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Training Churches in Faith and Work Discipleship

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This ministry focus paper entitled

TRAINING CHURCH LEADERS TO LEAD AN INTENSIVE FAITH AND WORK DISCIPLESHIP PROGRAM

Written by

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and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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upon the recommendation of the undersigned readers:

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TRAINING CHURCH LEADERS TO LEAD AN INTENSIVE FAITH AND WORK DISCIPLESHIP PROGRAM

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BY

DAVID H. KIM
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ABSTRACT

Training Church Leaders to Lead an Intensive Faith and Work Discipleship Program
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2017

The goal of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of two training mechanisms to equip churches to run an intensive faith and work discipleship program called the Gotham Fellowship. The first training involves participation in a week-long summer intensive and the second training will happen through the development of a leaders’ handbook for implementing the Gotham Fellowship.

Building upon the framework of the normative, existential and situational perspectives extensively outlined in this study, these church leaders will be equipped to lead a Gotham-like Fellows program in their churches to lay a foundation for a robust faith and work ministry. This training corresponds to the three perspectives. Normatively, those who will lead the Fellows program will learn a foundational biblical theology of work highlighting five passages of Scripture. Existentially, they will experience spiritually formative practices that highlight the need to engage God personally through adaptations of ancient devotional practices. Situationally, they will acquire and be trained to utilize tools that help apply the gospel’s power into the three areas of heart, community, and world through corresponding projects.

The Center for Faith and Work (CFW) will utilize two main online surveys to assess the effectiveness of this training—the first survey will be sent out shortly after the summer intensive with a follow-up survey sent out after the completion of the first-year Gotham program. Through these two surveys, the hope is to improve these two training tools so that CFW can more effectively prepare churches to launch Gotham programs that will accelerate faith and work ministries around the world.

Content Reader: Dr. Richard Mouw
Words: 259
To Jane, Caleb, and Luke. My greatest joys in this world.

To all my friends and colleagues at the Center for Faith & Work and all the Gotham Alumni in NYC and around the world who have made this work a delight.
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I would like to thank Rev. Timothy Keller and Katherine Alsdorf for their visionary influence and leadership in propelling a faith and work movement into the heart of the church. I would also like to thank Richard Mouw for his many years of personal encouragement and his support for the Center for Faith & Work. These three lives are the paragons of integrating faith and work.
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PART ONE

MINISTRY CONTEXT
INTRODUCTION

Martin Luther articulated the notion of the priesthood of all believers in his address “To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation concerning the Improvement of the Christian Estate” in 1520.¹ This doctrine began to dismantle the medieval worldview that divided Christians into two groups: those who did not have spiritual callings and worked in the secular world and those who had a sacred calling and worked as priests of God. Despite the passing of almost 500 years, this dualistic worldview has functionally persisted amongst most Christian circles. In our experience at the Center for Faith and Work (CFW), Christians around the world are unable to envision how their day-to-day work is as priestly as that of a church pastor. There remains in the minds of many Christians an unspoken hierarchy that some professions are more sacred than others, with occupations like pastor, missionary, and healthcare professional being near the top.

One would imagine that after 500 years, there would exist a flourishing and celebration of all types of work in the church and a commitment towards equipping these Christians to perform their priestly duties, much as seminaries have equipped pastors for theirs. Yet, unfortunately, churches have done very little in recent generations to equip congregants for daily life outside the church. Christians struggle to integrate their faith into their work in meaningful and hope-giving ways that would capture at least in part the

fullness of what Christ has accomplished through the gospel.

This need has been deeply felt at Redeemer Presbyterian Church, given the significance of work in New York City. For this reason, Redeemer launched the Center for Faith and Work in January 2003 to address this need and began to wrestle through the implications of the gospel on the wide array of work in the city. Since then, CFW has functioned as a research and development laboratory for faith and work ministry—prototyping and developing a diversity of programs that equip, connect, and mobilize Christians for daily life in the workplace.

At the core of CFW’s programs is a commitment to equip people theologically, spiritually, and vocationally in the context of community. As a megachurch, a unique opportunity that exists is the ability to convene and connect a wide range of occupations. Through various events throughout the year, CFW cultivates these communities by intentionally gathering both industry-specific groups as well as cross-vocational groups. As these communities develop and mature over time, the hope is that these equipped and connected people will mobilize concrete action and change that will materialize the hope and power of the gospel.

Of CFW’s many programs, the most successful has been the Gotham Fellowship, which was launched in the fall of 2008 as the flagship faith and work leadership development program. Given the requests CFW was receiving for deeper faith and work discipleship, Gotham began as an experiment to discover if commitment-phobic New Yorkers would be willing to commit themselves to a nine-month, weekly, intensive program, requiring daily readings and homework. In addition to these requirements, there
was a cost of $2,200, which was the highest fee Redeemer had ever asked for a church program. Much to our surprise, over the ten years of its existence, the number of applicants for this program has steadily increased year after year to the point where we now have over one hundred applications annually. In order to maintain the quality of this program, CFW has limited the number of Fellows to forty-two, turning away over 50 percent of the applicants.

The growth of Gotham has not been limited to New York City. Starting in the spring of 2011, several churches in Johannesburg, South Africa found out about Gotham through our website and asked if they could bring this program to their churches. It was an unexpected request, and it raised questions in our minds regarding the suitability of this program in Johannesburg, given the cultural differences between our two cities. Yet, surprisingly, they had a very successful launch. This venture into South Africa marked the beginning of a global branching of Gotham beyond New York to large cities around the world, and this demand continues to grow. CFW currently has 12 global Gotham programs in operation with a few more programs scheduled to launch next year. This unexpected growth has necessitated the development of training materials to aid these churches in implementing Gotham, with the future goal of developing a more robust faith and work ministry in their churches.

In hindsight, many elements have contributed to the success of the Gotham Fellowship. One key factor has been the curricular integration of three epistemic perspectives—the normative, situational, and existential. Building upon the work of John
Frame, this triperspectival approach created a broad and robust framework through which Fellows could begin to understand the complexities involved in applying the gospel to day-to-day work.

For most Christians, bringing faith into their work means either evangelism or trying to be an ethically upright person. While these two aspects of faith and work integration are significant, an approach that ends there lacks a robust view of the importance and relevance of faith to the myriad of issues that one encounters in the workplace. In contrast, the triperspectival architecture has allowed CFW to explore and include theology that is typically outside the purview of a traditional theology of work, given the goal to address the whole person in the context of work. We believe this robust framework has contributed significantly to the renewal that the Gotham Fellows have experienced in their lives. When participants discover the numerous ways in which the gospel can dramatically change their experience and understanding of work, there emerges a newfound vision for their work that brings a deep encouragement and hope even in the darkest situations.

This paper will focus on three main areas—ministry context, theological reflection, and ministry practice. Part One (Introduction and Chapter 1) will elaborate upon CFW’s and Redeemer’s ministry history and context which will provide important background for why the Gotham Fellowship was developed. Part Two (Chapters 2 and 3) will focus upon theological reflection beginning with a literature review in Chapter 2.

Chapter 3 will develop the triperspectival architecture of the Gotham curriculum, including the sub-frameworks that inform each of the three constitutive perspectives. The epistemological approach developed by theologians like John Frame and Vern Poythress will place into view three critical perspectives: the normative, the existential and the situational.

Part Three (Chapters 4 and 5) will move into ministry practice. Chapter 4 will present a broad vision for faith and work ministry and how a church can grow in her ability to prepare her people for life outside of the institutional church. Towards this end, the training of lay leaders within a church is absolutely critical. This ministry project will focus on training church leaders who in turn will lead others through the Gotham Fellowship. Building upon the framework of the normative, existential and situational perspectives, these church leaders will be equipped to synthesize Biblical teaching and spiritual formation in the context of committed community.

Chapter 5 will then focus upon implementing the training for church and/or lay leaders to lead a Gotham program that will hopefully launch a growing faith and work ministry in a local church. This training will be implemented in the summer of 2017 and will be in effect throughout the following academic year. The goals of this training will include the leaders’ ability to teach critical aspects of gospel renewal and faith and work theology in the contexts of heart renewal, relational renewal, and world renewal. In addition, trained leaders will grow in their ability to understand the critical importance of synergistically integrating theological, spiritual, and communal formation. This chapter will also provide an overview of the key resources needed to implement a Gotham
program, including the alignment of church leadership as well as staff and financial resources needed. The chapter will conclude by outlining an assessment plan to evaluate the success of the leader training and the outcomes of that success for program participants.

