never stop working on relationships. Being brilliant on our own gets the enterprise nowhere. This also requires self-awareness. This is a critical issue in times of conflict. Dennis Sandole et al. write:

Theorists often make a distinction between personal identity, or self-identity, and collective or social identity. Personal identity focuses on an individual's sense of him- or herself as an autonomous, unique person . . . Individuals have a sense of self, an identity or public image they want others to see. It incorporates particular traits, attributes and skills along with self-descriptions and self-evaluations that together constitute a personal identity . . . When the emergent circumstances of a conflict call into question one's sense of self, the conflict itself shifts.<sup>110</sup>

When our identity is fully aligned with our understanding of our goals, our personal identity is aligned with the vision cast by leadership.

Situational leadership implies that situations of injustice must be responded to and remedied immediately. Blakely et al. assert that, "[A]s perceptions of justice increase, so does the level of Organizational Citizenship Behaviours . . . a fair working

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<sup>107</sup> Best, "Awakenings," 69.

<sup>108</sup> Patricia Best was writing about an interview with me. At the time, I was CEO of the Canadian subsidiary of a U.S. company. I did not seek prior approval of the parent company to discuss the faith orientation that underpinned my approach to leadership. Following the publication of Best's article, there were a number of discussions with executives at the parent company. Ultimately, my colleagues at the parent company were comfortable, with the proviso that no proselytizing occurred.

<sup>109</sup> Verbatim respondent 8.

<sup>110</sup> Sandole et al, *Handbook of Conflict Analysis and Resolution*, 20–21.

environment is important for promoting the performance of Organizational Citizenship Behaviours.”<sup>111</sup>

### **Vision**

Among the critical attributes of leadership is vision (cf. Prov 29:18). Vision requires perspective and sometimes elevation. Jesus shows us, many times, to go to higher places. When we allow ourselves to break away from the fray; to go, figuratively, to a higher place, we can contemplate the end-state of what we are in the middle of now. We can look down on our work, not as a work in progress, but as a completed whole. We can look downstream from a decision we are about to take and see the effect of our prospective decision from that place in the distance, and through that figurative lens we can see if it has turned out the way we had hoped it would. We can see prospective paths to a solution that are not necessarily immediately visible from ground level. In a role where the work is never really done, perspective is a key leadership trait. People know when there is no vision. Following vision, *leaders should* consult, and then act. They must identify, and present the path forward. A respondent writes, “I feel secure for now. [That said] as I walked into the fog and did all I could – God met me and journeyed with me.”<sup>112</sup>

This conscious separation of oneself from the moment-to-moment demands of our work is not a luxury, but an absolute necessity. In fact we owe it to our organizations and stakeholders to do it. This may be one of the most critical changes in behaviour when moving into leadership: letting go of those activities which are no

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<sup>111</sup> Blakely et al., “The Moderating Effects of Equity Sensitivity,” 268.

<sup>112</sup> Verbatim respondent 7.

longer our job, and focussing on the bigger picture. The disciples offered a clear example when they immediately let go of their existing jobs to follow Jesus' call: in effect an eschatological call to a new destiny.

Jesus found solitude, but also community. The Christian life is lived in quiet solitude *and* in community. Leadership may be learned in solitude, but it is practised and honed in serving community. Indeed there can be no proportionality to our offer of help to others. This is serious business. Mentoring cannot be done from a safe distance.

Pollard amplifies the need for this dialogue at work. He writes:

In all of this uncertainty and change there is a constant – people:

- People who are looking for a mission and purpose in their work.
- People who are seeking to understand the why, not simply the how to of their job.
- People who have a growing appetite for more participation and ownership in results.
- People who are increasingly looking to the work environment for security and, in some cases, relief from the confusion in their personal lives.
- People who are creative, productive, and want to contribute.
- People who have been created in God's image with dignity and worth.<sup>113</sup>

A respondent writes, "I think my peers and co-workers want that deep sense of meaningfulness but I'm not sure that everyone knows how to get that."<sup>114</sup> Noddings writes, "[I]f we commit ourselves to receptivity, natural caring occurs more frequently, and conflicts may thereby be reduced."<sup>115</sup> Receptivity, openness and willingness to accept new ideas, on the part of the leader, engenders receptivity in all. This is a Spirit-led ethos. Leaders are custodians of an organization's ethos. This is central to the notion of shepherding.

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<sup>113</sup> Pollard, *The Soul of the Firm*, 128–29.

<sup>114</sup> Verbatim respondent 2.

<sup>115</sup> Noddings, *Caring*, 104.

When our colleagues, employees, stakeholders and customers know exactly what we stand for, the value of our ethos in the market-place rises. Our *price-to-ethos ratio* improves! Our workplace will be sought out by those wishing to find work where vocation might be fulfilled. It will be a place where people flourish.

The paradigm ‘knowing, being and doing’<sup>116</sup> is valuable to the role of leadership. It is *being* that may be most critical to employee engagement. This is easily seen in the ethos of a company when the founder’s name hangs above the door. The leader’s *presence* imbues every decision in the organization. A respondent writes, “There were times when the sense of being tested really could be borne through a sense of faith.”<sup>117</sup> readiness to confront situations that are potentially destructive of the need for hope is key. This calls for a well-articulated and often repeated statement of vision for the organization. Strong vision reignites hope.

The centrality of financial stewardship to the role of leadership requires that this area of responsibility should be contemplated through the lens of ethics. This has broad interpretations—including disposition, character, and beliefs. Nowhere is reflection on this word ethos more important than in our own journey into leadership.<sup>118</sup> Ethos establishes purpose. Purpose dictates our approach to stewardship.

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<sup>116</sup> The McMaster Divinity College paradigm is ‘Knowing, Being and Doing.’

<sup>117</sup> Verbatim respondent 14.

<sup>118</sup> There have now been some four experiences in my career where I have witnessed the phenomenon of the collective output of a group of co-workers has far exceeded the combined abilities and skills of those co-workers, and my own abilities as their leader. Something happens. There is a personal and group flourishing that is borne by the co-operative effort of all of us. It is ignited by trust and a deeply shared ethos. In such environments effort seems effort-less.



## Purpose

In a sense, we can see Spirit-led leadership as a form of outrage. This results in a welling up of indignation regarding the situation that exists before us. The Spirit-led leader determines the urgent need for things to be done differently. Purpose, and finding purpose in our work is a fundamental reason for this dissertation. R. Latta writes, “[A] purpose is a possible course of action, conceived and adopted for execution, but not yet executed . . . Activity and purpose are each teleological: every activity and every purpose is a tendency to an end.”<sup>119</sup> A respondent writes, “I actually need to feel a deep sense of purpose.”<sup>120</sup> Gary Burnison writes:

Large or small, Fortune 500 or community group, every great organization is established for a reason that that goes beyond profit. Leadership begins with that purpose—the ‘why’ of the organization. Certainly your people are working for their own self-interest; that’s why you pay them . . . People long for meaning in their lives, and so must the organization. Understanding the *why* behind what we’re doing lets us connect our individual actions to a larger, deeper, purpose.<sup>121</sup>

While Burnison does not speak of purpose in spiritual terms, this dissertation presents service to, and alignment with God’s Kingdom as that larger, deeper purpose. We might contemplate God’s Kingdom as a holy nation: a place that has been cleansed through Christ. Thus leadership is presented as a divine calling. Leadership is divinely inspired. This is a calling not to the deserving—or the demanding. It is a calling to the ready, as it was for Isaiah (cf. Isa 6:8). Sometimes the reward for leadership is hard to perceive. Moses was called to lead his nation to the Promised Land. He personally did not enter in. “The Lord said to him, This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, ‘I will give it your descendants;’ I have let you see it with your eyes, but

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<sup>119</sup> Latta, “Purpose,” 17–20.

<sup>120</sup> Verbatim respondent 2.

<sup>121</sup> Burnison, *Lead*, 29 [emphasis original].

you shall not cross over there (cf. Deut 34:4).” Leadership is about legacy rather than reward. Leadership is not a path to self-aggrandizement, but rather it is a path to an obligation of service to others.<sup>122</sup>

A respondent writes, “I try to communicate my faith through action and had the opportunity to foster an environment that treated people kindly, fairly and honestly. I also spoke up when people wanted to bend the truth. God gave me strength.<sup>123</sup> This testimony is contrary to so many accounts of what makes for strong leadership. For example, Lane Greene writes:

We live in a culture that promotes democratic values of being fair to one and all . . . The problem for us is that we are trained and prepared for peace, and we are not at all prepared for what confronts in the real world—war. The world has become increasingly competitive and nasty. In politics, business, even the arts, we face opponents who will do almost anything to gain an edge.<sup>124</sup>

There is a dimension of leadership that is beginning to be articulated in schools of business. It is about weaving our deepest spiritual values as human beings formed in the image of God into the all-engaging work of leadership. Leadership must involve creating an ethos worthy of those who seek purpose and meaningfulness in work. It is about responding to the call to leadership for those who seek a productive life. As Dell describes, “the desire to do something fulfilling with one’s life.”<sup>125</sup> Parkin discusses the difference between being a leader and leadership. She states:

A leader is a post-holder and may be elected, chosen, or appointed to lead something— an army, an organization, a project team. The post-holder is viewed as the source of leadership. The holder [i.e. manager] may or may not be good at leadership. Leadership may be exercised by anyone, from anywhere in an

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<sup>122</sup> A second year undergraduate student once told that me he was heading for a career in the military, and could not wait to receive a role as a commissioned officer. I asked him why. He told me that he could not wait to have people under him.

<sup>123</sup> Verbatim respondent 3.

<sup>124</sup> Greene, *The 33 Strategies*, xv.

<sup>125</sup> Dell, *Seeking a Life*, 34.

organization or group. Even when an appointed leader exists, others may exercise leadership.<sup>126</sup>

To add the Christian perspective to this, Stevens writes, “Business itself is an opportunity for the business person to function in a redemptive manner.”<sup>127</sup>

Training programs have little value if they do not follow an ethos of flourishing. Bartleby states, “American companies spent U.S. \$91bn on training [in 2017] almost a third as much again as they did in 2016.”<sup>128</sup> We may be overlooking a critical issue. There is a universal and deep thirst for meaningfulness and purpose, as expressed through our work. However, as James Burns writes, “We have long known that persons are complex bundles of motivations.”<sup>129</sup> Generally, although not always, among the respondents, this thirst for meaningfulness and purpose clearly is linked to the respondents’ spiritual orientation. It is also linked to a desire for an ethical, caring, and constructive environment.

It is fundamental that leaders know the life stories and aspirations of those they work with. True satisfaction is expressed when people feel they are doing the work they feel called to, and when they understand that the work they are doing is their calling. This is true among those respondents who express faith and those who do not. This requires the creation and preservation of a workplace that includes regular, trusting, and engaging conversations around work and progress that is focussed deeply on the personhood of the worker.

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<sup>126</sup> Parkin, *The Positive Deviant*, 94.

<sup>127</sup> Stevens, *Doing God’s Business*, 26.

<sup>128</sup> Bartleby, “Time to Get in Training,” 49.

<sup>129</sup> Burns, *Leadership*, 457.

Work environments and structures, the nature of work, the ways in which work is woven into our daily lives and values, are changing, sometimes dramatically.

Vocation, economic necessities, family, all require compromise. These compromises should be understood well and embedded in our leadership imperatives. A respondent writes, “I used to wear rose-coloured glasses and then get crushed when people weren't as justice minded or compassionate as I was.

We are all broken.”<sup>130</sup> Discernment is called for.<sup>131</sup> Elizabeth Liebert writes:

Discernment, the Christian spiritual practice of seeking and responding to God's call in the midst of all the forces, options, and decisions that mark our lives, may very well be the most important practice for dealing with the complexity of our contemporary lives.<sup>132</sup>

Barton speaks of discernment as “the capacity to recognize and respond to the presence and the activity of God – both in the ordinary moments and the larger decisions of our lives.”<sup>133</sup>

### **Symmetry of Information**

God is very clear with us when we are ready to listen. Assurance of symmetry of information is a critical leadership trait. Simply put, don't hide the ball. Those of us who know cannot and must not take advantage of those who do not know. In the investment industry this known is as a lack of symmetry, wherein those who have less financial knowledge than experts are at risk of being taken advantage of. Experts must ask

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<sup>130</sup> Verbatim respondent 2.

<sup>131</sup> At one point, I had a leadership role where the majority of the team were women. I used to call team meetings at the end of the workday, sometimes slipping into after-hours. Several of the women explained to me that this caused great tension, because they had children in day-care, and going overtime in daycare caused a greatly increased expense. This was a critical lesson.

<sup>132</sup> Liebert, *The Soul of Discernment*, 19.

<sup>133</sup> Barton, *Pursuing God's Will Together*, 10.

themselves, ‘if the other party reasonably knows everything that I know, would they still make the deal?’

Generosity is a critical leadership trait. Jesus offers, “From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required (Luke 12: 48).” This a call to fiduciary stewardship. To expand on this, we should take a legacy view on all the gifts that we have received. These gifts are not consumables that we can simply use up for ourselves, but rather are given to us to enrich the world around us. Russell Shorto writes:

It was largely the broader workplace where the faith dialogue occurred . . . [T]he Word spread 20 centuries ago. And as it did, it transmitted itself less in houses of worship than in the tents of carpet sellers, in the wine shops and bakeries and maybe most of all at the tables found in every market town where stacks of coins signaled the indispensable presence of the moneylender. The market was the central place of human interaction. It was where change happened, where ideas lighted from one mind to the next. It is up to us to decide whether our activities at work lead others toward faith, or away from it. One way or the other this will be our legacy.<sup>134</sup>

Acting our faith will encourage others to ask what drives us: opening a space for a Spirit-led conversation.

### **Corrective Leadership**

Leaders occasional must confront corruption. Grant Wahlstrom and Anita Chowdury write:

[T]he forensic audit team at Midnight Sun Inc. (MSI), sat with Justin Planter, a regional sales manager at the solar power company, as he rolled his eyes. MSI’s procurement department forwarded Planter’s travel and expense (T&E) reports to Cathy Francis, the human resource manager, after and employee noted that spending was not consistent with the company’s T&E policy. . . .During the interview, Planter admitted to purchasing a personal cell phone using his company credit card. In addition, he frequently used the credit card for alleged business meetings in establishments that bordered on adult entertainment.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Shorto, “Faith at Work,” para. 4.

<sup>135</sup> Wahlstrom and Chowdury, “The Double Dipper,” 23.

Sadly, such issues are not uncommon, and they must be addressed swiftly. As with confronting corruption, leadership involves confronting workplace aggression. A respondent writes, “Two males in the same job before me [were] paid more.”<sup>136</sup> How has this phenomenon become acceptable? Gender income inequality is workplace aggression. Another respondent writes, “[I feel] that I have been taken advantage of.”<sup>137</sup> This, too, is workplace aggression. In 1986, three short decades ago, Hall wrote:

Obviously, determining comparable worth [of a woman in the workplace] is a *formidable task*, because myriad factors have to be considered . . . The opposition to comparable worth will remain strong, however, for economic, political and social reasons.<sup>138</sup>

Time’s up. Leadership response is urgent.

As a leader with, or without, direct profit and loss accountability, one’s task is to act strategically and tactically to increase profitability while enhancing customer experience. In a market economy where our business win/loss ratio is a moment-to-moment measurement, an ethos that extends equally to customer experience as well as profitability is critical.

### **Leading From Beside**

The simplest and most effective correction occurs on the job and in the moment. This is curbside leadership—the essence of the ‘master-apprentice’ relationship. Leadership is about focussing on those who might work beside us. A leader’s task is to bring others to equivalent, even superior knowledge and ability.

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<sup>136</sup> Verbatim respondent 1.

<sup>137</sup> Verbatim respondent 22.

<sup>138</sup> Hall, *Dimensions of Work*, 219 [emphasis added].

There is an optimal level of performance to be aspired to in every business endeavour. This is where the enterprise achieves perfect equilibrium between client satisfaction, employee meaningfulness, and an appropriate profit margin. Many service providers are skewed in one direction or another; giving up client satisfaction for the sake of profitability, or profitability for the sake of the client experience. Often, employee purpose and meaningfulness may be forgotten altogether. Leadership should keep all these priorities in careful balance. This is a product of leading from beside, gained through dialogue. When we lead from alongside, through conversation we become aware of the inequities that are inhibiting true flourishing. This calls for us to move decisively to remove inequities in the workplace. As observed, the gender salary gap is a stark example. Deborah Gin and Chris Meinzer write:

In a recent survey of female constituents at *Association of Theological Schools* (ATS), we included a question of whether participants thought they were paid less than men at the same rank/level in their school. Of the 520 women currently serving in ATS schools, 40 percent said yes, 30 percent said no, and another 30 percent said they didn't know.<sup>139</sup>

While it appears that there has been improvement in recent years, gender inequity is still present, and it is discriminatory. This can be resolved with one single decision. In an interview, Karen Christensen adds depth to this issue. She states:

In any organization—whether it is public, private, or not-for-profit—internal processes create power dynamics, and those dynamics foster cultures where gender-based discrimination, racial discrimination, and discrimination towards other vulnerable populations proliferate. Organizational practices—many of which have become taken-for-granted—perpetuate inequality by privileging some groups over others in hiring, promotion, reward and other decisions.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Gin and Meinzer, “What about the Salary Gap,” 12.

<sup>140</sup> Christensen, “Tackling Inequality,” 123.

Trust grows out of deep engagement with colleagues.<sup>141</sup> Our task is to affirm and to encourage at the same time that we correct. The findings of the survey indicate that acting our faith—being guided by our faith, may be the most important way to bring faith into our workplaces.