The goal of this paper is to help churches interested in developing robust faith and work ministries launch a Gotham Fellowship in their context. The vision and hope of developing Gotham-like programs around the world is to help churches become more missional through effective and transformative faith and work discipleship. When lay-leaders are equipped and experience the transforming power of the gospel in the workplace, there is a heightened sense of calling and excitement in engaging the world to the glory of God.
The Early History and Context of Redeemer Presbyterian Church

The origin and growth of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City is a testimony to the power of the gospel to do the unexpected. What has now become a megachurch in the most populous city in America began with an idea and a conversation in a restaurant in downtown Philadelphia in March 1987. Terry Gyger, who was then the coordinator of Mission to North America, the Presbyterian Church in America’s church planting agency, approached Timothy Keller and proposed the radical idea of planting a church in Manhattan during a time when no one thought that would be either a viable or a good idea given the harsh realities of New York City during the late 1980s. It was no secret that more churches were desperately needed in the city, but there were several significant challenges to planting a church in Manhattan. Keller identified five such challenges: (1) NYC was experiencing only a slow population growth, (2) the middle class, including both whites and blacks, was continuing to leave as part of a twenty-year trend, (3) the city had lost 250,000 jobs since the Wall Street crash of 1987 and was
heading into a recession, (4) the quality of life in the city was declining as crime rose and schools were deteriorating, and (5) the cost of operations in Manhattan were so enormous that virtually no church existed that was not operating on an endowment or with continual denominational subsidies.¹

Yet, despite all these challenges, Keller’s research showed that there were three demographics of the city’s population that were growing: (1) professional elites, (2) new immigrants, and (3) the poor. Regarding these findings, Keller writes:

New York was 'de-homogenizing' economically and culturally. There was a growing new professional 'elite' class of knowledge workers. There was a dizzying variety of new immigrant working-class communities. And the poor of the inner city were becoming more isolated from other groups. Almost all of the evangelical Protestant churches had been serving the shrinking and aging English speaking middle class. This was even true of the African-American churches. There were almost no churches at all trying to reach the new (later to be called) post-modern young professionals, nor many seeking to reach the new immigrants or their bi-cultural children, nor even many seeking to reach the poorest residents.²

Keller concluded that there would be a need for a new generation of churches to reach these emerging populations, a significant portion of which included educated, liberal, upwardly mobile young professionals. With this target audience in mind, Gyger and Keller were able to accomplish the seemingly impossible task of raising adequate funds and finding a suitable location on the Upper East Side.³ The success of the fundraising

² Ibid., 4.
³ It should be noted that Keller initially turned down this invitation to be the church planter and sought after others who would be suited and willing to lead this entrepreneurial endeavor. However, after a frustrating and unfruitful search, in June 1988 Timothy and his wife Kathy Keller reluctantly decided to move forward with this audacious plan.
allowed the Kellers to live in Manhattan and hire the staff they needed to respond to the
growth rate of the church in the early years.

With the affirmation of finances and space, in February 1989, the Kellers, with
the help of several other Christian leaders, began a prayer and vision meeting. During
these gatherings, they wanted to create “a picture of what a church that believed the
gospel specifically should and could be like in Manhattan.”

Included in this brainstorming was the development of a “spiritual profile” of a Manhattan non-Christian:

What was the 'profile' we planned for and prayed about? The Manhattanites we prayed for were: extremely bright and experts in their fields (or aspired to be), had years of counseling behind them and tended to think in psychological terms, were extremely sexually active, were absorbed in their careers (which fostered most of their relationships), had a liberal social conscience, were commitment-phobic and highly private and individualistic, were very lonely, experienced constant, numerous, tumultuous transitions, were very secular but had tried at least 2 or 3 different religious systems already, and were deeply mistrustful of organized religion and evangelical Christianity in particular.

As these prayer meetings continued, these church and lay leaders began to form a vision that led to the following purpose statement: “To transform the city of New York by enabling Manhattan professionals to reach their web of relationships for Christ, and through time to change the whole city.” From the very beginning, this new church plant was to be a space for Christians who lived and worked in Manhattan to grow in their faith while also being a place where they could bring their non-believing friends. The comfort and ability to bring non-believing friends was paramount to the leadership’s growing

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4 Keller, Timothy. Redeemer’s History, 7.
5 Ibid.
6 Ibid., 8.
vision. This needed to be a church that expected biblically illiterate, non-Christians to be sitting in the pew. For this reason, they knew that had to craft a worship service and preaching that had the air of historic faith and expert culture. The preaching needed to be intellectual, devoid of Christian jargon, and presented in a fashion that reflected the intellectualism of Manhattan and the target audience. Above all, the preaching needed to present a high view of the city.

With its high crime rate, drug problems, and crisis in education, many Christians (as well as non-Christians) during that time had a negative association with New York City. This plant needed to reject that view in favor of embracing and loving the city as they found it. Despite all the endemic social issues, New York’s ongoing global influence was not overlooked. In a pamphlet explaining the rationale for this unlikely church plant, Keller emphasized the strategic role that New York City plays given its sheer size and influence around the world:

New York City has no real competition for the title “Capital of the World…. If the Christian church hopes to have an impact on the 21st century, it must address the city of New York… Today, New York shapes American culture, not only by generating new ideas and trends, but also by producing the next generation of American citizens from the immigrants who constantly pour into it.7

The first quarter of 1989 was a pivotal time in formulating what became foundational for Redeemer’s emerging vision. Through the efforts of these early leaders and ministry staff, Keller formulated the following three points to crystallize their vision in an early

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1. We want to be not just a congregation for ourselves but also for our friends who do not yet believe in Christ. (Behind this—the conviction that the gospel is the key to changing anyone—the thing that both believers and non-believers need to hear constantly.)

2. We want to be not just a ministry for ourselves, but also for the peace and benefit of the entire city. Our aim is not just a greater church, but a greater city. (Behind this—the conviction that there is no better place for Christians to live and serve than in the big city.)

3. We want to be not just a single church, but a movement of the gospel serving all churches and planting new churches (Behind this—the conviction that the real church is so diverse, encompassing all races, classes and cultures, that no congregation alone can really represent Christ to the city.)

With this vision guiding the church, Keller began the first test-run evening service in the summer of 1989 and launched the first official morning service that following September. These two services began bringing together approximately 150 people sitting in the pews on the Upper East Side. In the ensuing months and years, Redeemer experienced intense seasons of grace in which many were coming to faith in Christ, and Keller’s preaching was continually honed and refined by conversations he had with New Yorkers after the services.

The number of church attendees continued to grow year after year, as did the number of Sunday services. By 1991, Keller was preaching at four different services on the Upper East Side. To support this growth, Redeemer had to find a new space, and in the Spring of 1993 Redeemer moved to Hunter College to accommodate the 1,000 people who were attending each Sunday. By the end of the decade, around 2,000 people were

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8 Keller, Timothy. Redeemer’s History, 9.
regularly attending Redeemer, and a vision for a multi-site church began to emerge which would lead to Redeemer’s expansion to the West Side of Manhattan by February 1999.

With all the growth that was happening, one tragic event would rapidly fuel Redeemer’s growth beyond anyone’s expectation, and it would become a major milestone in Redeemer’s history as well as the nation’s. After September 11, 2001, in the immediate aftermath of the attacks on the two World Trade Center Buildings, Redeemer became overwhelmed by the spiritual, financial, and psychological needs of the City. On the Sunday after 9/11, approximately 5,300 disoriented New Yorkers attended Redeemer (up to that point the average attendance was about 3,000 people).

There was an incredible influx of needs and people looking to find a sense of meaning in the horror and loss that they experienced. Redeemer became one such place where people could hear a message of hope about a God who weeps with his people over the destructive power of sin. In the sermon preached after 9/11, Keller, in what perhaps may have been his most poignant sermon, concluded with these words:

But Jesus is the perfect counselor. He will always give you what you need. If you need truth, if you need tears, he will give it to you the day you need it. He will give it to you in the dosage you need it. He will give it to you in the order you need it. He is the only perfect counselor there is. You need to go to him. You need to get his tears, you need to get his truth, you need to get his anger. You need all those things, but most of all you need to get his grace. That is what you need most, and that is what he came to give. That is what we are going to keep giving here.9

The vision that was set forth in the beginning days of Redeemer by this point had crystallized to embody the hope of the gospel with a sincere desire to love and embrace

the City and her inhabitants. In the months and years to come, Redeemer would maintain a weekly attendance above 3,700, as the events of that horrific day would have the effect of growing the church by 700 people overnight. Somehow, Redeemer in the coming years would have to grow not only to accommodate the increasing numbers of people, but also the increasing hunger for meaning and purpose. These existential struggles cannot be separated from the underlying reasons that draw people to New York.

Launched the Center for Faith and Work

Given Redeemer’s commitment to contextualize her ministry to serve the city, work could not be ignored. In a city like New York, work is the dominating reality in people’s day-to-day lives. If the gospel is to have relevance and meaning for New Yorkers, there must be a meaningful connection between faith and work. Work is a powerful and critical avenue through which Christians impact the city. Given the sheer number of hours an average New Yorker spends at work, Keller strategically stated,

Rewinder's core values had always spoken of changing the city through Marketplace ministries. We had taught that the world cannot be changed only through Christians becoming ministers. What is needed is lay-Christians finding creative ways to reach others for Christ in their workplace and through the distinctiveness and excellence of their work.10

Until 2002, however, the church had done very little in this area to practically equip Christians for the workplace. This was an area of great need and significance waiting to be developed. In the fall of 2002, Redeemer moved forward to launch a major initiative. Keller invited Katherine Leary Alsdorf, who had become a Christian at

Redeemer in the early nineties and was a former CEO of several startup companies, to become the first full-time director of CFW. CFW launched in January of 2003 as the cultural renewal arm of the Redeemer movement. Alsdorf, who grew up in Central Jersey, knew of Redeemer from its inception and was drawn to the large vision that was emerging from this church. A foundational conviction for her was that the gospel changes everything, and if that were true, the gospel should have a profound impact on our work lives. Her experience in corporate America and familiarity with the high-tech startup scene gave her and the CFW a credibility that attracted many to this fledgling ministry. Redeemer was beginning to develop a vision to renew New York City’s cultural institutions through the people in its congregation who were employed in various vocations throughout the city.

In 2002, Redeemer reorganized the church to include (1) Worship and Evangelism, (2) Community Formation, (3) Mercy and Justice, (4) Church Planting, and (5) Faith and Work. From an organizational structure perspective, CFW became the last of the five ministry fronts that would define the main priorities of the Redeemer movement. Being a ministry front allowed CFW to grow, not as a subset of other ministries, but as an outward facing department that sought to wrestle with how the church can engage the city that it serves through work. With no real precedents and comparable church ministries, Alsdorf began experimenting with the help of elders in the church.

CFW began with a series of classes led by Alsdorf and elders of the church on the topics of decision-making, leadership, and theology of work. They wanted to explore what the Bible had to say about day-to-day concerns facing the congregation. In addition
to these classes, Alsdorf launched three vocation-specific groups. In 2004, the number of Vocation Groups grew to eight, and in that same year CFW hired an arts ministry director. They realized quickly the need to better understand the community, and so they initiated a survey with several hundred participants that revealed the following: (1) 6 percent had shared their faith in some way at work; (2) 55 percent prayed about their work; (3) 50 percent of all respondents responded affirmatively that they struggle to balance or integrate their desires with God’s desire for their lives; and (4) very few recognized any way their work itself contributed to society.

It became clear that CFW would need more resourcing to address the needs of the congregation in helping them connect the meaning of their work to the welfare of the city. In the Fall of 2005, Redeemer began a $15 million Vision Campaign with three goals: (1) church planting, (2) a church building, and (3) expansion of Redeemer’s current ministries which included CFW. The success of this campaign allowed CFW to expand significantly for the next five years. During these years, the strategy of CFW was beginning to crystallize further the concepts of equipping, connecting, and mobilizing the congregation in their professional worlds. According to Alsdorf,

The mission [of CFW] is to **equip**, **connect**, and **mobilize** our church community in their vocational spheres toward gospel-centered transformation for the common good. Each of the goals of equipping, connecting, and mobilizing is important to help people work differently in light of the gospel. Many groups of Christians gather to meet one another, but without common frameworks for thinking about their faith, the discussions remain shallow. Churches often view themselves only in the business of teaching, assuming that if they’ve taught it, their congregation will apply it. But the study of adult learning has shown that people change only when they **hear** the new thinking (so we equip them), can **discuss** it among their peers (so we connect them), and can **apply** it in simulated or
actual situations (so we try to mobilize them).\textsuperscript{11}

In the following years, the Vision funding allowed CFW to launch two significant ministry initiatives—the Entrepreneurship Initiative (EI) in March 2006 and the Gotham Fellowship in September 2008. While the EI focused upon mobilizing the many talents and resources of our congregation, Gotham was aimed at providing intensive theological training and discipleship.

One of the consistent requests that both Keller and Alsdorf received during this time was for more theological training that would help with faith and work integration. The community group system was not designed nor equipped to disciple people for the workplace context. There was a growing demand for faith and work discipleship in the church, and the structure of a Fellows program was one possible format that might best suit the needs of Redeemer’s congregants.

In 2006, CFW began to look at church-based fellows programs around the country like the Falls Church Fellows Program (VA), Trinity Fellows Program (VA), and the Trinity Forum (MD). They concluded that a fellows program could be a good model for CFW to pursue with some important contextual changes. Most fellows programs at that point were targeting recent college graduates and provided theological training to help discern their vocational direction. In contrast, CFW was more interested in targeting adults in their mid to late twenties who had garnered enough work-experience and time in New York to understand the real challenges of their work. In addition, CFW was looking

\textsuperscript{11} Timothy Keller and Katherine Leary Alsdorf, \textit{Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God’s Work} (New York: Dutton, 2012), 249.
for people who were not already so formed by their professions that it would be difficult
for the gospel to significantly change the way they approached their work. With these
initial parameters, Alsdorf hired David H. Kim\textsuperscript{12} in the summer of 2007 to create the
curriculum for this new Fellows Program.

The Gotham Fellowship

The newly conceived Fellows Program was to be a deep dive into a 200-level
faith and work discipleship course with theological content consistent with the teaching
and frameworks of the church. With this goal in view, three main areas needed to be
carefully considered: (1) the goal, (2) the content, and (3) the format of the program. As
discussion continued, it became clearer that the goal of Gotham would be leadership
development for life outside of the church. The church had leadership development
programs for officers in the church, but now wanted to turn the attention to those working
in the city. The goal of Gotham was to invest in the next generation of city leaders from a
diverse array of fields and industries with the hope of seeing New York City’s
marketplace and culture flourish for the benefit of all.

The next main question concerned the content of this program. Part of the
background research involved talking with alumni from other Fellows programs to gain a
sense of what materials were helpful. It became clear through these informal
conversations that though much content was delivered, it failed to change the way that
many Christians meaningfully engaged their day-to-day work. The theology that they

\textsuperscript{12} The author of this paper.
learned, while being conceptually rich, did not readily intersect with the daily struggles. Given this important feedback, it was imperative that CFW’s program content connect with the lived work experience of New Yorkers; good content alone would not be sufficient if unaccompanied by practical methods to bring this theology to life.

With this background, the next stage of developing the content involved combing through all of the non-sermon content that Redeemer had produced through the years—small group materials, retreats, conferences, and leader workshops. At that point, one of the most robust formulations of content outside of Sunday worship was delivered through annual congregation-wide conference/retreats. Through these events, Redeemer began to show how the gospel could transform hearts, communities, and the world. This served as the dominant framework used to communicate the scope of the gospel’s impact.

The other main underlying theme of Redeemer’s content was the centrality of the gospel. The gospel was woven throughout Redeemer’s materials so that it functioned not only as the entry point into the curriculum, but also undergirded every part of it. Because the gospel was clearly at the center of Redeemer’s teaching, it was imperative to define the gospel. For many in the church, there was an implicit understanding that the work of Christ was unique and was the expression of God’s love and grace towards sinners; however, the actual substance of the gospel was hard to articulate. The conclusion drawn from this discovery was that the curriculum not only had to be gospel-centered, but had to clarify the content of the gospel with its power to renew hearts, communities, and the world.

Building upon these initial findings, what was still needed was a robust framework to tie all the aspects of the curriculum together. The epistemological
framework developed by John Frame provided the superstructure that integrated important elements of the curriculum. The three perspectives of normative, existential, and situational broadened how CFW could deliver the content in a way that would resonate with the whole person and not merely one’s intellect. Chapters 2 and 3 will describe this framework in much more depth.

The last major issue in considering the Fellows Program was the format—the frequency of the meetings and duration of the program. Most other church Fellows programs usually met two or three times a week which would be very difficult for Redeemer’s demographic. Yet, learning in community and community formation would be critical in fostering the deep bonds that would allow the fruit of this program to continue beyond the actual program dates. To that end, a weekly commitment seemed necessary to develop that kind of deep relational connection.