### **Punctuality: The Simplest Leadership Example**

Paul’s letter to the Phillippians includes the words, “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves (cf. Phil 2: 3).” The most fundamental form of correction is personal example. A respondent writes, “I am here in this lifetime to be of service to others.”<sup>142</sup> Jesus said, “We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work (John 9:4).” Here is perhaps the simplest leadership service lesson of all: *time management*. Leaders are frequently missing the point about simple punctuality, and this is causing the unnecessary wasting of resources. It is giving a very unfortunate message to peers and subordinates in the enterprise. When someone shows up late occasionally, there are often good reasons, and we should acknowledge that. However, when someone shows up late persistently, they are making a choice to be late. When that person is the senior member of the group, or worse, the entire enterprise, the message they are giving is that they are quite comfortable with squandering the organization’s resources. They are also confirming their view that their own agendas rank ahead of those who are frustrated and

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<sup>141</sup> When I occupied the Dean’s office in a business school, a second-year commerce student knocked on my door. Haltingly, she told me that she had cheated on an exam. I asked her what she was going to do about it. She knew that she had to confess. We talked for a while, and she knew that there would be a penalty. Her transgression cost her a lost term. For a while I wondered if this might be the last time I encountered her. It was not. She returned, completed her studies, and graduated with distinction. Somewhere deep in her hope and self-respect welled up.

<sup>142</sup> Verbatim respondent 28.



waiting for them to show up! Either way it is a very short-sighted discipline and a bad message. Is there a more simple way to set the tone for collegiality and the importance of the stewardship of resources than by being on time? More than this, add up the aggregate time lost by people waiting on a late leader. Multiply that through their compensation rates, and then multiply that through the number of events where this is allowed to happen. The net loss goes straight to the bottom line. Above all this is one key word: respect. There is an expression, “they do not care what you know until they know that you care.’ All we have to do is show up—on time.

### **Vulnerability**

Leadership involves resolving the convoluted, the complex, the tangled and the torturous conundrums of the workplace. A respondent writes, “I am wrestling with how [we] should approach gender identity and sexuality issues – this is not a safe discussion.” David McLean writes:

Empirically, I believe the relational aspects of leaders and their followers are key . . . Specifically, relational agility, or the ability to establish and nurture deep inter-connectedness, respect and trust with others in the organization is foundational to organizational resiliency . . . I am defining organizational resiliency as the capacity of the organization to successfully navigate change while delivering positive results.<sup>143</sup>

Establishing deep connectedness is particularly challenging when spans of control are broad and organizational sections and departments are very large. Hamel writes:

In many companies, the major staff groups, such as HR, finance, and planning, employ hundreds, if not thousands, of people. Yet how many of these folks feel personally responsible for helping their company build a bona fide ‘management advantage? In my experience, most are focussed on compliance and efficiency issues.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> McLean, “Relational Agility,” 4.

<sup>144</sup> Hamel, *The Future of Management*, 246–247.

Leadership is tied to connection. Connection is tied to authenticity. Authenticity is tied to vulnerability. Vulnerability is an integral element of leadership and foundational to integrity and humility. Robert Clinton writes:

At the heart of any assessment of biblical qualifications for leadership lies the concept of integrity—that uncompromising adherence to a code of moral, artistic, or other values that reveals itself in sincerity, honesty, and candour, and avoids deception or artificiality. The God-given capacity to lead has two parts: giftedness and character. Integrity is the heart of character.<sup>145</sup>

Given the power that they hold over such critical elements as the allocation of scarce resources, workforce composition, compensation and benefits, leaders must have, and act with, integrity. A stark example of this is the decision to discriminate. This becomes apparent in decisions to hire majority workers over minority workers, male over female.

Describing integrity as a primary virtue, Walter Fluker writes:

Integrity informs the leader’s actions and practices . . . It is the practice of speaking and living straight from the heart without neglecting the rational processes of the mind . . . At a deeper level, the leader must examine the motivational content of his or her behaviours as they relate to integrity. While integrity has to do with wholeness, harmony, and integration at the personal level, it is also the product of critical self-examination.<sup>146</sup>

Intense, and frequent self-examination is core to growing in leadership. An example is the issue of reflection on the power imbalance that exists in the workplace. This requires virtually constant self-examination and reflection on the way authority is exercised and the resulting impact on morale and self-esteem in the workplace. Such reflection enables change. James Autry confirms, “If you change yourself, you’ve already changed the workplace environment.”<sup>147</sup> Accepting and allowing others to see our own vulnerability gives rebirth to humility; in turn bringing us closer to Christ. In the long run this

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<sup>145</sup> Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, 50.

<sup>146</sup> Fluker, *Ethical Leadership*, 66–67 [emphasis original].

<sup>147</sup> Autry, *Servant Leadership*, 50.

triumphs over hubris. However, as Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic writes, “men [sic] are rarely rewarded for behaving more humbly, and we have far too much tolerance for male leaders who behave like narcissists.”<sup>148</sup> In their discussion of the story of Job, Bartholomew and O’Dowd assert, “Wisdom grows only with humility before the Lord.”<sup>149</sup> This is a challenging assertion in a workplace culture that, literally, promotes confidence. Chamorro-Premuzic discusses the pitfall of “confidence disguised as competence.”<sup>150</sup> Chamorro-Premuzic writes regarding his subject, Ryan:

Ryan’s self-regard is apparent not only during job interviews, but also in internal team assignments, client presentations and networking events. Ryan speaks more, and louder, and he is much more likely to interrupt other people . . . He’s less likely to qualify his statements with caveats and more likely to speak in bold strokes—something his boss sees as ‘having vision.’<sup>151</sup>

By contrast, there is a critical and seemingly, sometimes, unattainable strength that is required of leaders—the strength of decision-making intertwined with deep empathy. Richard Chewning et al. write “Practicing corporate shalom by ensuring that relationships, profits, products and ethics correspond with God’s intention for humanity.”<sup>152</sup> Kindness does not mean softness; indeed servant leadership is a challenging calling. Northouse writes, “Servant Leadership is an approach focussing on leadership from the point of view of the leader and his or her behaviours. Servant leadership emphasizes that leaders be attentive to the concerns of their followers, empathize with them and nurture them.”<sup>153</sup> Servant leadership may ensure that leaders are more open to negative feedback. Chamorro-Premuzic writes, “One reason

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<sup>148</sup> Chamorro-Premuzic, *Why Do So Many*, 50.

<sup>149</sup> Bartholomew and O’Dowd, *Old Testament*, 185.

<sup>150</sup> Chamorro-Premuzic, *Why Do So Many*, 17.

<sup>151</sup> Chamorro-Premuzic, *Why Do So Many*, 17–18.

<sup>152</sup> Chewning et al., *Business*, 193.

<sup>153</sup> Northouse, *Leadership Theory and Practice*, 219.

overconfident leaders are more prone to reckless decisions is that they are immune to negative feedback.”<sup>154</sup>

### **Actions Will be Imitated**

For better or worse, leaders will be emulated. The findings of the survey indicate that acting our faith and being guided by our faith, may be the most important way to bring faith into our workplaces. It is remarkably powerful simply to be the kind of colleague that one desires everyone else in the organization to be. They will watch you intently. They will listen to your words, your tone, and your responses to questions. They will watch your body language, even without realizing it. This enables you to carry your organization’s lexicon to every person in the organization, and this will translate into the way folks treat one another and how they respond to customers as well. Such conversations also enable you to recognize and respond more immediately to instances of ineffectiveness, or gaps in knowledge and approach. This gives rise to the opportunity to be a curbside coach—giving meaningful guidance right in the thick of day-to-day activity.

Recognizing the person is a trait of strong leadership. A Deputy Head Master of a School in the UK, together with a colleague, would stand outside the school entrance in the morning and greet everyone as they entered. Often a conversation would ensue. People grow not only in capability, but in a deep sense of purpose in their work. The findings of the survey indicate that the person and model of Jesus is valued by many of

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<sup>154</sup> Chamorro-Premuzic, *Why Do So Many*, 35.

the respondents to the research questionnaire. This vignette also emphasizes the need for presence.

### **Acting Our Faith Grounds Others**

The findings of the survey indicate that among people of professed faith or spirituality there is a sense that their spirituality grounds them and strengthens them; providing them with meaningfulness, vocational fulfillment and joy. Some simply left for new environments over changing their existing environment. We can retain valued employees by paying greater attention to our values, and finding a forum in which to discuss them. By example, a respondent writes, “I feel trusted.”<sup>155</sup>

Short term performance can be forced. Long-term performance is tied, inextricably, to ethics and culture. The values that leaders model are the values that are embraced. If values are not aligned, it is time to think about moving on. People listen to what we say in the boardroom or the classroom, and then they watch how we behave in the hallways and at the curbside.<sup>156</sup> If our behaviour is inconsistent with our statements, others are confused, or they write the relationship off completely. In particular, they are watching us intently at inflection points. This becomes intense in times of error and of challenge. Do we obfuscate when challenged with an issue or do we address the issue plainly and openly? If there is compensation to be made for an error, do we deal with it forthrightly or do we try to negotiate the least we can get away with? The bottom line is that opacity might work for a while, but generally not for long. The findings of the

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<sup>155</sup> Verbatim respondent 9.

<sup>156</sup> I use the metaphor of the curb side to suggest the notion of leadership from alongside a person on the job, in the moment.

survey indicate that among people who expressed meaningfulness, vocational fulfillment and joy, there was also expression of a degree of fatigue and powerlessness. The root of this is inconsistency of leadership direction. Also evident was the resignation that finding greater purpose required economic compromise. This moment of resignation represents a significant inflection point, becoming debilitating to the point where one simply goes through the motions of work.

### **Work Is Sacramental**

*Leaders need counsel.* As suggested, the fog of current circumstances can be cut through only if we can stand in the future and describe that future in a level of detail that is as specific as our organization's current circumstances. Sometimes the clarity we need can only be achieved by bringing trusted and impartial advisors into the dialogue.

While this is a critical discipline when contemplating strategic decisions, it also has important value in everyday business. Dealing decisively and transparently with missteps can be costly, but never as costly as the impending financial or reputational hit that lurks when the first error is not dealt with head-on. Don Tapscott and David Ticoll write, "Leaders see transparency as a threat or an opportunity."<sup>157</sup> Work is sacramental. We must treat work with reverence. The Psalmist writes, "He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for man to cultivate—bringing forth food from the earth: wine that gladdens the heart of man, oil to make his face shine, and bread that sustains his heart (Ps 104:14–15)." In a fundamental sense these gifts are sacraments from God—they

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<sup>157</sup> Tapscott and Ticoll, *The Naked Corporation*, 3.

bring together his gifts of natural resources to us, and his gifts of `skills within us that we might use to put such gifts to our use. Thus, we arrive at work as sacrament.

The Latin *sacramentum* was used to describe a thing, sometimes money, pledged as a down-payment or a non-refundable bond. In this sense, some turn to the book of Acts for evidence of the sacred nature of this down-payment. We read, “Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God that he obtained with the blood of his own Son (Acts 20:28).” With this passage in mind, we should think of our life’s work as sacrament—as our down-payment on our participation in God’s kingdom. We may be happy in the knowledge that the Holy Spirit will equip us—authorize us—to carry out our work.

As Spirit-filled people, we are carrying out our purpose in our efforts to assure shelter, sustenance and self-actualization. Such work is sacramental and will endure through the ages and beyond, into the new kingdom. The word legacy has, as its root, the Latin *legatus*, the same root as the words legate and delegate. In effect, through our legacy we are sending the product of our labour on to the future: a future that is beyond our earthly lives. As good leaders we delegate to and equip those with whom we work alongside.

### **Prayer Invokes Legacy**

Prayer is a critical practice for sustaining self-awareness. In private prayer, as Williams writes, “[We] might say that we are being encouraged to flee from ‘projection’ – from

other people's projections onto us, ours onto them, our own inflated expectations of ourselves."<sup>158</sup>

In addition to having our mission in front of us every day, so must our perspective on legacy. Leading from faith is eschatological. We must adapt constantly, as the Spirit calls us. The workplace has changed since yesterday. As leaders, we must be *all* in. Leadership is *never* part-time. McChrystal writes, "Leadership is far more difficult than we realize. This calls for us to be clear-eyed to the burden we have inherited. Leadership is not glamorous or straightforward. It is painful and perplexing, even at its best."<sup>159</sup> Leadership without counsel will ultimately fail. Jesus says:

You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven (cf. Mt. 5:14-16).

When we are given the gift of leadership, we are *seen* by God. We become an 'I.' Gibbs speaks of:

[An] ethics of responsibility, arising out of the need not merely to speak and act responsively, but more out of the need to think: to give an account to others of why we should respond for other people . . . Responsiveness is the fulfillment of a responsibility, but my bearing of the responsibility is independent of whether I act ethically or not.<sup>160</sup>

This is the leadership task that we are called to. We are bound to an ethical exigency.

We cannot simply respond to situations. We must respond ethically. Thus Gibbs states,

"Responsibility in this ethics is asymmetric: I am responsible for others in a way that they are not responsible for me."<sup>161</sup> Sometimes there is a price to pay.

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<sup>158</sup> Williams, *Silence and Honey Cakes*, 63.

<sup>159</sup> McChrystal, *Leaders*, 399.

<sup>160</sup> Gibbs, *Why Ethics*, 3.

<sup>161</sup> Gibbs, *Why Ethics*, 3.



We should pray that our calling to leadership is sure. A respondent writes, “I pray most nights that I am making the right/best decisions.”<sup>162</sup> This *is* the response to the call of leadership. Leadership is about the future. It is about righting things that are not working. That is why leadership is hard.

Leadership requires endurance and forbearance. Leaders are steady and diligent. Leadership is transformational, not transactional. Richard Cassidy reminds us of Paul’s unfolding progress towards his testimony before the Roman Empire’s highest official. He writes:

Is it true that Luke fails to show Paul engaging in any particularly significant endeavour at the ending of Acts? It is important to observe that the encounters which Paul has previously had with various provincial officials effectively prepare the way for such a ‘summit’ encounter with Caesar. Luke has portrayed Paul receiving divine visions guiding him to judgement and testimony before the emperor (cf. Acts 23:11 and 27:24). The perspective afforded by the allegiance-witness theory is crucial. What emerges when Acts and its conclusion are viewed from this perspective is: (1) that Luke’s ending shows Paul’s faithful testimony before Caesar to be complete *in principle*, and (2) that Luke’s ending indicates that Paul’s ‘ordinary’ ministry of behalf of Jesus continues for the immediate future.<sup>163</sup>

Thus we learn that leadership, divinely-inspired, unfolds at a speed that God chooses. We do not, necessarily, get the entire blueprint in one instant. We must walk the path laid before us, hopefully bolstered as we require it. It is a marathon, not a sprint.

Finally, rest is required. Barton writes:

In solitude we learn to wait on God for our own life so that when leadership brings us to the place where the *only option* for us is to wait on God, we believe it all the way down to the bottom of our being. Because we have met God in the waiting place (rather than running away or giving in to panic or deceiving ourselves into thinking things are better than they are), we are able to stand firm and believe God in a way that makes it possible for others to follow suit.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Verbatim respondent 18.

<sup>163</sup> Cassidy, *Society and Politics*, 168.

<sup>164</sup> Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 98.

We should build into our routine sufficient time for rest, prayer, contemplation, and renewal.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has asserted that leadership must focus on the ethos of the organization just as structure is given to the material imperatives that guide organizational composition. This results in a leadership *gestalt* that combines human flourishing with output-oriented requirements. Neither is left behind. In fact both are enhanced.

To achieve this, multiple practices of leadership are recast and embedded in spiritual discernment, thus assuring that all leadership practices are moral in nature.

Deep focus is given to the individual person in a given situation. Leadership is considered to be co-related to human flourishing. Specific leadership activities are offered as imperative when those activities are conceived as equal in importance to flourishing in terms of organizational results.

Love is presented as the foundation to leadership, leading to moral choices that are automatically in concert with the *agape* imperative. Spirit-led leadership is comprehensive; it cannot be compartmentalized. This leads to adaptive capacity that facilitates situational response without erosion or loss of a divine-human endeavour that is constantly adapting and transforming as legacy to God's unfolding kingdom.

## CHAPTER 5: WORKPLACE MINISTRY

While chapter four had as its focus Spirit-led leadership, this chapter turns to ministry to the workplace, and in particular, to leaders. Veith offers us this, “The doctrine of vocation offers a theological way of thinking about work.”<sup>1</sup> The task of those in ministry who are interested in the workplace, and to leadership in particular, is to seek opportunities to open the conversation about vocation as a Spirit-inspired calling. This chapter begins with the apparent challenge of encountering those in our communities who work, and then to open a conversation about faith and work. As discussed, it is argued that leadership is a form of shepherding, in the fullest biblical sense of the term. This chapter seeks to offer methods both to prepare for such encounters, as well as means to create opportunities for them, all of this in the context of the postmodern world of work.

Of the respondents, five discuss some level of discussion with a minister or counsellor. One discusses attending a teaching series. One discusses annual visits from church elders. Two describe conversations with ‘advisors.’ One describes praying with a supervisor. The balance of the respondents are essentially silent on the matter. Thus ministry to the worker or the leader would appear to be best described as formational in nature, hence this chapter adopts the perspective described by Mark Cartledge, who

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<sup>1</sup> Veith, *God at Work*, 157.

states, “For the *formational* strand, theology is conceived as prior to and therefore applied to subsequent practice: hence theology *for practice*.”<sup>2</sup>

While there were few respondents who spoke of meaningful conversations with a minister or spiritual advisor, several referred to their spirituality as separate from a religious affiliation.