The next question regarding program format was duration. If this program was to impact the day-to-day working experience of the Fellows, it would be important to engage the Fellows for the better part of a year. In addition, a natural rhythm for New Yorkers followed an academic calendar beginning in the fall and ending in the spring. For these reasons, a nine-month program seemed to be the appropriate length for the goals CFW had in view. As the curriculum continued to develop, the program also incorporated monthly Saturday sessions and three quarterly retreats during the year to accomplish the full range of teaching, processing, and experience.

By mid-2007, CFW had the goal, the content, and format and was moving closer to marketing the program. The program still needed a name, and one day while considering options, a staff member jokingly called it Gotham due to his childhood
inclinations to comic books. Surprisingly, others on the staff liked it. When the team researched the term further, they discovered two aspects of the name “Gotham” that were interesting and relevant. The first was the meaning of the word itself. According to the New York Public Library, the name “Gotham” could be dated back to the medieval English and originally invoked the image of a foolish village of goat herders:

English proverbs tell of a village called Gotham or Gottam, meaning “Goat’s Town” in old Anglo-Saxon. Folk tales of the Middle Ages make Gotham out to be the village of simple-minded fools, perhaps because the goat was considered a foolish animal.13

The second connection involved the famed New York short-story writer Washington Irving. In his desire to create a mock-epic for New York, Irving began using the term Gotham in 1807 in his sardonic periodical, Salmagundi, where he lampooned New York culture. According to Edwin Burrows and Mike Wallace, in their Pulitzer Prize winning history of New York,

Repeatedly Salmagundi referred to Manhattan as the “antient city of Gotham,” or “the wonder loving city of Gotham.” In the context of these pieces—mocking commentaries on the mores of fashionable New Yorkers—the well-known name of Gotham served to underscore their depiction of Manhattan as a city of self-important and foolish people.”14

The term Gotham seemed appropriate for this new leadership development program for New York Christians. The Irving connection reflected the New York context of Gotham bringing a cultural relevance and appeal. The origins of the word brought an interesting


connection to the biblical concept of leadership and wisdom. In contrast to all the wonder of this city and her love for power, money, and fame, the gospel presents a startlingly distinct vision of leadership that flows from the power and paradox of the cross.

Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than man’s wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man’s strength (1 Cor 1:20-25).

The vision of Biblical leadership is one defined by Christ who became a servant for the sake of those he led; through his weakness, the renewing power of God became all the more evident. It is this gospel power that uniquely can change individuals, relationships, and the world around us including all work. A Christian’s confidence in renewal arises not from the abilities, talents, and resources afforded to people in a city like New York, but in the grace of God to do the things that humans cannot do in their own strength and wisdom. The gospel uniquely humbles those it lifts up to see the power of Christ to renew all things, including New York City. For these reasons, the name Gotham seemed quite fitting, reflecting the convictions and aspirations of the program.

Having chosen a suitable name, CFW began to market the freshly minted “Gotham Fellowship.” This marked the beginning of a significant and potentially costly experiment. CFW had spent approximately two years developing Gotham, and before the

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15 All Scripture quoted is from the 1984 New International Version, unless otherwise noted.
launch of this program a series of questions began to surface: (1) Would people apply to this program? (2) Would commitment-phobic New Yorkers consider a program that would cost $2,200, which to that point was the most expensive program ever offered by the church? (3) Would there be a theological hunger deep enough that people would be willing to meet weekly for nine months of the year to read ancient texts? (4) Would people be willing to fill out a fourteen-essay application? (5) Was enough value being offered for people to make this kind of sacrifice of time and money? As the final day of the application process closed, twenty-five applications were submitted for twenty-four openings. With much relief, CFW was able to fill all the requisite seats for Gotham’s inaugural class. On Labor Day weekend 2008, the first Gotham class commenced.

Nine additional Gotham classes have graduated since that initial class, and each successive year, the number of applications has increased. The Gotham alumni have become the greatest advocates and champions for this program. Today, Gotham has a class size of fifty-nine Fellows and receives over one hundred applications, with virtually no marketing beyond a few church bulletin announcements. With the benefit of hindsight, CFW has determined that this experiment was unexpectedly successful and that the initial investments made possible a robust leadership training program that began to satisfy a deep hunger in New York. CFW would learn quickly that this hunger was not unique to New York, and that there was a similar growing appetite around the United States and the world.

Over the course of the following years, CFW began to receive requests to help launch Gotham-like programs in other parts of the world. The initial request came from a
context very different from New York City—Johannesburg, South Africa. Their successful launch provided greater confidence that this program could be exported to other parts of the world and that the theological core of Gotham would allow leaders from different contexts to appropriate the materials to suit their demographic needs. There are currently twelve churches running Gotham programs, with that number increasing each year. Each summer, CFW hosts a training conference for churches interested in beginning a faith and work ministry, and the interest level continues to exceed the capacity. The hunger in the United States, as well as around the world, is growing for faith and work training, and Gotham is a unique program to equip lay-leaders so that they in turn can lead others to build an authentic local expression of faith and work ministry.
PART TWO

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will provide a basic literature review related to the development of the triperspectival approach that has served as the overarching framework for the Gotham curriculum. Of the following four sections in this chapter, the first will introduce triperspectivalism. The remaining three sections will focus respectively on the three perspectives that inform this epistemological approach—normative, existential, and situational.

Introduction to Triperspectivalism

In his book, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God* (DKG)\(^1\), John Frame sets out to develop a Trinitarian Christian epistemology grounded in the lordship of Christ. He divides this book into three parts, addressing three main questions: (1) the objects of knowledge (What do we know?), (2) the justification of knowledge (On what basis do we

\(^1\) Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*. 

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know?), and (3) the methods of knowledge (How do we know?). This question of how do we know what we know is a critical precursor in deepening Gotham’s curricular design. Frame’s robust conception of an epistemology rooted in God’s lordship provides a unique approach to understanding the nuances and complexities of learning. This next section will provide an overview of Frame’s triperspectival foundations.

Frame begins this discussion on knowledge with the biblical concept of lordship which he defines as covenantal headship. Drawing upon the work of Meredith Kline, Frame describes God’s covenant headship as both transcendent and immanent: “If God is covenant head, then He is exalted above His people; He is transcendent. If He is covenant head, then He is deeply involved with them; He is immanent.” God is as much involved in this world as he is sovereign over it. His transcendence is communicated through his attributes of control and authority, while his immanence or “covenantal solidarity” is reflected in his personal presence with his covenantal people. God’s authority, control, and personal presence represent three critical attributes that summarize God’s lordship. In Frame’s view, each of these three attributes informs the others, and each is an indispensable part of the whole.

This lordship of God quintessentially shapes the way Frame views and approaches knowledge. Knowledge is to be understood within this covenantal context.

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3 Ibid., 13.
4 Ibid., 16.
5 Ibid., 17.
and therefore, knowledge is not inherently neutral, but its truthfulness or falsehood is dependent upon one’s relationship to this covenant lord. If this starting point of the covenantal aspects of knowledge and of God’s authority, control, and presence is accepted, then it would follow that: (1) the highest rules of norms of knowledge come from him; (2) the course of nature and history is under his control, so that the facts are his facts; (3) our knowledge faculties are gifts of God and operate in his very presence.⁶

Frame then develops his three epistemic perspectives of the normative, situational, and existential. To know anything, one must first know God and the norms that he has established and reveals. Secondly, one must interact in this world that God has sovereignly created in time and space. Thirdly, one must experience this world in the presence of God. These three perspectives have been succinctly summarized by Frame in his Systematic Theology:

[The nature of God’s lordship suggests that we can know the world from three perspectives, corresponding to the three lordship attributes. In the normative perspective, we understand the whole world as a revelation of God, governing our thought. In the situational perspective, we understand the whole world as the factual situations that God as controller has brought to pass. In the existential perspective, we understand the world as a set of personal experiences granted by God, who is present with us and within us.⁷]

In Part 3 of his book, Frame develops a specific and technical epistemological methodology employing these three perspectives. For the purposes of Gotham, Frame’s development of these three perspectives help inform a critical but general concept that

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⁷ Ibid., 32–33.
informs Gotham’s framework. Gotham does not employ the specifics of the methodology outlined in this final section of DKG.

The greatest limitation of this book for the purposes of Gotham was the technical and philosophical nature of this text. As this philosophical work was written for a seminary audience, the language is not readily accessible and its application is directed towards epistemology. Yet, the notions of the normative, existential, and situational have been one of the key success factors in developing a robust framework that informs the whole person in knowing a tripersonal God. It is this triperspectival approach that has allowed for a breadth and depth in the forming of the Gotham curriculum. This background in Frame’s work has been crucial in developing each of these three perspectives in the realm of faith and work application. In the following sections, each of the three perspectives will be further elaborated.

The Normative Perspective

The first perspective to further explore is the normative. For the purpose of Gotham, the norms that the program focuses upon come primarily from biblical revelation. Frame points out how central to the Scriptures is Christ’s redemptive work yet, in understanding the significance of Christ in the Scriptures he writes this:

Consider, however, the following qualifications. (1) To understand the full scope of Christ’s redemptive work, we need the whole biblical canon. Otherwise, God would not have given us such a large document! (2) Thus the central message of the Scriptures, even though it is found more prominently in some passages than in others, is defined by the whole Bible. (3) Therefore there is a “perspectival” reciprocity between the

In Part 3 of DKG, Frame develops the role of Scripture in informing the Normative Perspective.
central message of Scripture and its detailed, particular messages. The central message is defined by the particular messages, and the particular messages must be understood in the light of the central message.9

What is critical in understanding the Bible is understanding the overarching narrative of the Scriptures. Frame rightly points out that to understand the particular stories in the Bible, one must also understand the whole narrative. For this reason, the normative perspective of Gotham focuses upon developing a biblical narrative that begins with Genesis and ends with Revelation. The contours of creation, fall, redemption and consummation have been commonly used in the Reformed tradition to provide an overview of the biblical narrative. One particular book that has been instrumental in highlighting an often-misunderstood portion of this narrative is Richard Middleton’s A New Heaven and a New Earth: Reclaiming Biblical Eschatology.

The motivating purpose for Middleton in writing this book is “to sketch the coherent biblical theology (beginning in the Old Testament) that culminates in the New Testament’s explicit eschatological vision of the redemption of creation.”10 Middleton is trying to address the incorrect notion that the final destiny of redeemed humanity is an otherworldly, immaterial life in heaven. As he journeys through the biblical narrative, Middleton paints a coherent and consistent picture of the final vision or eschatology presented in the Scriptures as one that includes the redemption of the earth and the renewal of the cultural mandate given in Genesis 1 and 2.

Middleton divides his book into five main parts: (1) from creation to eschaton, (2) holistic salvation in the old testament, (3) the new testament’s vision of cosmic renewal, (4) problem texts for holistic eschatology, and (5) the ethics of the kingdom. In Part One, Middleton provides a valuable overview of the overarching biblical story from Genesis to Revelation. This summary provides a succinct plot that addresses the question “why are we here?”. Building upon this biblical metanarrative, Part Two focuses upon the Old Testament and depicts a holistic salvation that reveals God’s ongoing commitment to the flourishing of earthly life. This Old Testament vision serves to provide important context and essential theological background that informs the New Testament understanding of salvation which is the focus of Part Three. The two chapters that comprise this part focus upon the restoration of human rule over the earth and then widen the scope of redemption to include the entirety of the material created order. Part Four addresses what some might view as problematic texts that challenge this more comprehensive vision of salvation. Middleton examines these texts and concludes that they do in fact provide support for his view of the redemption of creation. Part Five concludes with the ethical implications of the kingdom of God in the context of a semi-inaugurated eschatology.

Middleton’s book is invaluable in correcting a common misconception regarding the nature of God’s purposes for salvation, a belief which often arises out of a misinformed vision of the eschaton. Through his careful study of the Old and New Testaments, Middleton effectively argues that the work of Christ restores and renews creation which includes the cultural mandate given to Adam and Eve to rule over this world and to cultivate it in the likeness of God. Middleton argues that the work of human hands is part of the inheritance of New Jerusalem, and that Christians should not be
surprised to see familiar artifacts that represent the glory and honor of the nations:

Although the divine artist is indeed the one who has “prepared” and “adorned” the holy city for its dissent from heaven to earth (Rev 21:2), nevertheless kings and nations will bring their “glory” and “honor” into the city (21:24, 26), a reference to the best of human workmanship that has been developed throughout history.... The human contribution to the new Jerusalem should not be downplayed.11

Middleton asserts that the New Heavens and the New Earth will contain elements that represent God’s handiwork as well as that of human beings. He also connects the glory and honor of the nations to represent “the best of human workmanship that has been developed throughout history.” While I agree that there is something quite significant about what enters into this holy city, it is important to qualify the phrase “the best of human workmanship” as to not equate that with what we in our current society deem to be “the best.” For example, Isaiah 2:4 states that swords will be beaten into farming equipment and for many swords may not be considered the best of human workmanship. What God would identify as “glory” and “honor” may be quite different from common expectations, and so which human artifacts may enter into New Jerusalem are ultimately a mystery in this life known only in God’s sovereign mind. What is significant, however, is the scope of God’s redemption which includes our work in ways that bring eternal significance to the work that is done today.

Starting with Scripture as a critical aspect of the normative perspective, Middleton’s book is invaluable in establishing a holistic vision of the biblical narrative that rightly emphasizes the importance of the material world and the work that we do in

Middleton does not address the implications of this eschatology in the workplace in any significant depth, but he does include work as part of the scope of redemption.

The second book that has proven helpful in developing the contours of the biblical narrative and the normative perspective is Lee Beach’s *The Church in Exile*. The theology of exile, which is the main focus of this book, is critical in properly shaping the expectations Christians ought to have when engaging the world, especially in the arena of work. Beach’s book argues for the relevance of this theology to our contemporary context and more importantly, highlights how the theme of exile played a pivotal role for Israel and the New Testament church in shaping their worldview and expectations.

Beach introduces his book by demonstrating how pervasive the theme of exile is in the Bible and how closely exile is identified with the people of God through the different epochs in biblical history.

In biblical perspective, the people of God are by nature exilic. Throughout history, those who worship the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob have often perceived themselves to be a threatened minority, struggling to preserve their particular identity and beliefs. From the original couple being cast out (exiled) from the Garden, to the wanderings of Cain, to the nomadic journeys of the aforementioned patriarchs, to slavery in Egypt, to the constant threats of enemies throughout the period of the monarchy (including both the northern and southern kingdoms’ final period where both kings were essentially vassals to Mesopotamian power), to conquest by the Assyrians (eighth century), by the Babylonians (sixth century) and to Israel’s subsequent existence under Persian, Greek and Roman rule, the people of Israel never had the pleasure of living with a permanent sense of national security. Neither did the Christians who made up the first generations of the church. Thus the people of ancient Israel, Second Temple Jews and early Christians were plunged into cultural situations where who they were and what they were called to be was at odds, sometimes drastically so, with where they found themselves.

Beach’s book is divided into two sections: (1) a theology of exile and (2) the practices of exile. In the first and more helpful part, Beach examines the exilic story of Israel through
the Old Testament and New Testament. In the Old Testament, he focuses upon three main narratives: Esther, Daniel, and Jonah. He sees in these narratives a “hopeful vision and compelling model of life in exile.” Moving towards the New Testament, he briefly traces the development of the exilic theme in Second Temple literature and focuses upon the epistle of 1 Peter to examine Israel’s response to exile during the intertestamental period. His study of 1 Peter reveals “a consistency of ideas between Old and New Testament exilic experiences.” In Part 2 of his book, Beach moves to the application of this theology and experience into the twenty-first century church. He focuses upon the areas of leadership, theology, holiness, mission, and eschatology in considering how the theology of exile can be applied to the ministry context.

The critical contribution of this book is raising the importance of the theology of exile in understanding the redemptive-historical context of our current situation. The Scriptures present the invaluable and carefully developed context of exile to provide the church with normative expectations that can radically shape the church’s response in this world, a world that many view as increasingly secular and hostile to the Christian faith. Beach, in quoting Walter Brueggemann, demonstrates that despite the horror attendant to exile, “exile evoke[s] the most brilliant literature and the most daring theological articulation in the Old Testament.” When understood properly, exile can be a powerful expression of creativity and hope in the midst of darkness and brokenness: “[E]xile tends

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13 Ibid.
14 Ibid., 25.
to infuse communities with new creative energy that rises to meet the challenges of new cultural circumstances.”¹⁵

The most helpful part of Beach’s book is the first section which develops the theology of exile, especially his insightful analysis of Esther, Daniel, and Jonah. What proved to be less helpful, as it was less applicable in our context, was Part Two. Beach’s prescriptions deal more with applications in a ministry context and are not aimed at those who work in exile in the world. Nevertheless, this book is extremely helpful in bringing a greater creativity to the church in approaching work and the theme of exile establishes a normative expression of the kinds of expectations Christians ought to have when approaching work.