A study by Anushri Rawat and Shiva Nadavulakare state that:

[Their] study results demonstrate that having a strong work calling is beneficial for both individuals and organizations. Results show that individuals who have a strong work calling are more committed to their organizations, have less emotional exhaustion and exhibit higher levels of contextual performance. Thus, in order to reap positive outcomes from their work individuals should engage in work that enables them to pursue their calling. Also, organizations will have increased work outcomes by hiring individuals who have a strong work calling. Further, organizations will benefit greatly by creating conditions that enable individuals to pursue their calling. Findings indicate that individuals with a high calling thrive in organizations that have more participative decision-making practices and which offer high work discretion.<sup>3</sup>

While Rawat and Nadavulakare offer different sources of one’s calling, there is suggestion that one’s calling is the result of a “transcendent summons originating beyond one’s self.”<sup>4</sup> It appears critical that a discussion of calling is a valuable conversation for a minister to enter into.

Work-related ministry can help leaders, however, ministers appear to be infrequently hosting<sup>5</sup> spiritual conversations about the workplace and the role of leadership. A respondent who professes to be a person of faith writes, “I have not discussed this with any minister or advisor.”<sup>6</sup> There may be two reasons for this. People

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<sup>2</sup> Cartledge, “Practical Theology,” 269 [emphasis original].

<sup>3</sup> Rawat and Nadavulakare, “Examining the Outcomes of Having a Calling,” 499.

<sup>4</sup> Rawat and Nadavulakare, “Examining the Outcomes of Having a Calling,” 499.

<sup>5</sup> To host can be interpreted as nourishing, and protecting.

<sup>6</sup> Verbatim respondent 16.

do not contemplate speaking with a spiritual advisor. Indeed, they may not know one. Alternatively, spiritual advisors may be ill-equipped to have such a conversation.

It is possible that the postmodern era brought with it a change in the way to evangelize. Eddie Gibbs and Ian Coffey suggest that it has. They write:

In seeking to present the gospel to unbelievers, a strong emphasis has been placed in the past on overcoming intellectual obstacles to faith and on giving reasons to believe. The approach adopted was strongly apologetic in nature, on the assumption that the main reasons keeping people from belief were intellectual. While such an approach is appropriate in many secular and modern settings, in a postmodern cultural environment it may not constitute the starting-point in a spiritual discussion. At present, increasing numbers of people are already on a personal search for meaning and a sense of fulfilment.<sup>7</sup>

A significant number of people appear to be spiritual, but may need encouragement to explore the concept of God, and ultimately the Triune nature of God, together with the roles of Christ and the Holy Spirit in our lives. Ann Morisey echoes the observations of a number of the research respondents. She writes, “Our postmodern context has brought an additional pastoral need associated with the loss of confidence in our ability to change things.”<sup>8</sup> This can be of great concern. Loss of confidence can lead to a person being gripped by tedium and weariness. These statements would seem to resonate with the grounded theory resulting from the research supporting this dissertation. The findings of the survey indicate that it is possible that an epistemological social foundation is emerging from this group of respondents. This dissertation asserts a post-religious spirituality for many as a clear alternative to traditional organized religion. A respondent writes, “Sadly, I have seen more harm than good come from organized religion. My blend of humanism and some of the eastern faiths is not far away from a

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<sup>7</sup> Gibbs and Coffey, *Church Next*, 169.

<sup>8</sup> Morisey, *Beyond the Good Samaritan*, 32.

lighter type of Christianity which sees God as merely an interpretation of the word ‘Good.’”<sup>9</sup> While many respondents may be unchurched, or un-moved by common methods of evangelizing used to approach them, there appears to be a deep sense of spirituality among many, although some appear to be uncertain in terms of how to articulate fully what this means. A respondent writes, “I am a person of faith, but not any recognized faith.”<sup>10</sup> A significant number seek to fulfill a deep sense of spiritual purpose in their work. Some discuss interest and value in exploring what they describe as eastern religions. Many of the respondents assert that they are people of Christian faith. Several of these, however, do not see value in the teachings of the church; in fact some cite discord in their Church. A respondent writes, “I am wrestling with how the church should approach gender identity and sexuality issues - this is not a safe discussion.”<sup>11</sup>

Nor is it clear that they are regular attendees. Richard Niebuhr writes:

A Christian is ordinarily defined as ‘one who believes in Jesus Christ,’ or as ‘a follower of Jesus Christ.’ He [sic] might be more adequately described as one who counts himself [sic] as belonging to that community of men [sic] for whom Jesus Christ; his life, words, deeds, and destiny, is of supreme importance as the key to an understanding of themselves and their world—the main source of the knowledge of God and man [sic]. Good and evil, the constant companion of the conscience, and the expected deliverer from evil.<sup>12</sup>

Niebuhr’s words may still have heft for those that carry a strong grounding in faith, and are unmoved by their situation, seeing work as mission. One respondent writes:

I experience very deep joy and meaningfulness in my work. In my mid-thirties I followed God's leading toward a career using more of my gifts and a desire to help/serve. My views, which stem from a deep-rooted belief in Christian life, are not popular amongst peers. I feel quite powerless at times. I have chosen to work in a non-Christian environment where I can model Christ.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Verbatim respondent 24.

<sup>10</sup> Verbatim respondent 24.

<sup>11</sup> Verbatim respondent 1.

<sup>12</sup> Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, 11.

<sup>13</sup> Verbatim respondent 6.

This respondent would appear to model the definition of a Christian as provided by Niebuhr, and this respondent certainly reflects the struggle experienced in being in community with others who may not share the same views. Broadly, however, it is clear that the church is seldom identified among the respondents as a place that anchors them in coping with their workplace travails. A respondent writes:

I believe that there is something higher, but not through the lens of religious faith. In terms of my spiritual beliefs, I believe that we are all connected and that the energy we bring to our interactions effects the quality of connection, and other things like loyalty, trust, etc. I also believe that on the whole, people are good.<sup>14</sup>

Another writes:

I do not subscribe to an organized religion, however I do hold to my own spiritual beliefs. I believe that my work's meaning is driven by my desire to contribute to others' growth and development. I am also deriving meaningfulness from volunteering.<sup>15</sup>

Such responses imply a willingness to *believe* in a divine power, but not necessarily to *belong* to a denominational church or other faith community. It suggests that the gospel message may be accepted when it is perceived to affirm personhood and provides an affirmation that the person and model of Jesus presents the path to deeper meaningfulness. The findings of the survey indicate that the person and model of Jesus is valued by many. Gibbs and Coffey suggest that many non-believers “will engage in open and honest dialogue with people they know well and consider credible witnesses.”<sup>16</sup>

Osmer offers four questions that we might explore in preparing for pastoral dialogue. These are, “What is going on? Why is this going on? What ought to be going

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<sup>14</sup> Verbatim respondent 4.

<sup>15</sup> Verbatim respondent 5.

<sup>16</sup> Gibbs and Coffey, *Church Next*, 194.

on? How might we respond?<sup>17</sup> Seeking conversations around these questions will create opportunity for deep dialogue. Osmer continues with his discussion that the pragmatic task involves, “Determining strategies of action that will influence situations in ways that are desirable and entering into a reflective conversation with the ‘talk back’ emerging when they are enacted.”<sup>18</sup>

While it seems clear that many of the respondents to the research questionnaire supporting this dissertation hold an a priori knowledge of God’s presence in their lives, it also appears that a number of their coworkers do not. These either do not hold such knowledge, have chosen to deny it, or have not had an experience that would justify such a belief, i.e. develop an a posteriori knowledge of God’s presence. Yet many refer to spirituality. Thus, one’s response to workplace situations and one’s response to such situations is very much determined by one’s epistemological presuppositions. There are hints among the responses to the research questionnaire supporting this dissertation that respondents find themselves working alongside colleagues whose worldview is essentially grounded in empiricism. Min Jun Chul states:

[Empiricism] asserts that we can only grasp what we touch with our hands, taste with our tongues, see with our eyes, smell with our noses, and hear with our ears. Empiricism restricted the route to all knowledge to the five senses, thus making it impossible to know what we had regarded as knowable.<sup>19</sup>

A respondent writes, “Most people either believe in nothing, or believe in something so rigid and prescriptive that there is no point in discussing it.”<sup>20</sup> Marty offers that, “[T]he human self is a rather fragile thing. Social scientists and theologians of different stripes

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<sup>17</sup> Osmer, *Practical Theology*, 4.

<sup>18</sup> Osmer, *Practical Theology*, 4.

<sup>19</sup> Chul, “Paradigm Shift,” 157–158.

<sup>20</sup> Verbatim respondent 24.



have long pointed out the deep insecurities, the persistent struggles with meaning and significance, and the persistent search for lasting relations that so steadily define nearly every human life.”<sup>21</sup> Several respondents expressed insecurity. For example, one respondent writes, “In terms of fully satisfying a sense of calling, that is more difficult. I’m still trying to figure it all out.” Engagement with such individuals through mutual community and professional interest may allow for deeper conversations. Every community has a number of such initiatives. Lake Lambert writes, “The search for meaning . . . can include opportunities to volunteer through work and a focus on a company’s social responsibility. Researchers note that Millennials more than any other generation have experience with community service.”<sup>22</sup>

### **We Respond to Our Environment**

The workplace can frequently be more chaotic than calm. Pattison writes, “While there may be some general, formal principles of management, these may be unevenly applied in practice and the actual work of managers may be rather chaotic and *ad hoc*. Real Managers may not do the things they say managers should do.”<sup>23</sup> We all begin every task by responding, consciously or unconsciously, to our perception of our environment. This bears repeating, our situation shapes our reaction. A situational response frames our engagement with the task at hand. Edward Farley writes:

All human beings exist and act in situations and engage in interpretations of situations. This interpretative dimension of human existence does not cease with faith and with life in the community of faith. On the contrary, faith and the world of faith shape the perspective, the ‘taken-for-granted stock of knowledge,’ the weighting of what is important, all of which affect the interpretation of

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<sup>21</sup> Marty, “Shaping Communities,” 308-9.

<sup>22</sup> Lambert, “The Future of Workplace Spirituality,” 158.

<sup>23</sup> Pattison, *The Faith of Managers*, 13.

situations. In other words interpreting situations from the viewpoint and in the context of faith does create a special hermeneutic task, differentiable from other hermeneutic or interpretive dimensions of theology. This is the reason why interpreting situations can and should be part of a deliberate and self-conscious educational undertaking, part of the church's lay and clergy education.<sup>24</sup>

The respondents' collective perspectives largely describe an epistemological in-harmony, or tension. Woods writes, “[W]hat is the domain of a minister? Is it God, Is it life? Is it key events in one's life?”<sup>25</sup> The broader marketplace may not be a familiar domain to ministers. Rosalind Brown writes, “Some [ministers] are equipped by professional qualifications for secular work.”<sup>26</sup> In the Anglican tradition, deacons “inhabit the margin of the church and the world, putting the two in dialogue.”<sup>27</sup> The Church of Scotland's growth strategy of placing clergy *in-situ* appears to be a strong response to this challenge. Their website states:

The church has left the building: café church, youth church, nursing home church, bikers church—God's Spirit is firing our imagination and preparing people to serve as pioneer ministers in a variety of contexts and situations. Emerging churches explore a more incarnational model of church—going to people in their different neighbourhoods and networks, building friendships and community, and seeing if some of these communities have the potential for being church, rather than wait until those outside the church come to us. This is a joint venture between the Ministries Council and Mission and Discipleship Council who are collaborating in an innovative way to enable the Church of Scotland to face the challenges of ministry and mission in today's world. It's experimental, great fun, and enables us to respond to God's call in different ways.<sup>28</sup>

This is encouraging, but it is not new. Five decades ago, Phipps wrote:

A secular-based theology, on the other hand, will lead straight to the need for a sound sociological analysis of the secular entity . . . this implies better sociological thinking among clergy and laity, and, more important still, a far greater contact than often exists with the professional elements in society's

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<sup>24</sup> Farley, “Interpreting Situations,” 119.

<sup>25</sup> Woods, *Designing Religious Research*, 49.

<sup>26</sup> Brown, *Being a Deacon*, 33.

<sup>27</sup> Brown, *Being a Deacon*, 33.

<sup>28</sup> “Church of Scotland, “Going for Growth,” [n.d.]

various structures . . . This sort of partnership demands years of growing together in mutual understanding.<sup>29</sup>

Ministers can achieve this mutuality of understanding by building knowledge of practices, structures, economic factors, management, and organizational frameworks.

All these may be viewed together with those sociologies which are creating the workplace environments that those in our communities operate within. Kathleen A.

Cahalan states:

To be effective leaders ministers need both a breadth and depth of knowledge about the Christian faith as well as insight into living the faith in particular cultural and historical contexts. What are essential, then are *both* what a minister knows about the good news, its various expressions in Scripture and tradition, and how that knowledge in forms and shapes teaching, preaching, worship, social ministries, and the care of souls in particular ecclesial settings.<sup>30</sup>

There are truly wrenching dynamics at play as society and organizations transition from the modern to the postmodern. In one organization, there may be up to four generations of workers<sup>31</sup> all navigating changing structures and ethics in the same environment. Care must be taken while navigating the changes from those circumstances which were more in tune with traditions from earlier times. That said, Pattison argues that:

Within and beneath the everyday practice of management lie hidden religio-ethical assumptions that mostly go unnoticed by the casual observer. Just because they are unnoticed does not mean that they are not important or influential – indeed, some of the foundations of management may rest upon them.<sup>32</sup>

When leaders are brought together to discuss their work, their challenges, and their spirituality, resilience is built. Zylla states, “Resilience is measured by the ability, given similar resources of a person or organization, to bounce back, recover, and even thrive

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<sup>29</sup> Phipps, *God on Monday*, 78–79.

<sup>30</sup> Cahalan, “Introducing Ministry and Fostering Integration,” 102 [emphasis original].

<sup>31</sup> Silents (Born between 1925 and 1946), Baby Boomers (Born between 1946 and 1964), Generation Xers (Born between 1965 and 1980), and Generation Ys or Millennials (born after 1980).

<sup>32</sup> Pattison, *The Faith of Managers*, 1.

after a significant trauma or event.”<sup>33</sup> Thus, thoughtful conversations around pivotal events, especially inflection points, not only restore and strengthen the organization, but leaders within the organization are restored and strengthened. These events confirm and uphold leaders’ efforts as they navigate their way towards a greater sense of fulfillment and purpose of their work. Eventually, these dialogues of reflection may lead to further discussion of spirituality.

John Van Sloten writes:

One of the best parts of my job is meeting with small groups of workers from any given field to learn about their jobs as they better discern God’s active presence at work. This collective effort is not only an effective way for *them* to discover God’s on-the-job presence; it is also a means through which everyone in our community can do the same . . . When they realize they can know God through their unique passions and abilities, their experience of work is transformed. Their jobs become more God-aware, and this epiphany has led to a profound sense of delight and gratitude.<sup>34</sup>

Sponsorship of study groups will facilitate discussions of such challenges as cross-generational work practices and the integration of multiculturalism in the workplace.

Lambert writes, “A desire for ‘balance’ is frequently invoked when referring to the Millennials at work and this echoes a Boomer theme as well as the workplace spirituality movement’s quest for holism.”<sup>35</sup> It may take many, many interactions to reach a deep conversation, and we must keep in front of us that, as ministers, our job is to open up a space for the Holy Spirit to enter.

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<sup>33</sup> Zylla, “Cultivating a Resilient Congregation,” 103.

<sup>34</sup> Van Sloten, *Every Job a Parable*, 74 [emphasis original].

<sup>35</sup> Lambert, “The Future of Workplace Spirituality,” 156.

Cartledge states, “Healing and suffering are inevitably related.”<sup>36</sup> Cartledge also presents the pastoral provider as the, “co-sufferer.”<sup>37</sup> Trained pastoral help may be valuable.

Janet Ward, a client of the organization, Corporate Chaplains of America, states:

There are lots of problems that my staff has, the people that work for me, that I am not equipped to handle. So having a corporate chaplain, someone with training, someone with experience that can be dedicated to that problem for the person, and to keep it confidential, allows us to give a real meaningful asset to our staff.<sup>38</sup>

This is missiology. Lee Beach adds to the imperative to reach out into the community.

He writes:

It is not surprising that the decentering of the church and the challenges of a post-Christendom culture provide an impetus for the church to rediscover its true identity and rethink how it can fulfill its mandate to mission . . . First it means that the church is intentional in forging relationships with its community . . . This calls the church to truly be present in the community, to live with the people it is called to serve.<sup>39</sup>

### **Busy-ness and Powerlessness**

Everyone is too busy achieving and surviving. They are too busy getting somewhere, and too busy trying to figure out what to do next while doing their best for their families. Federico Suarez writes, “We are all so busy ‘finding ourselves’ that the divine request to deny ourselves becomes practically unintelligible.”<sup>40</sup> Busy-ness is a common underlying theme among the respondents. Ministers should discuss this with leaders. There is a risk in this. Parker Palmer writes, “As we become more obsessed with succeeding, or at least surviving, in the world, we lose touch with our souls and disappear into our roles.”<sup>41</sup> In

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<sup>36</sup> Cartledge, “Practical Theology,” 273.

<sup>37</sup> Cartledge, “Practical Theology,” 273.

<sup>38</sup> “Janet Ward explains rationale for using the services of Corporate Chaplains of America” [n.d.].

<sup>39</sup> Beach, *The Church in Exile*, 198–99.

<sup>40</sup> Suarez, *The Narrow Gate*, 22.