**The Existential Perspective**

The second perspective to explore is the existential perspective, which highlights the reality that God can be known at an individual and personal level. The knowledge of God is not merely normative—truths that are to be accepted—but also deeply personal and experiential. One of the central premises of the gospel is God’s desire to dwell intimately with his people, and this perspective honors that unique characteristic of the Christian God. In this section, two books will be highlighted: Steven Guthrie’s *Creator Spirit* and Dallas Willard’s *Hearing God*. Each book will highlight a distinctive contribution to the theology undergirding the existential perspective.

In *Creator Spirit*, Guthrie presents a pneumatology informed by theologians,

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¹⁵ Ibid.
philosophers, and artists. The main premise of this book is to discover the connections between the Holy Spirit and theological aesthetics, highlighting the Holy Spirit’s artistic characteristics. This unique combination provides a distinct exploration into the existential perspective focusing upon the role of the Holy Spirit in restoring humanity to their bodies, community, voice, freedom, and vocation.

Guthrie divides his book into three main sections: (1) the making of a human, (2) the spirit’s making and ours, and (3) a world remade. In Part One, Guthrie argues that the Holy Spirit’s role is to “restore, rather than extinguish, our humanity.” Guthrie highlights two important aspects of the Holy Spirit’s work to redeem both physical bodies as well as the role of community. In this first section, Guthrie is addressing two common misconceptions—the first, that spirituality has to do more with the immaterial than the material and the second, that community is not essential in individual renewal. The Holy Spirit’s role in redemption is to make fallen humans more human which requires community.

Part Two highlights the importance of human freedom and the Holy Spirit’s role in renewing voices to join God’s work of re-creation. Guthrie establishes the direct link between the Holy Spirit and art and how the artist is inspired by the Spirit to create. Part Three concludes by focusing upon the Holy Spirit’s work to renew human vocation in light of the eschaton. This last section is the most relevant to the Gotham curriculum.

Guthrie’s focus on the Spirit’s role in making and remaking our humanity is a

needed theological perspective today. The Spirit becomes the essential player in experiencing what the gospel looks like in day-to-day life. The most helpful part of this book was Part Three which focuses upon human calling. Guthrie writes, “As human beings we have the high calling of, first of all, seeing the world truly and, secondly, speaking of and for the world—faithfully, creatively, and redemptively.”

Guthrie highlights the importance of discernment in the restoration of calling. Guthrie makes an important distinction that calling is not merely concerned with what human beings do but begins with the ability to discern reality. This discernment has two dimensions which he describes as “responsive” and “creative.” The “responsive discernment” flows out of the expectation that the Spirit is actively present and working in the world. For this reason, Christians ought to be living expectantly, “looking attentively for the Spirit’s activity, listening carefully for the Spirit’s voice.” As Christians learn to discern the Spirit’s activity, the Spirit also empowers and commissions which Guthrie calls “creative discernment.” He explains this concept using the naming activity given to Adam in Genesis 2. Naming requires the ability to view this world as it truly is, and to then voice sounds that reflect or exposit what is seen. This voicing is a creative act which is an ongoing aspect of humanity’s calling.

The Holy Spirit enables human beings to faithfully carry out their Genesis 2 vocation of recognizing and saying something about the created world. The full exercise of our vocation means speaking in a way that harmonizes with God’s own creative word. The Holy Spirit enables us to discern the

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17 Ibid., 153.
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid., 157.
20 Ibid., 167.
shape of God’s creative and redemptive work, to discern the character of created reality, and, therefore, to speak and act within creation in a discerning way—a way that is both faithful and creative.\textsuperscript{21}

According to Guthrie, Spirit-led discernment leads to a whole new way of seeing this world and then responding to this vision with words and actions that correspond to this new world that Christ has ushered in. Discernment thus requires the ability to recognize God’s activity in the world and then respond by participating with him in his redemptive work.

Guthrie closes his book with a discussion on the meaning of beauty in light of New Jerusalem. Guthrie’s engagement with beauty underscores the importance of the existential perspective in deepening a sense of humanity, and how the Spirit is actively at work to bring all of creation to that beatific glory: “When we truly experience beauty, particularly beauty that is marked by perfection, proportion, and clarity, we may sense that we have encountered something “spiritual,” perhaps even something of the new creation. We are right to feel this way.”\textsuperscript{22} He quotes Abraham Kuyper to suggest that there is a meaningful connection between the art people experience in this world and the “perfect coming luster”\textsuperscript{23} of the future. For Guthrie there is a continuity between the art we see and make today and the return of Christ. Guthrie does not extend this analogy to other work that humans engage in, but one could make the argument that all work contains elements of God’s character that will persist into the coming age. The

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., 168.
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 210.
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., 179.
eschatological reality that should shape aesthetics today, should also extend to influence
the entirety of all the work that people do.

The various sections of Creator Spirit provide a rich theology of the Holy Spirit
that is foundational to the existential perspective. One of the critical aspects of the Holy
Spirit’s role is to lead Christians in their calling through an increasing discernment.
Dallas Willard’s Hearing God is a helpful complement to Creator Spirit, as Willard
provides the theological and practical guidance to knowing the voice of God.

Critical to the existential perspective is a growing confidence that people can
know God in a personal and experiential way. Yet, for various reasons, many Christians
are suspicious about the existential perspective, as its subjectivity feels unreliable;
however, Willard argues that “God has created us for intimate friendship with himself—
both now and forever.”24 He iterates the importance of this confidence by emphasizing
the centrality of this existential perspective:

> In the last analysis, nothing is more central to the practical life of the
> Christian than confidence in God’s individual dealings with each person.
> The individual care of the shepherd for his sheep, of the parent for the
> child and of the lover for the beloved are all biblical images that have
> passed into the consciousness of Western humanity.25

He looks to Jesus’ relationship with God the Father as the ideal picture of what an
intimate relationship between father and child should resemble, and hearing God is an
expected and integral part of this vision. Willard endeavors to help Christians become
confident about hearing God—“hearing God as it relates to living a whole life in the will

24 Dallas Willard, Hearing God: Developing a Conversational Relationship with God, Updated

25 Ibid., 27.
of God: the question of who God wants us to be as well as what he wants us to do (where appropriate).”26 In the first chapter, Willard establishes that hearing God manifests in a variety of forms as one should expect given the complexity of human personality. The Bible provides needed guidance for the Christian in understanding these divine-human encounters. God determines how he speaks to his people, and at the heart of this communication is a conversational relationship with mature Christians who increasingly grasp the lead of the Good Shepherd.

Through the following chapters, Willard provides both the biblical justification for why Christians ought to expect to hear from God as well as practical ways in which the Christian can come to hear God’s voice. He provides an excellent summary of his book:

Chapter one clarifies the tension in which Christians live, believing that hearing God is very important to our walk with him but at the same time lacking a confident understanding of how it works in practice. Chapter two removes some common misunderstandings about God’s communications with us. Chapter three explains the various ways in which he is with us. Chapter four examines some objections to the very idea of God’s communicating with individuals. Chapter five deals with the various ways in which he communicates and explains and defends the centrality of the “still, small voice.” Chapters six and seven discuss the centrality of God’s speaking—God’s Word—to his creation and to the process of redemption. The Word of God is not foreign to routine reality; it is at the very heart of it. Chapter eight clarifies how we can be sure that we are hearing God. Finally, chapter nine deals with what to do on those occasions, sure to come, when God is not speaking—or at least when we are not hearing him. Some of the Scripture translations throughout are paraphrases I have offered, and they are indicated by the word “paraphrase.”27

Each chapter builds upon the previous to paint a coherent and biblically grounded vision

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26 Ibid., 15.
27 Ibid.
of hearing God. While each chapter has relevance to the Gotham curriculum, Chapter 8 is particularly relevant as it focuses upon the practical aspects of recognizing the voice of God. Pertaining to work situations, it is imperative that Christians understand how to recognize God’s voice and lead. In this discussion, Willard refers to “three lights”28 often used in determining God’s direction for a particular situation: (1) circumstances, (2) impression of the Spirit, and (3) passages from the Bible. Willard points out that when all three lights point in the same direction, for many this is the sure sign that this is God’s intention for the inquirer. Willard critiques this view as it can be used as a formula bypassing the actual relationship that God desires from his people. Willard emphasizes that the voice of God is paramount in discerning God’s direction, a voice that is either familiar or alien depending on the nature of the relationship between God and the inquirer.

These things we do—reflecting on the three lights—turn out to be the very things that go into exercising responsible judgment. As we reflect on our circumstances, our impressions of the Spirit and passages we read in the Bible, we also listen for the divine voice. But when God speaks and we recognize the voice as his voice, we do so because our familiarity with that voice enables us to recognize it.29

Willard rightly emphasizes the critical importance of the relationship with God in discerning direction. The three lights while serving as important factors that should weigh upon decisions, are nevertheless not meant to be received in isolation from a growing discernment of God’s voice.

Willard identifies three distinguishing factors that qualify this voice—the quality,

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28 Ibid., 221.
29 Ibid., 226.
spirit, and content. The quality of the voice speaks to the tone or style of the speech. The spirit refers to the attitude or personal characteristics tangibly present in the voice. The content points to the information that is communicated. These qualifying factors are helpful as they further nuance God’s voice and provide a more holistic approach to discerning God’s voice. For example, it is clear that Satan can mimic the content of God’s speech, but his quality and spirit are quite different from God’s.

Given Willard’s guidance for discerning God’s voice, spiritual formation is an indispensable part of faith and work training as it emphasizes the importance of nurturing a growing relationship with God that yields the fruit of spiritual discernment. Christians are in desperate need for discernment in the workplace and this perspective helps Christians grow in their ability to act wisely amidst confusing choices and circumstances. From an existential perspective, the role of the Spirit and the role of the discerning Christian together informs how we are to experience and respond to God in the situations of day-to-day life.

The Situational Perspective

The final perspective affirms God’s sovereignty over the time and space of creation and his active involvement in the past, present and future. Abraham Kuyper is noteworthy as a theologian who took seriously the implications of God’s sovereignty and providence over the whole world. In a series of lectures delivered at Princeton Theological Seminary in 1898-1899, Kuyper expounded upon what he termed a

30 Ibid., 228.
Calvinistic life-system or worldview. Building upon Calvinism not as a narrow confessionalism, but upon a deep conviction of the sovereignty of God over the whole of the cosmos, Kuyper articulates a theology that helps inform this situational perspective. Beginning with three foundational relationships—relationship to God, to others, and to the world, Kuyper advances his life-system in the spheres of religion, politics, science, art, and the future.

In his first lecture entitled “Calvinism a Life-System,”31 Kuyper states that the starting point of life system must begin with a relationship with God that then flows into relationship with others and then, subsequently, relationship with the world. He argues that Calvinism establishes that humans have direct and immediate fellowship with God. This immediate fellowship then leads to the conclusion that all people stand as equals before God destroying any kind of distinction that some groups of people would have higher status than others. Likewise, this immediate fellowship in the context of a sovereign God means that every person can serve and praise God in every position in life. Kuyper was resisting the common but mistaken tendency to view this world as evil and fallen, a propensity which leads to a worldview that would prefer flight from the world rather than actively engaging it: “Henceforth the curse should no longer rest upon the world itself, but upon that which is sinful in it, and instead of monastic flight from the world the duty is now emphasized of serving God in the world, in every position in life.”32

32 Ibid., 31.
From his first lecture, Kuyper establishes how the relationship between God and humans integrally shapes how Christians ought to engage with the world and develops a rationale for why people should engage the world as part of their worship and service to God. This theology has profound implications regarding work. Work is not simply seen as the result of the fall, but is part of how we come to know and serve God in the world, opening the entirety of our lives in the service of God. In his subsequent lectures, Kuyper expounds upon how this Godward orientation pertains to five key areas of society.

The next lecture entitled “Calvinism and Religion,” also has significance to Gotham. Kuyper begins this talk by responding to four issues he raises regarding the distinctions of Calvinistic religion:

1. Man’s religion ought to be not egotistical, and for man, but ideal, for the sake of God. 2. It has to operate not mediately, by human interposition, but directly, from the heart. 3. It may not remain partial, as running alongside of life, but must lay hold upon our whole existence. And 4. Its character should be soteriological, i.e., it should spring, not from our fallen nature, but from the new man, restored by palingenesis to his original standard.33

These responses bear particular relevance to apprehensions carried by many members of the millennial generation: (1) religion that exists for God corrects the abuses of how religion has often been used for selfish gain, often at the expense of others; (2) immediate relationship with God provides the intimacy and spiritual experience that many crave; (3) religion that pervades the whole of life provides integrity and authenticity to one’s beliefs and removes a sense that faith is relegated to only portions of my life; and (4) a soteriological gospel recognizes and affirms the brokenness of our world and connects

33 Ibid., 49.
with this generation’s desire to change it. Kuyper’s approach to theology creates a needed bridge between theological concepts and its relevance and import to the world in which people inhabit today.

The following lectures on politics, science, art, and the future are all are incredibly helpful in continuing to model of theological reflection that intersects with sectors of our modern world. He shows the relevance of theologies such as common grace and antithesis in each of these spheres and demonstrates why and how Christians can begin to understand our world through the lens of God’s sovereignty. For example, in his lecture on “Calvinism and Science,” Kuyper states that the antithesis between Science and Christianity does not center on the evolution versus creation debate, as it did in the United States. Rather, the antithesis is between a worldview that asserts that this world is “normal” or “abnormal”:

Hence it follows, that the conflict is, not between faith and science, but between the assertion, that the cosmos, as it exists to-day is either in a normal or abnormal condition. If it is normal, then it moves by means of an eternal evolution from its potencies to its ideal. But if the cosmos in its present condition is abnormal, then a disturbance has taken place in the past, and only a regenerating power can warrant it the final attainment of its goal. This, and no other is the principal antithesis, which separates the thinking minds in the domain of Science into two opposite battle-arrays.34

This is one example among many where Kuyper’s use of theology leads to a novel and often insightful approach to understanding particular aspects of our modern world. His view of common grace and antithesis helps clarify ways in which Christians have much in common with the non-believing world as well as identifying areas of profound

34 Ibid., 174.
difference.

As one reads through the various lectures, it becomes evident that Kuyper engages in theological speculation when interpreting historical events. For example, in “Calvinism and the Arts,” Kuyper states that in the same manner that God chose Israel to bring true religion into the world, he elected the Greeks in the domain of philosophy and the Romans in the realm of law and statecraft:

But if Israel was chosen for the sake of Religion, this in no way prevented a parallel election of the Greeks for the domain of philosophy and for the revelations of art, nor of the Romans, for the classical development within the domain of Law and of State.35

This audacious claim, while being theologically tenuous does reflect a deep commitment to God’s sovereignty and active involvement in the world. Kuyper is deeply committed to a vision of God and this world where these things are integrally connected. This vision is critical in the development of the situational perspective and to enable Christians to live each day with this conviction of God’s presence and involvement in all that transpires in this world.

35 Ibid., 218.
CHAPTER 3

TRIPERSPECTIVALISM APPLIED TO FAITH AND WORK

Triperspectivalism provides a unique framework when applied to faith and work ministry, creating a robust approach to leadership development. Drawing from the three perspectives—normative, existential, and situational—the Gotham Fellowship attempts to address the whole person in their vocational context. This chapter will outline how each of these perspectives informs the development of the Gotham curriculum.

The Normative Perspective: Protology, Exile, and Eschatology

The normative perspective highlights the importance of Scripture in providing norms for a theology of work. This perspective affirms that there is a design behind the work that humans do and that meaningful flourishing arises when people understand and live in accordance with these norms. Three normative anchors critical for the development of a Biblical theology of work are protology, exile, and eschatology. Each of these doctrines sets forth norms regarding the purpose of work, expectations for work in a fallen world, and the redemption of work. In this section, we will look at three biblical passages closely associated with each of these doctrines—Genesis 1, Jeremiah
29, and Revelation 21—to highlight important norms of faith and work theology.

Protology

A study in protology quintessentially begins with Genesis 1:1 which opens with a God who creates—“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” Much could be written regarding the depth of meaning contained in this terse sentence; however, for the purposes of this chapter what is paramount is encountering a God who works. In Genesis 1 and 2, God not only speaks creation into existence, he is intimately involved in the crafting of it, dignifying the concept of work. In Genesis 2:7, God sculpts the human body with his hands. In Genesis 2:8, God digs a garden. In Genesis 2:9, God plants an orchard. In these two short chapters, the Bible establishes a high view of work through the depiction of God as the preeminent worker. This affirmation of work is a needed corrective against the common misconception that work is the product of sin and ultimately an unnecessary evil.