<sup>41</sup> Palmer, *A Hidden Wholeness*, 15.

the midst of all this is hope. The findings of the survey indicate that hope is stronger than lived experiences in many cases. It is hope that we must purvey. Suarez offers a dialogue focused on Matthew's account of the Sermon on the Mount:

Paradoxical as it may seem, it is not the wide road, the affirmation of the ego; that enables us to find ourselves and attain the fullness of our personality. It is the narrow road, the denial of self (which is the affirmation of God) that leads us to this end. For it is only along this narrow road and through the narrow gate—through Jesus Christ—that one can arrive at the death of the old man [sic] or the false self, and to the birth of the new man [sic], or the authentic self.<sup>42</sup>

This passage emphasizes the paracletic nature of ministry. We are to find ways to come alongside leaders struggling with workplace demands, disappointments, disagreements and challenges. Martin Lloyd-Jones adds, “We are meant to be participators in this; it is a call to action. You notice the words, ‘Enter ye;’ they are an invitation and an exhortation at one and the same time.”<sup>43</sup> Somewhere inside, this call is heard. There is an innate sense that there is more. A respondent writes, “He is still revealing.”<sup>44</sup> This is not intellectual. It is spiritual.<sup>45</sup> As Palmer states, “The soul wants to tell us the truth about ourselves.”<sup>46</sup> Donald Capps writes:

When persons who are experiencing problems and difficulties seek assistance from a pastor, they are, in this very act, seeking hope. They may not have much confidence that the pastor can help them, but their act of reaching out, however hesitant or uncertain it may be, is an indication of their desire to hope, to find grounds for hoping rather than despairing. When the pastor initiates contact with a person who is in difficulty, the pastor, through this very act, offers hope.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Suarez, *The Narrow Gate*, 24.

<sup>43</sup> Lloyd-Jones, *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*, 487.

<sup>44</sup> Verbatim respondent 2.

<sup>45</sup> On occasion, I will spend time with someone who wants to talk. I will ask them, ‘do you want faith to be part of this conversation?’ Invariably, the answer is yes. Though they may not say it explicitly, their soul wants to speak.

<sup>46</sup> Palmer, *A Hidden Wholeness*, 15.

<sup>47</sup> Capps, *Agents of Hope*, 8.

A respondent writes, “My views, which stem from a deep-rooted belief in Christian life, are not popular amongst peers. I feel quite powerless at times. I have chosen to work in a non-Christian environment where I can model Christ.”<sup>48</sup> This respondent echoes a critical premise of this dissertation. This dissertation accepts the Wesleyan perspective offered by Kenneth Collins, that “there is no man [sic] unless he [sic] has quenched the Spirit, who is wholly devoid of the grace of God.”<sup>49</sup> Thus, there is, in all persons, at least a faint glimmer of the divine light which when made brighter brings rebirth, and restoration. God is always the first mover, the initiative-taker, both in the rebirth of the soul, and in its restoration. Soul rebirth and restoration is effected by Jesus Christ through the working of the Holy Spirit. Christ will move through us, and beyond us.

Active listening is at the heart of soul-care. Palmer writes:

The soul is like a wild animal—tough, resilient, savvy, self-sufficient and yet exceedingly shy. If we want to see a wild animal, the last thing we should do is to go crashing through the woods, shouting for the creature to come out. But if we are willing to walk quietly into the woods and sit silently for an hour or two at the base of a tree, the creature we are waiting for may well emerge, and out of the corner of an eye we will catch a glimpse of the precious wildness we seek.<sup>50</sup>

Active listening is a deeply engaged presence. Deborah Antai-Otong writes, “Active listening involves all of the senses, not just hearing. It requires tremendous energy, discipline, and concentration, and requires recognizing and screening out internal and external influences and barriers that interfere with communication.”<sup>51</sup> As suggested earlier, presence, or being, must precede doing. Presence involves paying attention. Ananias’ first task was to ‘be’ with Paul (cf. Acts 9:10). Our task is to be present with

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<sup>48</sup> Verbatim respondent 6.

<sup>49</sup> Collins, *The Theology of John Wesley*, 74.

<sup>50</sup> Palmer, *A Hidden Wholeness*, 58.

<sup>51</sup> Antai-Otong, “Active Listening at Work,” 24.

people before dialogue can begin. Ananias was to represent God, and to invigorate the situation by his presence. Doohan writes:

Recent spiritual renewal focuses on a rediscovery of the essential source values of faith and an opening to the autonomous values of the world. These discoveries have led to a simplification of spiritual life and a fundamentally positive attitude to the world. This has also led to new ways of thinking and living Christianity that imply a new value for human and earthly realities, an awareness of personal responsibility for others, and a new community consciousness in believers.<sup>52</sup>

This consciousness centres on presence. Osmer writes:

In recent decades discussion of the spirituality of presence has been widespread and has moved in a number of directions. Here it describes a spiritual orientation of attending to others in their particularity and otherness within the presence of God. The key term here is ‘attending,’ relating to others with openness, attentiveness and prayerfulness. Such attending opens up the possibility of an I-Thou relationship in which others are known and encountered in all their uniqueness and otherness, a quality of relationship that ultimately depends on the communion-creating presence of the Holy Spirit.<sup>53</sup>

Sometimes, perhaps even most of the time, our simple, quiet and attentive, presence is enough to make a profound impact on people. We must listen but we must listen *knowledgeably*. In other words, we must explore and understand the epistemological perspectives that will frame dialogue. As alluded to earlier, the challenge, of course, is that before we can listen, we have to meet them. This is precisely why we should find ways to enter into dialogue outside the walls of the church, engaging in social issues, turning our own knowledge and experience into opportunities to bring groups together away from traditional church services.<sup>54</sup>

These interactions give way to opportunity for soul care. In the essential moment of soul care—the moment of soul-full rebirth and restoration—the overwhelming love

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<sup>52</sup> Doohan, *Spiritual Leadership*, 108.

<sup>53</sup> Osmer, *Practical Theology*, 34.

<sup>54</sup> Given my own background, I have led special events on such topics as investing, governance, leadership, etc.



of God can and will reverse the effects of living in the world, wiping away anxiety, sorrow, anger, disappointment, jealousy, even hubris. Thus we begin a process where one allows oneself to change one's mind. People give themselves permission, and in finding permission, allow their souls to lead them and become Spirit-led leaders. This moment may be brief, but its effect extreme.

As challenging as it might be to broach this question, it seems critical to consider exactly what it is that we soul-carers are to care for. Kate McLelland offers that the soul is “in its broadest sense, the essence of a person, the thing that defines them, the thing that makes them who they are.”<sup>55</sup> We should seek ways to join leaders; to come alongside them, in conversation about the workplace *before* we approach the spiritual dimension of their lives and aspirations.<sup>56</sup> This is a soul-full engagement. Barton states, “I am talking about the part of you that is most real—the very essence of you that God knew before he brought you forth in physical form, the part of you that will exist after your body goes into the ground.”<sup>57</sup> The soul is shaped, formed, and nurtured by the Holy Spirit to perform those intellectual and physical tasks that we are being called to do, and that we are being equipped, spiritually, to carry out. Thomas Oden writes, “Soul, according to its classical Christian conception, is the unitive centre of the person . . . Soul is that by which we most deeply feel, know, and will, and by which the body is animated. The soul lives out of God, and its life transcends this mortal sphere.”<sup>58</sup> All of this discussion of the soul is presented to make the point that the caring of souls is at the

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<sup>55</sup> McLelland, *Call the Chaplain*, 15.

<sup>56</sup> An approach that I use personally is to make myself available for workplace dialogue. At the appropriate moment I ask, “Would you like faith to be part of this conversation?” Invariably, the answer is yes.

<sup>57</sup> Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, 13.

<sup>58</sup> Oden, *Pastoral Theology*, 187.

very centre of the task of ministry: ensuring that souls are healthy and capable of doing what Ronald Rolheiser describes as “keeping us energized, vibrant, living with zest and full of hope . . . keeping us fixed together.”<sup>59</sup> The findings of the survey indicate that among people of professed faith or spirituality there is a sense that their spirituality grounds them and strengthens them. It is their spirituality that provides them with meaningfulness, vocational fulfillment and joy. Being present allows us to respond to this.

### **The Pastoral Relationship**

Osmer states, “Transforming leadership . . . is leading an organization through a process in which its identity, mission, culture, and operating procedures are fundamentally altered.”<sup>60</sup> Conversations regarding transformation are central to the pastoral mission to Leaders. Many domain-specific expert counsellors assist with solving critical human issues, but it is the pastoral relationship that provides soul care, which may be a critical prelude and ongoing component of transformative action Oden stresses the uniqueness of the pastoral relationship. He writes that while many professional counselling practices are “analogous to various aspects of ministry, none encompass ministry, because none accepts the full responsibility of soul care.”<sup>61</sup> This is our sacred and solemn calling.

As discussed earlier, focussed and intensive listening is a critical leadership skill. This may be the most important outcome of our pastoral training. Our greatest lesson may be the lesson of attention. Jean Stairs writes:

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<sup>59</sup> Rolheiser, *The Holy Longing*, 14.

<sup>60</sup> Osmer, *Practical Theology*, 177.

<sup>61</sup> Oden, *Pastoral Theology*, 187.

Over and over again, I am struck by the transforming significance of the ministry of listening . . . Listening for the soul is the primary and essential form our pastoral care takes when we are concerned with fostering spiritual depth in the lives of those within our communities.”<sup>62</sup>

Our listening must be steeped in epistemological reflection. In Paul’s first letter to Timothy, he writes:

Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. Do not neglect your gift, which was given to you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you. Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers (1 Tim 4:13–16).

Rescher states, “Transcendental questions deal with matters on a scale of comprehensiveness and ultimacy that is not encountered with questions of limited scope and mundane routine.”<sup>63</sup> The key issue here is the epistemological orientation of the person being cared for. Ballard asserts, “Many modern theologies focus on the importance of lived experience, practice, action, and the primacy of human need.”<sup>64</sup> In the same way that pastoral counsellors are provided with thorough preparation for specialized clinical situations, there is a deep need for preparation for work-place and work-related spiritual care, beginning with leaders. Ballard and Holmes assert:

Pastoral practice can be narrowly defined as working with individuals, families or small groups over their specific problems, issues, hopes and joys. But Christian pastoral practice happens at many levels . . . The place of the bible in the Church needs to be much more highly nuanced than appears. Perhaps the task is to find ways whereby people become literate in the Scriptures so that these are an almost subliminal resource that can inform every part of life.<sup>65</sup>

Workplace ministry, or ministry to leaders having concerns about their workplace experiences, are at the core of pastoral theology; specifically, the caring of souls. We

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<sup>62</sup> Stairs, *Listening for the Soul*, 15.

<sup>63</sup> Rescher, *Metaphysical Perspectives*, 222.

<sup>64</sup> Ballard and Holmes, *The Bible*, 65.

<sup>65</sup> Ballard and Holmes, *The Bible*, xxi.

must heed Carnegie Calian's mildly pejorative question, "Where are the pastor-theologians, the interpreters of the Word of God within the events of human life?"<sup>66</sup>

While we might take this as an affront, Calian is pressing on a critical point here. Our level of knowledge of the workplace-related lived experiences of those we wish to reach *must* achieve a level that allows us to recognize, interpret and discuss such matters.

When we understand, and when people know that we understand, they will hear our voice and they will turn to us. Knowledge of pastoral theology must be linked to a depth of knowledge of leadership. Oden writes:

As theology, pastoral theology is attentive to that knowledge of God witnessed in Scripture, mediated through tradition, reflected on by systematic reasoning, and embodied in personal and social experience. It seeks to give clear definition of the tasks of ministry and enable its improved practice.<sup>67</sup>

Van Sloten adds, "It makes sense that the deeper we enter into an awareness of God's presence at work, the more we will know him as the providential source of all things."<sup>68</sup>

For workplace leadership ministry it may be the personal and social experience which should be explored most. As already stated, among the respondents, the question, "Have you spoken with a minister or counsellor?" drew mixed to negative responses. John 10:1–8 provides a wonderful image of the sheep knowing the shepherd's voice. This analogy is critical. The shepherd has intimate knowledge of the sheep and how to care for them. The pastoral task is to give voice to the circumstance of the person under counsel. If the person's search is spiritual rather than intellectual, the soul will hear the voice, as long as that voice is within earshot. This must be the leadership voice. Jesus understood the lives and circumstances of his people, together with the language that

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<sup>66</sup> Calian, *Today's Pastor*, 125.

<sup>67</sup> Oden, *Pastoral Theology*, x.

<sup>68</sup> Van Sloten, *Every Job a Parable*, 178.

they would respond to. His was situational leadership. The pastor's task is encouragement and the bringing of hope that is relevant and pertinent to the situation.

We require a radical reliance on Christ if we are to care for souls. In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul writes, "For it is God who said, 'Let light shine out of the darkness,' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor 4:6)." Michael Knowles writes, "Paul's confession amounts to a wry acknowledgement of the scorn with which the [Corinthian] congregation apparently views him. He may not look like much, he admits . . . but that does not negate his message."<sup>69</sup> Paul knew the law. He also knew when the law was irrelevant. Paul followed Jesus' model of leadership. It was Paul's deep awareness of this, together with his ability and commitment to know deeply the ethos of each community that he visited. His personal experiences as a labourer, also gave him credibility with his audiences (cf. Acts 18: 1–3). Faithfulness to God means faithfulness to our communities and all their lived experiences. Andrew Purves writes, "We should think about ministry as empowerment for faithfulness that God does in and through us, by *joining to the faithfulness of Jesus Christ*. Within such empowerment there remains obedience to union with Christ."<sup>70</sup> Union with Christ means pastoral engagement with workplace and social issues.

### **Activism**

Ministers should be activists as well as evangelists. Robert Furbey offers:

Religion has been conspicuous in the recent development of social and community cohesion discourse in the UK and other nation states. Religion is seen

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<sup>69</sup> Knowles, *We Preach Not*, 178.

<sup>70</sup> Purves, *Reconstructing Pastoral Theology*, 43–44 [emphasis original].

simultaneously as problem and solution, a cause of social division and bloody conflict, but also a resource in building civic ‘partnership’, inclusive local governance, strong communities’ and a vibrant civil society . . . a report by the [British] Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) made a positive case for faith community involvement in urban regeneration.<sup>71</sup>

An example of street-level ministry is presented by Jennie Middleton and Richard Yarwood. They write:

[W]e contribute to work that has called for greater attention to be placed on the ways in which religious faith and ethics are performed to create liminal spaces of understanding in urban areas . . . Street-Pastors engage with a city’s nightlife with the stated aim of providing practical help and advice for those at risk of involvement of antisocial behavior.<sup>72</sup>

While this street-level ministry may seem a long way from workplace ministry, and ministry to leaders in particular, it is worth noting that many ‘narcotics anonymous’ programs are attended by relatively high income office workers and senior personnel.<sup>73</sup>

Activism regarding gender inequality would be a good place to start, beginning in our own environments. Referring to an experience of income inequality, which has been discussed earlier, a respondent writes, “This is not how the body of Christ should behave.”<sup>74</sup> How can the body of Christ ignore such circumstances? Northouse points out that from the mid-1960s there was a turn away “from the view of women as inferior to men (e.g. some had posited that women lacked skills and traits necessary for managerial success) to the view that extols the superiority of women in leadership positions.”<sup>75</sup> Yet, here we are. We have not resolved the fundamental issue of compensation inequity. To take this one step further, Northouse suggests that women’s styles tend to be more

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<sup>71</sup> Furbey, “Beyond Social Glue,” 119–20.

<sup>72</sup> Middleton and Yarwood, “Christians Out Here?” 502.

<sup>73</sup> Note that Evangel Hall Mission in Toronto has an active program called the Clean off Queen Street Narcotics Group.

<sup>74</sup> Verbatim respondent 1.

<sup>75</sup> Northouse, *Leadership Theory and Practice*, 349.

transformational than men's.<sup>76</sup> So, clearly, women's leadership skills are at least equal to their male counterparts. Chewning et al. write that justice must be expressed, "through compensation."<sup>77</sup> They go on to assert that organizations practise "corporate shalom by ensuring that relationships, profits, products, and ethics correspond with God's intention for humility."<sup>78</sup> In effect, experiencing dissonance is suffering inequality in the workplace. Shalom is the elimination of suffering. Shalom means the elimination of inequality. Phillips writes:

Throughout Scripture we see that the human condition entails entering uncharted territory and, at times, turbulent seas. And it also true that God does 'wondrous works in the deep,' bringing those who call on him, in the Jerusalem Bible's words, 'safe to the port they were bound for' (Ps 107:24, 30).<sup>79</sup>

Workplace inequity brings suffering, and central to a theology of suffering is a God who suffers with us. Palmer writes, "Only a God who is vulnerable and even needy will evoke our love in a way that completes the circuit of human-and-divine, the circuit in which each of us becomes a carrier of love's energy, a co-creator of the Great Work to be born."<sup>80</sup> Activism and soul-care go together. This is an important, Spirit-centric, conversation to have with leaders.

### **Inviting Leaders to God's Table**

The re-enactment of Christ's last meal with his disciples is a deeply moving experience. For leaders, it may be especially poignant for those being introduced to the spiritual dimension of servant leadership. Thomas Marsh states, "[T]he relationship between

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<sup>76</sup> Northouse, *Leadership Theory and Practice*, 351.

<sup>77</sup> Chewning et al. *Business*, 67.

<sup>78</sup> Chewning et al. *Business*, 194.

<sup>79</sup> Phillips, "Spiritual Direction," 160.

<sup>80</sup> Palmer, *The Active Life*, 84.

Christ and the Eucharist is so obvious and so basic. It is the fact of the Eucharist which above all else elevates Christology from the status of mere history and makes it a living relevant theology.”<sup>81</sup> Introducing the mystery of the Eucharist to leaders may be a way to respond to spiritual yearning, but it may take innovative ways. Throughout Nouwen’s corpus, there are examples of his creating an opportunity for Eucharistic communion. For example, Nouwen writes, “Tonight, during the Eucharist for the English-speaking assistants, we heard the words of Jesus.”<sup>82</sup> In this situation, as with many, Nouwen simply brings the Eucharist into a moment in the day.<sup>83</sup> Williams states, “In case we’ve forgotten, it’s worth reminding ourselves that the Bible seems fairly clear that we are given to one another as believers so that we may know and experience more of God than we would on our own.”<sup>84</sup> There can be no ‘camps’ that may be formed or implied—no assertion that there is a zero-sum game at hand where one group will triumph over another. Sarah Moses states:

Rowan Williams’ theological understanding of the non-competitiveness of Christian community and ecclesial unity as given provides a necessary framework for an analysis of the ethics of recognition. With regard to moral discernment, Williams identifies moments when new questions and potential new practices force communities to determine whether an ethical judgment is ‘continuous’ with the historic tradition. It is such situations that the exercise of recognition functions as the practice that allows a community to embody communion and to facilitate ethical discernment in the context of disagreement.<sup>85</sup>

This is a critical leadership conversation. Williams is reminding us of the practices of the first Christian community (cf. Acts 4:32–37). Each member of the community was

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<sup>81</sup> Marsh, “Christ, the Church and the Eucharist,” 80.

<sup>82</sup> Nouwen, *The Road to Day Break*, 69.

<sup>83</sup> I regularly have the occasion to bring communion to others during pastoral visits or discussions. This moment draws us together and binds us in our shared faith.

<sup>84</sup> Archbishop’s Presidential Address. [n.d.].

<sup>85</sup> Moses, “The Ethics of Recognition,” 151.



both seen as a contributor, and recognized for their right to participate and for their respective gifts. In an essay on moral decision-making, Williams wrote, “We watch to see if our partners take the same kind of time, sense that they are under the same sort of judgment or scrutiny, and approach the issue with the same attempt to be dispossessed by the truth with which they are engaging.”<sup>86</sup> Williams learned, as we all do, that not all processes achieve the desired outcome.<sup>87</sup> Sometimes it is because insufficient time has been taken. Moses writes, “Cultures are products of historical processes in interpretation and meaning which are always in flux and changing.”<sup>88</sup> This is a leadership task to which pastoral counselling is well-suited.

### **Being Tested**

A respondent writes:

There were times when the sense of being tested really could be borne through a sense of faith. Although not an attender at any religious ceremony, I frequently use meditation, reflection, and prayer as a means to resolve issues in my mind. I do have a strong sense of spiritual guidance.<sup>89</sup>

Bass and Dykstra write, “Practical theologians have long insisted that theological reflection finds its most generative starting point in concrete, nearby situations.”<sup>90</sup> Such perspectives seem to call out for a conversation with leaders. As pastors, these conversations allow us bring our own workplace experiences into the dialogue with leaders. To paraphrase Nouwen, if a person has never been to the desert, it is unlikely

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<sup>86</sup> Williams, “On Making Moral Decisions,” 304.

<sup>87</sup> I, too, have witnessed such breakdowns. Sometimes it is because one party holds views so strongly that they are blind to the opportunity for recognition. I have witnessed the ugliest of situations as chair of university tenure and promotion committees, where academic rivalry and jealousy descends into an attempt to prevent a colleague from receiving deserved recognition.

<sup>88</sup> Moses, “The Ethics of Recognition,” 154.

<sup>89</sup> Verbatim respondent 14.

<sup>90</sup> Bass and Dykstra, *For Life Abundant*, 355.

that they can lead us out of the desert. This is an important issue for discussion. When we suffer with someone, we become empathetic to their suffering. Our own suffering helps us walk with the person in their journey and, where appropriate, help them find the path.

Compassion embodies the overwhelming urge to help someone in need, in a way that is wholly without judgment. Jennifer Worth describes her work as a midwife, working with nuns in postwar East London. She writes:

The St. Raymund midwives worked in the slums of the London docklands amongst the poorest of the poor . . . They laboured tirelessly through epidemics of cholera, typhoid, polio, and tuberculosis. They delivered babies in air-raid shelters, dugouts, church crypts and Underground Stations. This was the tireless, selfless work to which they had pledged their lives.<sup>91</sup>

This was a considerable task.<sup>92</sup> Gary Badcock writes, “When Luther argued that monastic life amounts to an abdication of one’s responsibility to care for the neighbour, he effectively set a seal on the ordinary world of human affairs as the one legitimate sphere of human community.”<sup>93</sup> This is a critically important issue. It is through their direct engagement in the community—often in situations that would be inconsistent with their own personal lived experiences—that they act out their faith and in so doing, bring faith to others. Zylla describes “the essence of the compassionate response: *to move into the suffering of others with active help*.”<sup>94</sup> Leaders bear massive burdens. Pastoral ministers are purveyors of hope. In turn, ministers equip leaders to bring hope, resilience, and forgiveness to others. Nouwen writes:

When we live with hope we do not get tangled up with concerns for how our wishes will be fulfilled . . . In the prayer of hope, there are no guarantees asked,

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<sup>91</sup> Worth, *Call the Midwife*, 7. Underground Stations are subway rail system stations.

<sup>92</sup> Worth’s book was set in the era and place that I grew up. This was before birth control. Large families lived at a subsistence level income or worse. Food was still rationed due to wartime shortages.

<sup>93</sup> Badcock, *The Way of Life*, 116.

<sup>94</sup> Zylla, *The Roots of Sorrow*, [emphasis original] 100.

no conditions posed and no proofs demanded . . . Hope is based on the premise that the other gives what is good. Hope includes an openness by which you wait for the promise to come through, even though you never know when, where, or how this might happen.<sup>95</sup>

The finding of the survey indicate that hope is stronger than actual lived experiences.

Hope implies trust and reliance. A respondent writes, “I feel called to this time and place for a reason.”<sup>96</sup> This is a hope-full statement. Another respondent writes, “I am able to leverage my gifts.”<sup>97</sup> Hope is what shores up the entrepreneur in the early days and months of a start-up business. Hope is what empowers an employee to bring an idea to the Chief Executive Officer. Hope underpins vocation. Hope leads to prayer. As Nouwen affirms, “Prayer leads you to new paths.”<sup>98</sup>

Hope leads to a willingness to improvise when the perfect tools may not be available. Hope leads to trust, and trust leads to the empowerment of others. Hope leads to a forgiving attitude toward failure. Failure leads to innovation.

Hope leads to perseverance. The letter to the Hebrews states:

So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. For in just a very little while, He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him. But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved (Heb 10: 35–39).

When the workplace is imbued with hope. Workers will take that hope with them. Zylla states, “*A resilient community of faith has an ‘ethos’ of hopefulness and a narrative that*

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<sup>95</sup> Nouwen, *With Open Hands*, 73.

<sup>96</sup> Verbatim respondent 2.

<sup>97</sup> Verbatim respondent 15.

<sup>98</sup> Nouwen, *With Open Hands*, 122.

*evokes a hopeful view of the world.*”<sup>99</sup> This statement epitomizes the organization that is vibrant, innovative, and joyful.

### **A Ministry to Governance**

While this dissertation is focussed primarily on those in functional leadership roles, and finding ways to provide ministry to them, there is another tier of leadership that ministers might reach out to. This tier is the group charged with the legal oversight of the enterprise: the Board of Directors. David Gyertson writes, “When mission and/or identity crises occur, it is not unusual to find the root causes in the relationship between the governing board and the CEO.”<sup>100</sup> Pattison adds, “Ethical and values issues become more apparent and more contested when radical change takes place. Custom, tradition and ‘common sense’ can no longer serve as a complete guide to behaviour.”<sup>101</sup> There is a very real opportunity for ministers to engage with boards, particularly in finding ways to address each of the grounded theories in this dissertation during retreats that are focussed on organizational mission and core values. The pastoral task is to seek opportunities to bring counsel and guidance to board chairs. This cannot be overstated. Discussing board and governance matters may be outside our experience; however, as with many challenges, listening is the beginning.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Zylla, “Cultivating a Resilient Congregation,” 108 [emphasis original].

<sup>100</sup> Gyertson, “Christian Leadership,” 34.

<sup>101</sup> Pattison, *The Faith of Managers*, 103.

<sup>102</sup> In recent years, the primary reason that I am called out to provide counsel is for boards of directors who are in times of deep uncertainty and, occasionally, conflict.

### Ministry to Leaders is a Significant Task

Marty states, “[P]astoral ministry is greater than any task.”<sup>103</sup> As we orient ourselves toward the work of leadership-related ministry, the Spirit will equip us. Purves writes:

Pastors are men and women who are called, educated, installed and empowered to announce God’s forgiveness, declare God’s healing, proclaim God’s word, celebrate God’s sacramental presence, call forth and guide the living of the amended life, teach the truth of the Christian faith, and, in ministries of compassion, live in community with the people in their pastoral charge.<sup>104</sup>

The dissonance expressed by respondents to the research questionnaire is, largely, an *inner life* issue. Oden writes, “Care of souls means the care of the inner life of persons, the mending and nurturing of this personal centre of affect and willing . . . Our interpersonal soul care seeks to understand and respond to God’s active caring.”<sup>105</sup>

Ministers are conduits for caring; often in environments where caring is set aside, even considered unwelcome.<sup>106</sup>

Palmer writes, “Deep caring about each other’s fate does seem to be on the decline.”<sup>107</sup> There is certainly evidence of this. However, the natural tendency to care is still there, even if suppressed by circumstances. A respondent writes, “It is meaningful to work alongside people to help them explore their lives and life circumstances.”<sup>108</sup>

When the circumstance is provided, this tendency to care will be re-ignited. As leaders are reminded of this, they will see the deep value in creating such circumstances.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Marty, “Shaping Communities,” 312.

<sup>104</sup> Purves, *Pastoral Theology*, 117.

<sup>105</sup> Oden, *Pastoral Theology*, 187.

<sup>106</sup> ‘Kicking ass and taking names’ is a familiar workplace idiom, probably rooted in military vernacular.

<sup>107</sup> Palmer, *A Hidden Wholeness*, 37.

<sup>108</sup> Verbatim respondent 12.

<sup>109</sup> The capital markets industry is where I spent the greater part of my career. It is competitive in the extreme. It is a profession environment that presents rapidly changing situations that require instantaneous recalibration of assumptions, and quick decisions. Traders and portfolio managers go home at the end of each day knowing whether they were on the right side or the wrong side of the transaction. It takes great effort to establish and keep trusting relationships in this environment.

A respondent writes, “There is little transparency around pay. But, I am creating something—it is meaningful and tangible, something hopefully I can be proud of.”<sup>110</sup>

Again, shalom means the elimination of inequality; a critical factor in workplace suffering. Introducing and exploration of faith as a way to address this suffering will take time and patience. Nouwen writes:

The spiritual life is first of all, a patient waiting, that is, a waiting in suffering (*pator* – suffer), during which the many experiences of unfulfilment remind us of God’s absence. But it is also waiting in expectation which allows us to recognize the first signs of the coming God in the centre of our pains. The mystery of God’s presence, therefore, can be touched only by a deep awareness of his absence. It is at the centre of our longing for the absent God that we discover his footprints.<sup>111</sup>

Wisdom is the product of the (often guided) exploration of faith. Oden writes, “It is only in the companionship of grace, drawing on resources beyond one’s own, that wisdom can be found . . . The working minister is in a co-working ministry day after day with Christ’s own ministry, supported and energized by the Holy Spirit.”<sup>112</sup> It is our sacred task to provide hospitality and relationship and service—to listen and invite a conversation with leaders into which Christ can enter.

Respondents articulate their spiritual yearning, as a means of coming to terms with the purpose of their work, in numerous ways. A respondent writes, “In terms of fully satisfying a sense of calling, that is more difficult. I’m still trying to figure it all out.”<sup>113</sup> Intuitively, one can imagine vast numbers of people saying something like this. This is an invitation to ask someone to tell us their story. Listening to stories are at the heart of ministry. Nowhere, perhaps, is this more critical than in the workplace. As

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<sup>110</sup> Verbatim respondent 29.

<sup>111</sup> Nouwen, *Reaching Out*, 128.

<sup>112</sup> Oden, *Pastoral Theology*, 193.

<sup>113</sup> Verbatim respondent 1.

spiritual counsellors, when we listen to the impact that circumstances have on individuals we begin to move into their lives, and when we move into their lives we have the opportunity to introduce healing. Thomas Attig writes that “you must learn the details of each life story . . . you must learn the details.”<sup>114</sup> Osmer takes this further. He describes a ‘continuum of attending’ from informal attending to semiformal attending, to formal attending. At the formal attending end of the spectrum, Osmer writes, “*Formal attending is investigating particular episodes, situations, and contexts through empirical research. [A form of priestly listening], such methods allow congregational leaders to attend to others in a systematic and intentional fashion.*”<sup>115</sup>

A respondent writes, “I feel that most of my colleagues share the same passion, although there are definitely some who don’t.”<sup>116</sup> Another writes, “I’m not sure if my co-workers share the same views.”<sup>117</sup> Another writes, “I’m not convinced my colleagues share my sense of vocation.”<sup>118</sup> Another writes, “I don’t feel a high degree of meaningfulness.”<sup>119</sup> Incompleteness gnaws at people, particularly leaders. Bass provides a simple but moving example of incompleteness. She writes, “Most days, I do not live on a mountain top, rather, I poke along in the weeds, my eyes turned down toward my own path rather than out toward God and neighbour. Even then, of course, I retain a certain kind of knowledge of God.”<sup>120</sup> These situations can be substantially ameliorated through active listening.

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<sup>114</sup> Attig, *How We Grieve*, 18–19.

<sup>115</sup> Osmer, *Practical Theology*, 38–39 [emphasis original].

<sup>116</sup> Verbatim respondent 8.

<sup>117</sup> Verbatim respondent 30.

<sup>118</sup> Verbatim respondent 10.

<sup>119</sup> Verbatim respondent 32.

<sup>120</sup> Bass, “Practical Wisdom,” 69.

## Workaholism

A challenge that is perhaps pervasive today is workaholism, particularly among those in leadership roles. Thomas W.H. Ng et al write:

The changing nature of careers in recent years further accentuates the need to increase our understanding of Workaholism . . . [W]ith the advance of technology (e.g., internet and telecommunication), more and more employees are able to work outside the traditional office and outside traditional work hours, These changes can induce more workaholism especially in managerial employees, who now have both greater incentives and greater opportunities to invest more heavily in work . . . On one hand, workaholics are addicts who cannot control themselves; on the other hand, they are particularly diligent and dedicated workers.<sup>121</sup>

This deserves exploration. Scott Hahn writes, “We have become stuck in creation’s sixth day, unable to get perspective on life, unable to get a decent rest . . . If we do not make time to stop and think we lose our ability to sense God’s being and his presence.”<sup>122</sup> For people practicing their faith this means attending to the rhythm of work and Sabbath rest. For most, however, this notion has been lost. Nouwen writes, “We need someone who encourages us when we are tempted to give it all up.”<sup>123</sup> This phenomenon may be a primary reason for increased mental leaves of absence. Stefan Wyszynski offers a simple counselling discussion regarding praying at each stage in our work. He states:

[There] is a kind of supernatural organization of work: a division of work into a number of little activities, each of which we give back to God in a separate act of love. It is possible to set all of the activities of the day into this framework. However, it is sufficient to get through some determined task well once during the course of the day in order to acquire wonderful fruits in the sanctification of the temporal.<sup>124</sup>

In our engagement with leaders, we open a space, and God takes over. James Loder writes that in the moment of surrender we are, “known, seen and authorized [by

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<sup>121</sup> Ng et al., “Antecedents, and Consequences, of Workaholism,” 111–12.

<sup>122</sup> Hahn *Ordinary Work*, 51.

<sup>123</sup> Nouwen, *Reaching Out*, 137.

<sup>124</sup> Wyszynski, *All You Who Labor*, 82.



God].”<sup>125</sup> Loder describes Paul’s experience on the Road to Damascus, which we may view as a leadership preparation event. He writes, “Not only is Saul, seen, known and understood, he is authorized; first by this direct meeting and later by confirming events . . . He is called into the making of history.”<sup>126</sup> Paul’s experience is an extreme example of a transformative circumstance that we may experience ourselves; i.e. trauma followed by understanding. In Paul’s conversion, God calls upon one individual, a disciple named Ananias, who is to play a major pastoral role. It is immediately important to note here that God calls upon Ananias to provide both spiritual and physical solace to Saul. So it is that this is a critical time for spiritual guidance. Ananias has a strictly limited task in the story of Paul’s calling. He is to heal and baptize Paul. This is his active role. This narrative may well present Ananias as the archetype for the pastoral role of coming alongside those leaders who are struggling with their faith—not to mediate, but to be a vessel through which Christ, through the Holy Spirit, brings God’s love and mercy. But first we must act, just as Ananias was called to act—to step into the situation.

Pattison writes:

Managers have to determine whether there is a need for change, and whether they have any choice about this. In doing so, they must identify the core mission or *raison d’etre* of their organization to discriminate between competing priorities and courses of action . . . Often, these issues have substantial ethical and practical implications. They should be taken seriously before change management is embarked upon.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Loder, *The Transforming Moment*, 22.

<sup>126</sup> Loder, *The Transforming Moment*, 22.

<sup>127</sup> Pattison, *Faith of the Managers*, 121–22.

### Loneliness and Liminality

As is clear in this dissertation, for many the struggle to find purpose can be significant, if not monumental. Flourishing must involve spiritual intimacy. Before we can reach intimacy with God, and indeed greater intimacy with another person, we should first find stillness in solitude, which becomes a path to prayer. However, the silence that is prelude to solitude that may be the most significant threshold to cross. For those who have not yet accepted faith; indeed, even for those who have accepted faith—to ask them to be still—to enter solitude, can be a daunting request. Moreover, many will actively resist such an imperative.

Leaders feel that they have to say something. We avoid silence, out of fear of the darkness of our existence, and out of fear of a struggle with the errors of our past. Nouwen writes, “Whether it is good or bad I do not know, but there is no doubt that solitude leads me often to think about my past.”<sup>128</sup> If this is Nouwen’s experience, then we can imagine how profoundly difficult it might be for one who has not yet found faith, to devote time to silence, without distractions, without the glittering lights of computer screens, mobile devices, televisions, and so on, in order to enter into solitude. To say the least it can be painful to confront past errors and perceived missed opportunities. We may even feel that it is too late—we have too much baggage—to contemplate a relationship with the divine. As Woody Guthrie wrote:

You've got to walk that lonesome valley  
Well you gotta go by yourself  
Well there ain't nobody else gonna go there for you  
You gotta go there by yourself<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Nouwen, *The Genesee Diary*, 93.

<sup>129</sup> Song Title: Lyrics by Woody Guthrie.

This is a liminal space. Leaders find themselves standing at a threshold, not knowing whether to step forward or to step back. It is a lonely place. Paul Tournier adds:

How many men and women around about us there are, with whom we rub shoulders daily, living in secret loneliness? The doctor, a sort of confessor, knows it better than anyone else. Often at the close of an interview I have heard the client tell me, Without realizing it, I have been looking for someone for many years, someone to whom I could say just what I've told you now, someone I could trust without reservation and without any fear of being condemned.<sup>130</sup>

Loneliness certainly can be a place where we are stuck; unable to move. Loneliness can be a *liminal* place—a threshold to pass through, perhaps with guidance. Gianpiero Petriglieri et al. write:

We set out to investigate how management education may foster the transformational learning that supports leaders' ongoing development. On the basis of [our] qualitative analysis we propose that this occurs through a process of *personalization* by which individuals examine their experiences and revisit their life stories as part and parcel of management learning.<sup>131</sup>

Arguably, this process of personalization involves Liminality. Silence is the first foothold on this threshold. The next step is into solitude. This is the pastoral task. This was Ananias' task. This is our task, and we never know when we will be called upon.<sup>132</sup> Fully seeing others is first achieved this silence. Chapter 4 referred to the leadership task of fully seeing people. Foundational to the pastoral role is to teach people to see one another. Martin Buber makes clear the divine exhortation that each human being is fully seen and identified—invited into full participation in God's Kingdom. Buber writes, "The It is the chrysalis, the You the butterfly."<sup>133</sup> We metamorphose into whole human beings when we are seen as whole beings—when we are loved. Loneliness, then, is a

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<sup>130</sup> Tournier, *Escape from Loneliness*, 14.

<sup>131</sup> Petriglieri et al. "Up Close and Personal," 436 [emphasis original].

<sup>132</sup> After a presentation to a large group of accounting students, a young person approached me, knowing of my work at the Divinity College. He said, "Can I ask you a question? I said, "Of course." He then said, "I don't know how to pray."

<sup>133</sup> Buber, *I and Thou*, 69.

state of being an It; being solitary, unnoticed, isolated. Intimacy is non-existent in loneliness. To be seen—to be fully known—is to dispel loneliness. When someone sees us, acknowledges us, notices us, speaks to us, and tells us that we are a whole and unique being, we are no longer alone. When we know that we are no longer alone, a movement toward intimacy begins, and this can be instantaneous. In a world where everyone is wrapped in sight-inhibiting technology, perhaps a workshop on seeing people would be valuable.

Our divine obligation, in fact, is to see the whole person and affirm to them that they are seen.<sup>134</sup> This is critical. Thus, solitude is not loneliness. It is across the threshold from loneliness and the fears of silence. Solitude is being *alone* without being *lonely*. It is an act of withdrawal for reflection, meditation and, for a person of faith, a source of spiritual growth. This is a moment of surrender to God, who knows us completely. Arriving at this moment, this prelude to surrender, can be a dangerous passage. Evelyn Whitehead and James Whitehead write:

My former state and its values and motives are no longer satisfying; they no longer make sense. Disorientation and confusion can result. Such a passage is, for one who would believe, a potentially sacred time, a *kairos*. Experienced initially as disorienting and even debilitating, this time is also one of special opportunity—an extraordinary chance to encounter God and to reorient oneself in more loving and generous directions.<sup>135</sup>

When we contemplate this transforming moment occurring while a person is also attempting to navigate all the myriad responsibilities of work-related tasks, we can understand why this may well be a time that intense consternation and uncertainty could occur. Whitehead and Whitehead write, “This *kairos* at mid-life, like every other such

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<sup>134</sup> I cannot overemphasize this. Every time I have the occasion to practice this full ‘seeing’ of another I am overwhelmed by the transformational change in the demeanor of the person.

<sup>135</sup> Whitehead and Whitehead, *Christian Life Patterns*, 140.

frightening moment, is often avoided. Busying oneself in work or fleeing into distractions are but two such attempts.”<sup>136</sup> Our regular presence in the dialogue of work may prove to be crucial in terms of becoming a familiar and trusted pastoral colleague.

### **Prayer and Meditation**

As stated earlier, many respondents who identify as leaders refer to prayer and meditation. For example, “I frequently used meditation, reflection, and prayer as a means to resolve issues in my mind.”<sup>137</sup> The pastoral endeavour includes, perhaps at its very centre, an invitation to prayer. Prayer also begins in solitude. Through prayer, intimacy begins. A respondent writes, “There is definitely a sense of calling. This has led me to much time in prayer.”<sup>138</sup> As intimacy begins first with God, we are prepared for intimacy with one another. The more willing we are to spend time in reflective solitude, the more ready we are for complete and constructive participation in community. Nouwen asserts that prayer is the most essential element of the faithful life. However, he writes, “Praying is no easy matter. It demands a relationship in which you allow someone other than yourself to enter into the very centre of your person, to see there what you would rather leave in darkness, and to touch what you would rather leave untouched.”<sup>139</sup> Prayer is, in effect, a liminal space—a portal—between the eternal and the temporal; between the now and the not yet. These thoughts shed light on a great challenge for the person who relies on their perceived ability to go it alone, feeling no need for reliance on the Divine. Research suggests that this may be a growing syndrome

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<sup>136</sup> Whitehead and Whitehead, *Christian Life Patterns*, 140.

<sup>137</sup> Verbatim respondent 14.

<sup>138</sup> Verbatim respondent 23.

<sup>139</sup> Nouwen, *With Open Hands*, 19.

in the increasingly pervasive worldview that excludes the existence of God.<sup>140</sup> For people who are working hard to maintain control of their lives in sometimes chaotic environments, it is entirely reasonable that standing at a liminal threshold brings great anxiety, particular when those around us are simply ignoring the issue altogether. A respondent writes, “I barely hear the word ‘God,’ let alone a discussion about who Jesus is.”<sup>141</sup>

How can we help leaders bring work back into the realm of God? Paul Stevens points to several conversations that we might attempt to ignite in a Spirit-led leadership practice.

He suggests:

- A theological framework for marketplace activity.
- An understanding of corporate culture and the task in cultivating it.
- An explanation of how faith relates to vocation, work, and ministry in the workplace and gives it lasting and satisfying meaning.
- A perspective on how spirituality is not merely a way of cranking up motivation in weary workers but the very source of creativity and entrepreneurship.
- A motivational perspective on dealing with awkward ethical dilemmas.
- A plan for living contemplatively in the thick of a demanding career.<sup>142</sup>

While not explicitly stated in the questionnaire verbatim responses, it is clear that these elements of leadership practice should be integrated into a living and dynamic action plan, constantly reviewed and refined. In particular, the act of providing regular feedback and frequent affirmation of progress are critical. Amabile and Kramer write:

Through exhaustive analysis of diaries kept by knowledge workers, we discovered the *progress principle*. Of all the things that can boost emotions, motivation and perceptions during a workday, *the single most important is making progress in meaningful work*. And the more frequently people

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<sup>140</sup> I have often used the metaphor of standing on a coastal beach, watching the tide flood and ebb, and standing on the sand as if in a liminal place. We cannot remain on the beach as the tide approaches, and we cannot stand forever at the threshold of a decision to accept God.

<sup>141</sup> Verbatim respondent 6.

<sup>142</sup> Stevens, *Doing God's Business*, 13.

experience that sense of progress, the more likely they are to be producing creatively in the long run.<sup>143</sup>

Opening a conversation about progress on a leadership task may yield a very valuable conversation. While leaders are explicitly charged with achieving goals related to profit and output, leading a conversation that ties such goals to the personal aspirations related to human flourishing is crucial. Somewhere in our conversation with someone, there will be a clear transforming event, initiated by God. Following the model of Ananias, our charge is to come alongside those who invite us. We should seek an invitation to guide them toward contemplative prayer and to seek an encounter with the divine. This is not contra a profit or productivity motive. It promotes human flourishing, and, arguably, human flourishing enhances organizational performance. Anton Boisen underscores the view that transformation often occurs at moments of deep inflection. These are moments when we experience risk of loss, moments of tragedy, or simply moments when we finally come face to face with the fundamental question, ‘who is God to me?’ Even more deeply, we may ask ‘who am I to God?’ Boisen writes, “My thesis is that religious experience is rooted in the social nature of man [sic] and arises spontaneously under the pressure of crisis situations . . . As one stands face to face with the ultimate realities of life and death, religion and theology tend to come to life.”<sup>144</sup> This could well be the moment of deepest inflection.

The pastoral presence is critical as potential leadership crises unfold in dialogue. Patton writes, “For Boisen, crisis could be a tragedy or an opportunity, the making or breaking of a person, the discovery of possibility and direction in life . . . Boisen

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<sup>143</sup> Amabile and Kramer, “The Power of Small Wins,” [emphasis added] 2.

<sup>144</sup> Boisen, *Religion in Crisis and Custom*, 3.

understood crisis as involving the disorganization of a person's world . . . something has happened which has upset the foundations upon which ordinary reason is based."<sup>145</sup>

Patton takes this further when he writes:

The implications for pastoral care and counselling of these features of human crisis which Boisen identified seem clear. I can offer only a few words of elaboration. For the pastor, crisis . . . is a time when the usual defenses have broken down and when a person may see things about herself or himself that ordinarily would not be perceived. Because crisis breaks down defenses, a time of crisis is one in which the pastor needs to be particularly careful of what is said and how it is said.<sup>146</sup>

We cannot wait in the sanctuary of the church for people to come and find us. The UK's Street-Pastor example referenced earlier provides an exemplar. Gibbs and Coffey write, "Churches cannot stand apart from society and invite people to come to them on their terms. Rather, churches must go to people where they are and communicate in terms that will make sense to them, addressing the issues that shape their lives."<sup>147</sup>

### **Creating Space for Divine Contemplation**

We are to find leaders where they are and seek to create a space for divine intervention and then depart. This divine influence, and the resulting convictional moment—the spiritual transformation—can only be achieved in solitude. Timing is crucial. Parker Palmer writes, "To suffer with another person means to be there in whatever way possible, to share the circumstances of the other's life as much as one can—not to add to the world's pool of suffering, but to gain intimate understanding of what the other requires."<sup>148</sup> Thus, central to ministry is the theology of suffering, and central to a

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<sup>145</sup> Patton, "Physicians of the Soul," 165.

<sup>146</sup> Patton, "Physicians of the Soul," 166

<sup>147</sup> Gibbs and Coffey, *Church Next*, 45.

<sup>148</sup> Palmer, *The Active Life*, 84.



theology of suffering is a God who suffers with us. Pastors are called to discern when their ministry should be one of silence—to create a space where the Holy Spirit can speak. In the same way that God is also present in silence, Zylla writes, “There are extended times where words may not be helpful to those who are suffering.”<sup>149</sup> We cannot wait in hope that leaders will walk through the doors of the church, although some will. We should find a way to meet leaders where they want to meet.<sup>150</sup>

Being transformed into a person that is in communion with the Holy Trinity makes possible a deeper intimacy with others. It is the removal of the fear of such intimacy. Nouwen writes, “Contemplative Prayer often brings us to an intimate encounter with the love of God, revealed in Jesus. In such an experience we come to know even more deeply that God is not against us, but for us; not far from us, but with us; not outside of us, but deeply within us.”<sup>151</sup>

At Evangel Hall Mission in Toronto, this is witnessed every day. Just one example is the story of Bill, as presented in their 2016 Annual Report:

When Bill first stepped through the doors of Evangel Hall Mission, he had reached the end of his rope. He was out of work, living under a truck, and struggled with a crippling drug addiction. Discovering EHM through word of mouth, Bill came here looking for help when there was nowhere left to go. He started volunteering a few days a week, which was vital in helping him find a purpose again. It also eased his mind of the hardships that plagued him. ‘EHM made me feel like a somebody,’ he says. ‘They lifted me out of the gutter and gave me a place to be.’<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Zylla, *The Roots of Sorrow*, 89.

<sup>150</sup> I had such an experience when entering a building lobby and passing my business card to the security guard—he proceeded to ask me about a passage in the Gospel of John. We sat and talked for twenty minutes, followed by a number of inspiring email exchanges.

<sup>151</sup> Nouwen, *Spiritual Formation*, 12.

<sup>152</sup> Evangel Hall Annual Report 2016 No page number.

This testimony underscores Nouwen's words, "We need someone who encourages us when we are tempted to give it all up, to forget it all."<sup>153</sup>

Paul Mickey writes, "The pastor's relationship to people is not to be seen as one of a perfect moral influence, but it is a two-way relationship in which the resources of the 'imperfect' pastor are immediately and continually available to imperfect and incomplete people."<sup>154</sup> Thus morality and caring are inextricable—both constitute the pastoral relationship. Nel Noddings underscores this when she asserts that, "Moral behaviour arises out of our natural impulse to care."<sup>155</sup> Leaders must be encouraged.

We ask significant questions: 'Am I worthy of love?' 'Are others capable of loving me?' These deeply personal, fundamental, and perhaps fearful questions may be emblematic of the threshold moment between silence and solitude. They represent central elements of the fear of intimacy. John the Apostle makes it clear:

And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the Day of Judgment, because in this world we are like him. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because he first loved us (1 John 4: 16–19).

A discussion of forgiveness may be the deepest and most profound of opportunities that we are given. It brings us to a sacred place. Berel Lang writes, "We know that people may not feel forgiving or be able to act forgivingly even when they are aware that the circumstances warrant forgiveness."<sup>156</sup> This is, in effect, a liminal space, where paracletic ministry may be valuable.

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<sup>153</sup> Nouwen, *Reaching Out*, 137.

<sup>154</sup> Mickey, "Is There a Theology," 30.

<sup>155</sup> Noddings, *Caring*, 51

<sup>156</sup> Lang, "Forgiveness," 109.

## Holy Ground

When we seek and are accepted into a caring relationship, we are effectively entering holy ground; blessed ground. Nouwen writes about a deeply meaningful conversation with a student that illuminates this. He writes, “It is the Christ in you, who recognizes the Christ in me.”<sup>157</sup> Nouwen is suggesting here that evidence of care being received is the reciprocating notion of care being returned. To be clear, however, we seldom need to actually say this. We just have to act in such a way that that it is obvious. Patton speaks of a relationship beyond words. He writes of a “wholeness that exceeds what can be known, done, and said.”<sup>158</sup> This wholeness of relationship may be the result of divine intervention in the caring moment. Noddings adds an important dimension to this assertion. She writes, “The one-caring, in caring, is *present* in her acts of caring. Even in physical absence, acts at a distance bear the signs of presence: engrossment in the other, regard, desire for the other’s well-being.”<sup>159</sup> Our adult children and grand-children, years after leaving home to live their own lives, carry our love and lessons with them. Jack Balswick et al. provide a Trinitarian foundation for this. They write, “to live as beings made in the image of God is to live as reciprocating selves, as unique individuals living in relationship with one another.”<sup>160</sup> The indwelling of God is the underpinning of our reciprocating selves. This is our gift to leaders.

It is the indwelling of God that brings deeper leadership competence. It may take years to become aware of this. Capps discusses the competent self. Capps writes of, “[H]ow important it is [to be] recognized as competent . . . [This] also reveals that a

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<sup>157</sup> Nouwen, *Reaching Out*, 45.

<sup>158</sup> Nouwen, *Lifesigns*, 55.

<sup>159</sup> Noddings, *Caring*, 19 [emphasis original].

<sup>160</sup> Balswick et al., *The Reciprocating Self*, 31.

person in the fourth decade of life is expected to be competent with regard to various interpersonal relationships—familial and work related—and that competence, in every one of these relationships, is very difficult to achieve.”<sup>161</sup> These observations underscore the reality that this decade of life is a season of great risk. The challenging pastoral call is to open a dialogue—introducing the way of hope and legacy, through creating space for the healing work of the Holy Spirit. Again, our task may be a combination—sometimes repetitively—of being physically present and absent in the counselling process. Anthony Storr introduces us to “the paradoxical notion that building stronger relations frequently requires time in solitude to restore relational damage that may have occurred in the past and provide for restoration to a sense of deeper self-worth.”<sup>162</sup>

Just as when we stand in the liminal space that is a threshold, we must make a choice. We can move on or move back, live in fear, or live in anticipation. Solitude could be viewed as a moment of both fleeing and staying. Williams writes, “We might say that we are being encouraged to flee from ‘projection’ – from other people’s projections onto us, ours onto them, our own inflated expectations of ourselves.”<sup>163</sup> When we stay and contemplate in solitude, however, “we have to find somewhere dark enough for memory and imagination to join hands.”<sup>164</sup> Nouwen continues, “Our primary task in solitude, therefore, is not to pay undue attention to the many faces which assail us, but to keep the eyes of our mind and heart on him who is our divine saviour.”<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Capps, *The Decades of Life*, 79.

<sup>162</sup> Storr, *Solitude: A Return to the Self*, 149.

<sup>163</sup> Williams, *Silence and Honey Cakes*, 63.

<sup>164</sup> Williams, *Silence and Honey Cakes*, 96.

<sup>165</sup> Nouwen, *The Way of the Heart*, 20.

Even for Nouwen, however, this is challenging at times. He confesses, “So what about my life of prayer? Do I like to pray? Do I spend time praying? Frankly the answer is no to all three questions. After sixty-three years of life and thirty-eight years of priesthood, my prayer seems as dead as a rock.”<sup>166</sup> But Nouwen does not give up. He affirms that, “Prayer gives us the courage to stretch out our arms and be led.”<sup>167</sup> For the self-assured aspiring leader in the fourth decade, this is a difficult surrender. Once made however, a convictional experience may come swiftly. Getting on to the right path, especially as we reach mid-life, may have a great deal to do with forming a crystallized picture of one’s legacy. This may be the pinnacle of leadership. This is finding purpose—it is accepting our divine vocation. Rolheiser makes the statement, “Spirituality is about what we do with the fire inside us.”<sup>168</sup> In other words it is accepting Christ as the source of our future. This is the movement from illusion to prayer. Nouwen writes, “Prayer is being unbusy with God instead of being busy with other things. Prayer is primarily to do nothing useful or productive in the presence of God.”<sup>169</sup> This is a sea-change demand.

Workplace dissonance brings fear. Leaders may be the cause, or the victim. To be intimate with another is to have overcome fear. This presents the pastoral presence in a prismatic way. This is to say that we reflect the light of God back to God, and we refract that light onto those to whom we minister. Nouwen writes:

Christian ministers who have discovered in themselves the voice of the Spirit and have rediscovered their fellow human beings with compassion might be able to look at the people they meet, the contacts they make, and the events that they

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<sup>166</sup> Nouwen, *Sabbatical Journey*, 5.

<sup>167</sup> Nouwen, *Making All Things New*, 42.

<sup>168</sup> Rolheiser, *The Holy Longing*, 11.

<sup>169</sup> Nouwen, *Spiritual Journey*, 19.

become a part of, in a different way. They might uncover the first glimpse of the new world behind the veil of everyday life.<sup>170</sup>

Once we see the possibilities in others, we cannot help but see the whole person, regardless of their circumstances. We can then become the shepherd—the leader—guiding the person toward a convictional experience, when we step aside and let Christ take over. Referring to Phil 2:5–11, Loder writes:

Christ, by his own initiative, enters into all ‘worlds’ (incarnation) by the proclamation of his world, he exposes the deepest possible conflict (sin) and then takes it into himself (crucifixion). He enters into the condemned and buried past of world history (descent into hell). Then he emerges as a radically new being, or new being breaks in on the earth through him (resurrection). The inherent continuity of God’s action in Jesus Christ is exultantly affirmed (glorification), and it corresponds with public life in history (Pentecost) . . . Thus connecting human transformation to Christian history.<sup>171</sup>

Loder employs this passage to underscore that, “Convictional experiences are to be seen as initiated by Christ.”<sup>172</sup> Loder continues by asserting that, “Transforming experiences initiated by Christ are characterized by a resulting sacrificial love in the one transformed.” Loder makes a further comment that should be of great comfort to those struggling with the past, when he affirms that, “Convictional experiences are to be seen pre-eminently as a breakthrough from the future.”<sup>173</sup> Rev 3:20 offers, “Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and eat with you, and you with me.” This is a request for hospitality and is a critical point—if we are deafened by our past we cannot not hear God’s knock at the door. This is a liminal moment. In an earlier paper, I wrote:

The first task of paracletic ministry is to fully see the person—perhaps in their state of pre-metamorphosis—their transition to solitude and with it receptivity

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<sup>170</sup> Nouwen, *The Wounded Healer*, 48.

<sup>171</sup> Loder, *The Transforming Moment*, 148.

<sup>172</sup> Loder, *The Transforming Moment*, 148.

<sup>173</sup> Loder, *The Transforming Moment*, 185.

for a divine encounter. Thus when they know that we, as their pastoral guide, let them know they are seen, not only by us, but moreover by God, fear of a past that holds them back subsides, and a new intimacy begins.<sup>174</sup>

As alluded to earlier, hospitality continues long after our physical presence is gone. Nouwen asserts that the tangible expression of pastoral care is hospitality. He writes:

Loneliness is dispelled by hospitality: It belongs to the essence of a Christian spirituality to receive our fellow human beings into our world without imposing on our fellow human our religious viewpoint, ideology or way of doing things on them as a condition for love, friendship and care.<sup>175</sup>

### **Withdrawing From the Dialogue**

Nouwen asserts that we have to know when to leave a person alone. He states:

Paradoxically, we must then move away and leave solitude behind: The mystery of God's presence, therefore, can be touched only by a deep awareness of his absence. It is at the centre of our longing for the absent God that we discover his footprints, and realize that our desire to love God is born out of the love with which he has touched us . . . We discover how much he has filled our lives already.<sup>176</sup>

The task, then, is one of invitation. When invited, our questions should open a space for the future. Nouwen writes that, "By slowly converting our loneliness into a deep solitude, we create that precious space where we can discover the voice telling us about our inner necessity—that is, our vocation."<sup>177</sup> Michael Knowles writes, "Christians bear witness to a saving grace that precedes any human response. Faith does not bear witness, first and foremost, to a particular act of reception, but to the divine primacy of divine action on behalf of humanity that makes reception possible."<sup>178</sup> Just as Jesus

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<sup>174</sup> Bates, "Paracletic Ministry," 4.

<sup>175</sup> Nouwen, *Reaching Out*, 98.

<sup>176</sup> Nouwen, *Reaching Out*, 128.

<sup>177</sup> Nouwen, *Reaching Out*, 40.

<sup>178</sup> Knowles, *Of Seeds and the People of God*, 141.

presented himself to Cleopas and his companion on the road to Emmaus, as ministers we should be fellow travellers with leaders. In this role, we invite others to join us in contemplative reading of scripture, and we fulfil a critical task—that of companionship. In addition, to repeat, we should be ready to move into, and out of, the way. Nouwen underscores the mystery of God’s absence. He writes, “It is our longing for the absent God that we discover his footprints.”<sup>179</sup> This is the mystery of pastoral care. Ralph Underwood underscores the point. He writes, “For Boisen, the essence of Christian Ministry is the task of understanding guidance toward the ends of reconciliation, including ultimate unification with God.”<sup>180</sup>

Our work as pastors is to confront the darkness in our own lives, and then to help with the same confrontation in the lives of those leaders that we are sent to find, acknowledge, and guide toward prayer. Workplace ministry will not be simple. It is, however, essential. Workplace ministry requires going to where the action is.

### **Conclusion**

The postmodern era has brought a need for a new evangelism. We are witnessing a new epistemology for many. We are witnessing a post-religious spirituality. Ministry through coming alongside leaders should be considered, in the heart of their lives and work. Christian apologetics must give way to workplace related discussions of spirituality, and of the possibility of flourishing.

This is paracletic ministry. This is bringing a priestly presence to the very core of people’s circumstances, creating space for the soul to speak; standing beside someone in

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<sup>179</sup> Nouwen, *Reaching Out*, 128.

<sup>180</sup> Underwood, “A Ministry of Reconciliation,” 143.



a liminal space—a threshold event. To be encouraged is the creation of dedicated spaces to provide respectful and inclusive ways to recognize faith traditions and meditative practices in the workplace. Activism in our communities may be valuable, seeking out the matters that affect the communities in which we live and work. Engagement may be powerful.

Learning and understanding the language of the workplace, together with the methods and principles under which postmodern organizations operate, will equip us to bring the gospel messages of hope and forgiveness to all who labour.

## CONCLUSION

Five decades of work and leadership experience, together with academic and professional studies in finance, accounting, capital markets and theology, led to a question: do people experience a complete sense of spiritual flourishing in their work? Thirty-two individuals kindly agreed to share their experiences. These respondents represent a broad diversity of profession, age, role and geography. A majority of the respondents expressed faith or spirituality, together with tacit affirmation that work is vital to personhood. However a significant number went on to articulate some level of disharmony, or dissonance, in their workplace experience.

Development of the grounded theory supporting the recommendations of this dissertation is the result the narrative testimony of thirty-two unique lived experiences in a broad number of environments in three countries. The design of the questionnaires allowed for an open-ended opportunity for expression of the lived experiences of the respondents who are situated in all stages of life and in a broad number of professional circumstances.

The workplace has changed significantly in the last half-century as society transitioned from modern to postmodern. On the one hand, organizational systems are calculated and designed to achieve the hard goals of the enterprise. On the other hand, postmodern organizations are places for a wide range of behaviour, from humour to oppression and fierce competition.

If people experience dissonance at work, then leadership is directly involved in the creation of such circumstances. This focus draws from the grounded theory emerging from qualitative study, which describes the workplace circumstances of the respondents. Arguably, virtually all of these circumstances flow effectively from specific leadership decisions. Therefore they also can be addressed by leadership decisions.

A multi-faceted emergent grounded theory is drawn from breaking down the qualitative data provided by research, subsequently reflected on through an iterative, interdisciplinary, review.

This dissertation also suggests that if leadership has the power to change workplace circumstances, paraclitic ministry can help. Ministers have the capacity of listening, encouraging, and advising. A practical theology of work and leadership offers leaders a pathway to the creation of workplaces that nurture human flourishing *and* which achieve maximum possible output. In addition, the study of a practical theology of work and leadership offers to ministers and faith-based counsellors a means to advance new conversations with leaders and those who seek to lead. The payoff is a community of workers and leaders who experience true flourishing. The enterprises that they are part may experience significantly greater results.

All of the foregoing has come together to inspire innovative, Spirit-led leadership. Leadership that is modelled after the biblical concept of followership if Jesus' call to servant-hood and humility. Some of the observations result in challenging admonitions. Self-awareness is therefore a foundation for those willing to reflect and respond. The rewards, however, are significant. The product of Spirit-led leadership is

the creation of legacy in the broadest sense. Indeed, the outcomes, one might argue, are of eschatological dimensions.

The work of leadership is not easy. The workplace is going to change further. What will be a constant, however, is the relationship between satisfying work, in all its dimensions, with general well-being, both for individuals and entire communities.

Dreams of a 'middle class' life are being challenged. Many are debt-laden, to the point of being on the brink of financial insolvency. Many are holding down several jobs while harbouring fears of lay-offs. Commute-times are lengthening. Many are just tired.

In the midst of all this, people are doing their best to reflect on their spiritual nature, and a very significant number are, literally, praying for the ways in which their spiritual centre might be more fully expressed in the way they work. They care for their co-worker and they hope for an environment of equality, trust and integrity.

Spirit-led leadership is an 'all-in' profession requiring full commitment. It is a calling. The Bible, both in Old Testament and New Testament passages, recounts the stories of people who receive this sacred call. We hear of their initial and sometimes ongoing struggles to cope with their call. We also learn that, for the most part, no particular grand reward is given for their effort. Ultimately, however, their efforts change not only the lives of individuals, but entire communities.

The academy is in the early stages of broad enquiry into the methods and effects of bringing focus on faith, spirituality, and work. Collaboration on broader research between business faculty and schools of humanity and theology would be valuable. One specific area might be the leader's role in establishing and maintaining an ethos that has human flourishing as its focus. This might include a longitudinal study. This might

explore to a deeper level the impact of leadership when presented as a spirit-led practice focussed on the realities, requirements, and practices of specific work environments.

## APPENDIX 1: CODING

The following provides a full list of codes collected from research questionnaire respondents:

Role Identified	Theme	Code	Frequency
Supervisory	Benefit of work/Sense of purpose	God is involved/directing me.	1
		Satisfies economic needs.	4
		Does not satisfy economic needs	3
		See/ or experience inequality.	1
		Sense of justice.	1
		Coworkers are not achieving	3
		I achieve a sense of purpose.	1
		Sense of calling.	1
		Pray regularly for myself.	1
		Pray regularly for others.	2
		Proud of my work.	1
		Work is meaningful/has value.	3
Non-Supervisory	Benefit of work/Sense of purpose	God is involved/directing me.	2
		Satisfies economic needs.	3
		Does not satisfy economic needs	3
		See/or experience inequality.	1
		Coworkers not achieving purpose	3
		Sense of purpose/calling.	6
		No sense of calling.	2
		Pray regularly for others.	1

	Proud of my work; is fulfilling.	1
	Work is meaningful/has value.	1
	Views are not popular among peers.	1
	Stressful environment.	2
	money should not outweigh job satisfaction.	1
	Meaningful to work alongside others.	1
	Feel taken advantage of.	1
	Concern for treatment of others.	1
	Job security is a concern.	2

Role Identified	Theme	Code	Frequency
Retired	Benefit of work/Sense of purpose	Concerned about lack of ethics.	1
		No sense of calling.	1
		Sense of calling.	3
		Satisfied economic needs.	1
		work very stressful at times	2
		No job security	2
		Coworkers are not achieving	1
		Competitive environment.	1
		Sense of calling.	2
		environment lost ethics	1
		coworkers did not share views.	1
		Being a leader was satisfying.	1
Self-employed	Benefit of work/Sense of purpose	Enjoy helping others.	1
		Sense of family at work.	1
		Sense of purpose/calling.	1

Role Identified	Theme	Code	Frequency
Supervisory	How does faith bear on views?	God has designed each person	1
		God is doing a new thing	1
		I am privileged	1
		We are all broken	1
		We all need salvation	1
		I hold to my own spiritual beliefs	2
		meaning is in helping others	4
		faith is a key component.	1
		Pray for discernment.	4
		Struggle with evil in the world.	1
		My life is witness & testimony.	1
		Faith has been strengthened.	1
Non Supervisory	How does faith bear on views?	We are connected.	1
		Connection impacts loyalty etc.	1
		I hold to my own beliefs.	2
		driven by desire to contribute.	2
		See all as equals.	1
		Faith keeps me steady/humble	1
		All work s/b done as working for Jesus	1
		Called upon to use our talents.	1
		Pray for discernment.	1
		meant to help others.	4
		God has placed me where I am.	1
		Using God-given talents.	1
		Views are informed by my faith.	2
There is something out there.	1		



	We are meant to help others.	1
	I know that efforts are rewarded spiritually.	1
	I have been provided for.	1
	More harm than good from organized religion.	1
	Good engenders good.	1
	I do not believe in an afterlife,	1
	focus s/b on behaviour in this life.	
	Faith shaped who I am.	1
	Do my best to glorify Him.	1


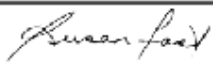
Role Identified	Theme	Code	Frequency
Retired	How does faith bear on views?	Faith through action.	1
		Speak up when people bend the truth - God gave me strength.	1
		Being tested borne through faith.	1
		Meditate & pray frequently.	2
		Strong sense of spiritual guidance	1
		Church a key role.	1
Self-employed	How does faith bear on views?	believe in mother nature.	1
		focussed on helping others.	1
Supervisory	Are you comfortable speaking about your faith at work?	fear of reprisal/conflict	2
		Speak up in loving ways.	1
		Speak through actions.	1
		Yes.	5
		This is awkward.	1
		I don't want to be converted.	1

Non-supervisory	Are you comfortable speaking about your faith at work?	If there is room.	1
		Barely hear the word 'Jesus.'	1
		Yes.	5
		I speak about my spirituality.	1
		Don't offer unless asked.	1
		Fear of judgment.	1
		Not comfortable.	1
Retired	Are you comfortable speaking about your faith at work?	Don't like to 'preach' at work.	1
		Depends on who I am speaking to	1
		Yes.	1
Self-employed	Are you comfortable speaking about your faith at work?	Yes.	1
		Only if the person is interested.	1
		Everyone's opinion is valued.	1

Role Identified	Theme	Code	Frequency
Supervisory	Have you spoken with a minister or counsellor about your work?	Yes, advisors empathise/clarify.	4
		None	5
Non-supervisory	Have you spoken with a minister or counsellor about your work?	taken a coaching program.	1
		None	7
		teaching series at church.	1
		annual visits with elders	1
		Yes.	3
		never had a satisfactory conversation.	1
Retired	Have you spoken with a minister	A couple of interactions.	1

	or counsellor about your work?	many discussions & disagreements	1
Self-employed	Have you spoken with a minister or counsellor about your work?	customers who are ministers.	1
		No.	2

APPENDIX 2: MREB CERTIFICATE

		<p><b>McMaster University Research Ethics Board (MREB)</b>                  c/o Research Office for Administrative Development and Support, MREB Secretariat, GH-305, e-mail: ethicsoffice@mcmaster.ca</p>	
<p><b>CERTIFICATE OF ETHICS CLEARANCE TO INVOLVE HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH</b></p>			
<p>Application Status: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Addendum <input type="checkbox"/> Project Number: 2018 056</p>			
<p><b>TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT:</b></p> <p>Purpose of Work</p>			
<b>Faculty Investigator(s)/ Supervisor(s)</b>	<b>Dept./Address</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>E-Mail</b>
P. Zylla	Divinity	x20104	zyllap@mcmaster.ca
<b>Co-Investigators/ Students</b>	<b>Dept./Address</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>E-Mail</b>
P. Bates	Divinity	x20512	batesp@mcmaster.ca
<p>The application in support of the above research project has been reviewed by the MREB to ensure compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement and the McMaster University Policies and Guidelines for Research Involving Human Participants. The following ethics certification is provided by the MREB:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The application protocol is cleared as presented without questions or requests for modification.  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The application protocol is cleared as revised without questions or requests for modification.  <input type="checkbox"/> The application protocol is cleared subject to clarification and/or modification as appended or identified below.</p>			
<p><b>COMMENTS AND CONDITIONS:</b> Ongoing clearance is contingent on completing the annual completed/status report. A "Change Request" or amendment must be made and cleared before any alterations are made to the research.</p>			
<b>Reporting Frequency:</b>		<b>Annual:</b> Jun-01-2019	<b>Other:</b>
<b>Date:</b> Jun-01-2018		<b>Chair, Dr. S. Fast</b> 	

## APPENDIX 3: QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

Purpose at work: Questionnaire Analysis

Questionnaire Number	Role identified	Sense of Purpose	Are you a person of faith?
1	supervisory	energized about what God is doing with me. kingdom benefit Work does not satisfy my economic needs gender income inequality - husband should provide. This is not how the body of Christ should behave. Two males in same job before me paid more!	yes
2	supervisory	I actually <i>need</i> to feel a deep senses of purpose. I want to pay my bills but I also have a deep sense of justice. My 'calling' has changed a lot. Called to this time and place for a reason. He is still revealing. I think my peers and coworkers want that deep sense of meaningfulness but I'm not sure that everyone knows how to get that.	yes
3	Retiree	My chosen industry was not at all 'secure.' I believe that it was my calling. I was given HR responsibilities that afforded me the opportunity to learn and grow. It also mean firing people - although it was always difficult, or was done as kindly as possible. The industry changed and, in my view, became less ethical. I joined a small firm owned by a gay Christian man, who is on the same page as me in terms of ethics and purpose.	yes

Questionnaire Number	How does your sense of faith bear on your views?	Are you comfortable speaking about your faith at work?	Have you spoken with a minister or counsellor?
1	I believe that God has designed each person uniquely with a role to play. I am privileged to pave roads forward for others - to encourage a cultural shift. I believe that God is 'doing a new thing.'	both yes and no. I find it hard to have honest, open conversations without fear of reprisal. I am wrestling with how the church should approach gender identity and sexuality issues - this is not a safe discussion.	Yes. My advisors empathize and are righteously angered and disappointed.
2	I used to wear rose-coloured glasses and then get crushed when people weren't as justice minded or compassionate as I was. We are all broken. We are all in need of salvation. I'm able to give a little more grace to people and a little more grace to myself.	Yes. To be honest, I used to be quiet for fear of conflict but now am much more bold to speak up in loving ways.	I am fortunate to have a group of advisors who can get me through the tough days. They remind me why God has placed me here.
3	I try to communicate my faith through action and had the opportunity to foster an environment that treated people kindly, fairly and honestly. I also spoke up when people wanted to bend the truth. God gave me strength.	Yes. I'm better at it now that when I was younger. I still don't like to preach at work but I'm fine bringing up the 'treat others...' message.	A couple of interactions.

Questionnaire Number	Role identified	Sense of Purpose	Are you a person of faith?
4	non-supervisory	I am not [currently] doing the work that I would feel is more my calling.	no
5	supervisory	I enjoy work for the flexibility, freedom of choice. I wish I could achieve a greater degree of financial reward.	no
6	non-supervisory	I experience very deep joy and meaningfulness in my work. In my mid-thirties I followed God's leading toward a career using more of my gifts and a desire to help/serve. My views, which stem from a deep-rooted belief in Christian life, are not popular amongst peers. I feel quite powerless at times. I have chosen to work in a non-Christian environment where I can model Christ.	yes

Questionnaire Number	How does your sense of faith bear on your views?	Are you comfortable speaking about your faith at work?	Have you spoken with a minister or counsellor?
4	I believe that there is something higher, but not through the lens of religious faith. In terms of my spiritual beliefs, I believe that we are all connected and that the energy we bring to our interactions affect the quality of connection, and other things like loyalty, trust, etc. I also believe that on the whole, people are good.	No. I have experienced a very negative reaction where tangible proof is the only way that you are credible and to be believed. I am a conflict avoider.	I have taken a coaching program.
5	I do not subscribe to an organized religion, however I do hold to my own spiritual beliefs. I believe that my work's meaning is driven by my desire to contribute to others' growth and development. I am also deriving meaningfulness from volunteering.	No. I prefer to speak through my actions.	I do not have conversations with an advisor.
6	My faith enables me to see all as equals, full of potential gifts that need to be exercised in order for them to find deeper reward. My faith keeps me steady when I don't see where next month's income will come from. My faith keeps me humble to know that I have something to learn from every client. My faith reminds me I don't need answers.	Yes. I seek first if there is room for the conversation. I barely hear the word 'God' let alone a discussion about who Jesus is.	A teaching series at my church about how God values work and how He uses it to transform us and sometimes as a mission field to serve others.  I have sought out and found a mentor.

Questionnaire Number	Role identified	Sense of Purpose	Are you a person of faith?
7	non-supervisory	I have a sense of meaningfulness, but it's not deep and has grown over time. I also experienced a stressful church environment. I feel secure for now. [That said] as I walked into the fog and did all I could - God met me and journeyed with me.	yes
8	self-employed	I changed careers 16 years ago to start an agriculture business. It has become my calling. It can be scary and overwhelming at times. All my efforts and funds go into the business. My workers and family are my peers.	no (maybe yes)
9	non-supervisory	Everyone wants to feel 'needed' at their workplace. I truly experience an enjoy a sense of deep meaningfulness at work. I feel trusted. I feel that my views are shared by my peers to a certain extent. Money is a motivator for most people, however, it should never outweigh the benefits of job satisfaction.	yes
10	non-supervisory but supervisory in the past.	[My first career] satisfied my economic and social needs, but there was no sense of fulfillment or vocation. I moved into the staffing industry and discovered a sense of vocation.	yes
11	supervisory	I am very satisfied with the fit between my gifts and my calling. Salary is not high, but God has provided.	yes

Questionnaire Number	How does your sense of faith bear on your views?	Are you comfortable speaking about your faith at work?	Have you spoken with a minister or counsellor?
7	I know that all work, regardless of its value on Earth, should be done with the same passion as if working for Jesus directly.	Yes. It's my accountability and check point.	Spoke with supervisor - very loving, trusting and humble.
8	I respect mother nature. You have to have faith and not give up. So am I a person of faith? I don't know - maybe.	Yes	I have had conversations with customers who are ministers. One in particular is always very encouraging.
9	We have been called upon to use our talents to the best of our ability. This provides a sense of purpose. I pray for the wisdom to make the most of every day. I strive to be more like Jesus in the way I work and interact with my colleagues.	Yes. We are called to spread the good news about our Lord and how by faith we may come to know Him.	Annual visits with our Church Elders. These conversations help with applying our faith to our everyday lives.
10	I was brought up to think that 'helping others' is what we're meant to do.	Yes.	No
11	as I work in a ministry role, faith is a key component.	Yes	Not answered

Questionnaire Number	Role identified	Sense of Purpose	Are you a person of faith?
12	non-supervisory	It is meaningful to me to work alongside people to help them explore the lives and life circumstances and how these things affect their well-being.	yes
13	non-supervisory	My work does provide a deep sense of meaningfulness. I find it very satisfying to know I have had a positive impact. I have also worked in the not-for-profit sector. [That said] I will be working out of financial necessity until I am at least 70. My work is a calling.	yes
14	retiree	I worked all my working life in one career. Latter part of my career in senior leadership. As a teacher I enjoyed communication with young people. When they presented more challenging behaviours, that encouraged me to reflect on how I could improve. It was as a leader that I gained most satisfaction - working with colleagues to improve the institution. I believe that I 'built bridges.' If I am honest, there was no sense of vocation in the early days. It has grown, almost imperceptibly.	yes
15	self-employed	First career gave a sense of deep meaningfulness. Able to leverage my gifts and honouring a family career tradition. Second career - what I am meant and called to do.	Yes

Questionnaire Number	How does your sense of faith bear on your views?	Are you comfortable speaking about your faith at work?	Have you spoken with a minister or counsellor?
12	I believe that God has placed me where I am today.	Yes. Thank goodness I can incorporate my faith into my work.	Yes. They are very encouraging.
13	I believe that I am doing good works, utilizing God-given talents. Many different careers. Considered ministry, but this was not my calling. It is an honour and privilege.	Yes, conversations with advisors.	Affirmed that things have a way of working out.
14	There were times when the sense of being tested really could be borne through a sense of faith. Although not an attender at any religious ceremony, I frequently used meditation, reflection, and prayer as a means to resolve issues in my mind. I do have a strong sense of spiritual guidance.	Yes, but it depends very much on who I am speaking with.	With one employer, prayed together.
15	I became a church elder in my 20's. This influenced my view regarding social responsibility. Focussed heavily on lessons from Residential Schools issue. Focussed me on helping others.	Only if I know that the person is interested.	No.



Questionnaire Number	Role identified	Sense of Purpose	Are you a person of faith?
16	supervisory (own business)	I learned a 'trade' but learned that it is so much more than that. People rely on a person's expertise. Money was what drove me at first, but then realized a sense of helping others in need. I have noticed lately that people are losing their sense of good' or 'skilled' workmanship - instead it's all about speed and price.	yes
17	non-supervisory	My work satisfies my economic needs, and that does lead to a sense of calling as we are able to contribute money to causes important to us. Also treating people in a manner that emphasizes humanity is central to our mission. In terms of fully satisfying a sense of calling, that is more difficult. I'm still trying to figure it all out.	yes
18	supervisory	Huge satisfaction from the work I do. Love the university setting and I am contributing meaningfully to researchers, students and university life. I find myself challenged from time to time on specific incidents, and I pray most nights that I am making the right/best decisions.	yes
19	supervisory (own business)	I have always considered my work as a means to an end. That said, I am proud to have been able to create a sense of 'family.'	no

Questionnaire Number	How does your sense of faith bear on your views?	Are you comfortable speaking about your faith at work?	Have you spoken with a minister or counsellor?
16	I do have faith, but only [in the sense] that I believe there is something out there that we are all striving towards. I do not expect others to help me, but I do expect me to help others.	Yes. I do believe there is a God, however I do not believe what most people say or believe in. I have my own beliefs and sometimes cannot even explain those.	I have not discussed this with any minister or advisor.
17	[My views] are very much informed by my spirituality. I know that my efforts will be rewarded on a spiritual level. In addition, I believe that easing the suffering of others is an easing of my own suffering.	Yes, and because I don't identify with one specific religion I think that makes it easier to speak about my spirituality. I'm guided by an inner connection to the divine.	I can't say that I've had a conversation with a spiritual advisor that I can remember. I've studied a lot of spiritual material.
18	I find myself more able to see the human side of issues. That doesn't always help! I spend time praying for discernment. I try hard to ensure full understanding of issues. People are important to me.	Yes. Faith is rarely discussed in a work place - as such this is awkward and I rarely, if ever, begin it.	None.
19	[no answer given]	I am not a person of faith. However, we have fostered an environment where everyone's opinions are valued. Just don't thrust your opinions on others.	No.

Questionnaire Number	Role identified	Sense of Purpose	Are you a person of faith?
20	non-supervisory	My role is fulfilling. I was raised to believe that kindness to one will be passed on to another. I have seen how a calm approach can spread with others in the room. I'm not sure if my coworkers share the same views.	yes
21	retired	My career was stressful and at times very political and demanding. I was compensated well but job security was not guaranteed. Performance was key. Even though I sometimes worked under great distress and pressure I felt that this was my calling. I believe I was a strong but compassionate leader. I don't believe my coworkers shared my views. Competition was their belief to success.	yes
22	non-supervisory	I have always questioned my salary. [I feel] that I have been put in a position of being taken advantage of, reducing my drive and loyalty. But I am blessed to continually receive what I need. Many events have placed a sense of doubt in my job security. E.g. others not being supported; not being assigned to a position that I felt qualified to do; being assigned a role that suited the company, but which impeded my development; being reprimanded for something I did not do.	yes

Questionnaire Number	How does your sense of faith bear on your views?	Are you comfortable speaking about your faith at work?	Have you spoken with a minister or counsellor?
20	My religious upbringing plays an important role in how I conduct myself around others.	I don't bring the word of God into conversations with friends or at work. My faith has always taught me to treat others how you would like to be treated.	No.
21	I was brought up by a strong, Christian, loving, mother. The church played a key role in my early development. I drew my strength in bad times through prayer. My success would not have happened without God's love. Now that I am retired I still try and start my day with prayer and meditation.	Yes, [although] I have a quiet faith and hope I am humble in all my actions.	I was fortunate to be associated with the church - we had many discussions - and disagreements - that helped shape me as a person. The result was I came to the conclusion that we are called to serve.
22	Simply, I have always been guided and provided for.	I don't offer my opinions unless asked, but will discuss my viewpoints openly.	No.

Questionnaire Number	Role identified	Sense of Purpose	Are you a person of faith?
23	supervisory	My work is very meaningful. It meets my economic needs and is well-suited to my gifts.	yes
24	non-supervisory	I have worked in the same field all my life, and do so for the meaningfulness of the role - helping others. I was not inspired by those who were more vociferous about their religion - they were less inspiring and more linear. I tend to gravitate toward those who put their faith into practice quietly,	yes, but.. not any recognized faith.
25	non-supervisory	I enjoy a sense of fulfillment and vocation. I do not sense that this shared by others [around me].	no
26	supervisory	work fully satisfies my economic needs and my sense of vocation. In order to earn more money I had to get promoted. That said I gain a sense of vocational enjoyment and I am committed. I'm not convinced that my colleagues share my sense of vocation.	yes, but not a regular attendee at church. I'm not sure I am a believer.

Questionnaire Number	How does your sense of faith bear on your views?	Are you comfortable speaking about your faith at work?	Have you spoken with a minister or counsellor?
23	There is definitely a sense of calling. This has led me to much time in prayer.	Yes. I am surrounded by other people of faith.	Yes. These occasions brought much clarity.
24	Sadly, I have seen more harm than good come from organized religion. My blend of humanism and some of the eastern faiths is not far away from a lighter type of Christianity which sees God as merely an interpretation of the word "Good." I believe that good engenders good. Personal development for personal gain is the essence of our struggle in this life. I do not believe in an afterlife, and I see belief in a afterlife postponing the behaviours that we would prefer to see in this life.	Yes, but carefully. Most people either believe in nothing, or believe in something so rigid and prescriptive that there is no point in discussing it.	I have never had a satisfactory conversation with a person of faith.
25	n/a	n/a	n/a
26	I do pray when it feels comfortable to do so. This offers me some comfort. I struggle to come to terms with all the evil in the world which affects innocent lives. I describe myself as a good Roman Catholic without the baggage of the church.	Yes, but... I don't want to be converted during a theological conversation.	No. I don't want to be disrespectful.

Questionnaire Number	Role identified	Sense of Purpose	Are you a person of faith?
27	supervisory	I believe in the value of my work. I gain an immense satisfaction and fulfilment. My monetary needs are more than met.	Yes
28	supervisory	in my younger years, work was focussed on satisfying my economic needs. I recall feeling confident about my abilities and felt lucky to be receiving compensation for work that I loved. In a later managerial role, I did not feel as though the work fed my soul in any way. I now understand that I am here in this lifetime to be of service to others. I still do not have all the pieces to define exactly what that will look like.	Spiritual, not religious. I believe there is a power greater than us.
29	non-supervisory	I earn a very good living, but... job security is always a concern - being on maternity leave made me nervous. There is also always the gender question in terms of pay. There is little transparency around pay. But... I am creating something - it is tangible and meaningful, something I can hopefully be proud of. For some co-workers are driven only by money, 'lifestyle,' or power.	tough to answer. grew up as a Roman Catholic. I acknowledge there is a higher power. Trouble relating to organized religion. So.. Yes then.

Questionnaire Number	How does your sense of faith bear on your views?	Are you comfortable speaking about your faith at work?	Have you spoken with a minister or counsellor?
27	Col. 3:24-24 & Thesis 4:22-12. These two verses encapsulate my views on my work and my faith. My life is one of witness and testimony.	Yes. When I was appointed, I made it clear to the [search] panel that my Christian faith was central to my life.	Listened to a number of expositions - all helpful.
28	I no longer fear the unknown and feel confident that spiritual guides as well as the support network I have in my life will help me reach my goals. I will be ok no matter what.	n/a	I have not had a conversation with a spiritual advisor about work.
29	I'm challenged. Do I take my son to church? Do we volunteer? Good Shepherd? Hospital? Rather than church, I would rather be out there helping people.  I don't believe [my 'faith'] has any bearing. I'm sure my faith shaped who I am, though.	Fear of judgment - it's simply not discussed. Not a safe subject.	No.

Questionnaire Number	Role identified	Sense of Purpose	Are you a person of faith?
30	Supervisory	I work in the long-term care sector. I feel I have always been called to work with older adults. I have dedicated my life to working with this demographic in NFP organizations. I started working directly with patients, and now find I miss the patient interaction. I feel a very deep sense of intrinsic meaning. I feel that most of my colleagues share the same passion, although there are definitely some who don't.	Yes
31	Non-supervisory	Very satisfying in terms of my vocation. It lacks in economic needs - easily compared to similar settings.	Yes
32	Non-supervisory	I don't feel a high degree of meaningfulness - but to some degree, yes.	Yes

Questionnaire Number	How does your sense of faith bear on your views?	Are you comfortable speaking about your faith at work?	Have you spoken with a minister or counsellor?
30	This is two-fold for me. Because I work with palliative patients, I find myself asking why these people are suffering. On the other hand I feel my faith has been strengthened because I don't know all the answers and find myself praying. Every night I pray for people and ask God to give them more time.	Yes. I was raised Catholic, but as I've gotten older, I have included going to community churches. I am very expressive at work, and to patients and their families.	A lot of the advice I have received is around suffering, and why it's ok not to have all the answers.
31	I find great pride in the opportunity to help and care for others.  In my field, I see end-of-life care in a different way.. New beginning in Heaven.	Yes, This job gives me a chance to speak about my faith.	N/A
32	My faith affects how I treat others. Deepens my perseverance to do the best I can do to glorify Him.	No. I am not comfortable.	They have influenced me greatly.

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