The creation narrative affirms the goodness of work. At the close of multiple days, God pronounces his benediction on his creation with the rhythmic cadence of, “And God saw that it was good” (Gn 1:10, 12, 18, 25). Proverbs 8 further elaborates upon the goodness of creation by underscoring the delight associated with it:

When he established the heavens, I was there; when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep, when he assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside him, like a master workman, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the children of man. (Pr 8:27-31)
In this passage, lady wisdom is likened to a “master workman” delighting in the work of each day. These passages make clear that work is a blessing in which God takes great delight. As we approach the New Testament, the Apostle Paul clarifies in Romans 1:19-20, “For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made.” Here Paul is making an important connection between who God is and the visible things he creates. In other words, work is the tangible expression of God’s being and character, and in his work God delights. Louis Berkhof further specifies how the works of creation are an expression of God’s glory:

The supreme end which He had in view, was not to receive glory, but to manifest His inherent glory in the works of His hands. It is true that in doing this, He would also cause the heavens to declare His glory, and the firmament to show His handiwork, the birds of the air and the beasts of the field to magnify Him, and the children of men to sing His praises.¹

Given this connection between God’s glory and the work of his hands, work becomes the arena in which humans too can discover and explore the inner and invisible qualities as creatures endowed with God’s image. Work is the opportunity to make visible the wonder of being an image-bearer of God. With this in view, it is understandable that the apostle Paul would later exhort the church at Colosse to, “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men” (Col 3:23) and also to the church at Ephesus:

⁵ Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, ⁶ not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from

the heart, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man… (Eph 6:5-7)

Work is to be done ultimately to God, and humanity’s work, like God’s work, is ultimately a reflection of God’s glory. A biblical theology of work must begin with creation revealing God’s work to be good, a delight, and an expression of God’s invisible qualities, particularly his glory. In a fallen world, these truths are easily lost and counterintuitive to day-to-day experience. Affirming these foundational norms can profoundly correct many common misconceptions regarding the perception of work in a fallen world; however, it is equally critical to consider the context of our current age to inform the expectations that Scriptures present regarding work. To this end, the theology of exile is a critical doctrine in further developing a theology of work.

Exile

The expulsion from the garden of Eden provides the earliest example of humans being exiled from their homes. The experience of exile throughout the Old Testament provides an important perspective that can powerfully shape expectations for work. One way to understand the experience of exile is to contrast it with the experience in Jerusalem. These different two perspectives, Jerusalem and exile, arise from the two distinct eras in Israel’s history.

The first perspective, Jerusalem, refers specifically to the golden age of the Solomonic monarchy when dignitaries such as the Queen of Sheba (1 Kgs 10) came to

\[\text{\textsuperscript{2}} 1 \text{ Cor 10:31 “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”}\]

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Jerusalem to marvel at her beauty, development, and splendor. Historian John Bright writes of this period:

The Bible with justice depicts Solomon’s reign as one of unexampled prosperity. Israel enjoyed a security and a material plenty such as she had never dreamed of before and was never to know again. And this, in turn, allowed an amazing flowering of the peaceful arts.³

During this period, there was an unparalleled sense of flourishing, national identity, and security; however, within one generation, this golden age of prosperity led to civil war and subsequent exile for both the northern and southern kingdoms.

The second perspective arises out of the exile of Judah in the south to Babylon.⁴ It was into this unthinkable historic situation that God gave Judah the demoralizing command to seek the prosperity of a city (Jer 29:7) and an empire that would destroy the state of Judah forever.

At a stroke her national existence was ended and, with it, all the institutions in which her corporate life had expressed itself; they would never be re-created in precisely the same form again. The state destroyed and the state cult perforce suspended, the old national-cultic community was broken, and Israel was left for the moment an agglomeration of uprooted and beaten individuals, by no external mark any longer a people. The marvel is that her history did not end altogether.⁵

Into this horrific context, God audaciously commands the exiles in Babylon to be a sustained blessing to the powers that leveled their beloved city of Jerusalem. To the

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⁴ The theme and experience of exile is not limited to Judah’s exile to Babylon, but can be found throughout the entire Bible from Adam and Eve being exiled out of the garden to the church being identified as exiles living in a foreign land (1 Peter 1:1).

⁵ Bright, *A History of Israel*, 330.
exiles, God gave to his people the incredulous task of building houses, planting vineyards, and giving their children into marriage (Jer 29:5-6). This historic context and emotional impact of exile is important to recognize as it significantly shapes and realigns expectations during this period.

Jerusalem and exile represent two dramatically differing periods of Israel’s history and they present two distinctive visions of how God’s people related to the world around them. This contrast illuminates the assumptions that many Christians have when it comes to engaging their work. The Jerusalem perspective can have as its implicit goal the building of its own institutional security and identity apart from the surrounding cultures—to build a kingdom within a kingdom. The Jerusalem perspective strives for the world to come to acknowledge her—to admire her values, culture, and worship. In contrast the exilic perspective recognizes life in a foreign power without the security and comforts of Jerusalem. In Jerusalem, with her established cultic practices, people are expected to conform to the worship of the one, true, living God; while in exile the expectation is to enter a world that does not recognize this God while internally retaining a sense of identity and purpose around this God.

The expectations of life, worship and identity that come out of these two different perspectives are quite different. There is comfort and security in Jerusalem, discomfort and insecurity in exile. In Jerusalem, there is a dominant culture in which one’s identity is constantly reinforced by the surroundings so much so that this identity can be taken for granted. In exile, God’s people are the minority culture in a foreign world where there is a constant awareness of being an alien; yet, at the same time God’s people are called to seek the flourishing of that opposing kingdom that can be quite hostile.
Turning to the New Testament, there is a clear identification of God’s people being “exiles” (1 Pt 1:1, 17) and “aliens and strangers” (1 Pt 2:11) in this world—citizens of a heavenly kingdom (Phil 3:20) and a heavenly city (Heb 13:14). There is a strong sense of continuity with the Old Testament exiles, as the church waits to return home, which will only come in its fullness with the return of Christ. Until then, the consistent parallel drawn in the New Testament of the church is the expectation of exile and not of Solomonic Jerusalem. Because of the work of Christ, the church saw themselves as citizens of a different kingdom, sojourners, exiles, aliens and strangers awaiting the New Jerusalem to come; however, this exilic perspective was not just the forced result of living under Roman occupation. In the New Testament, the people of God with a renewed sense of mission were called to willingly put themselves in “exile” living in a foreign world for the sake of witnessing the hope of Christ to the world around them (cf. Heb 13:11-16).

One of the most dynamic aspects of the turn to hope in exilic life was the renewal of Israel’s sense of being a people of mission. Exile brought about a renewed sense that Israel had a role to play among the nations of the world in declaring the supremacy of Yahweh.\(^6\)

The gospel became the ultimate motivation and rationale for entering into a life of exile as it clarified where the church was situated in the scope of redemptive history. In this already but not yet period, the theology of exile brings needed clarity and distinction regarding expectations for work. The exilic perspective reminds Christians that they are called to work without expecting the companies or sectors for which they work to be

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\(^6\) Beach, *The Church in Exile*, 62.
aligned to Christian values and ends. Christians may be called to work for the good of organizations that do not necessarily seek their good. Exile also reminds Christians that the very reasons they may want to leave their work, may be the very reasons God has called them there. Exile clarifies the mission of the church to bring hope and light into brokenness and darkness endemic in all workplaces. Exile also reinforces the reality that there exists an eschatological homecoming that gives strength to the sometimes arduous task of persevering in a broken world.

Eschatology

The third and last doctrine to consider in the development of the normative perspective is eschatology. As the study of protology began in Genesis 1, so it is fitting that the study of eschatology would focus upon Revelation 21-22. In these final chapters of the great drama of redemption, New Jerusalem, described as the bride of Christ (Rev 21:9), comes down from out of heaven (Rev 21:2). Into this great city, the kings of the earth are seen bringing the glory, honor, and wealth of the nations (Rev 21:24-26, cf Isa 60:11). This final vision has profound implications for the theology of work.

In his book, *He Shines in All That’s Fair*, Richard Mouw argues that God has “multiple divine purposes” as he unfolds his redemptive plan culminating in the coming of New Jerusalem. Using the intra-Calvinistic debates between infralapsarians and supralapsarians, Mouw highlights the infralapsarian view which allows “for an ultimate

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multiplicity in the divine purposes.”

This view, in contrast to supralapsarianism, implies that God is glorified not only through the salvation of the elect, but also in the restoration of creation and humanity’s role in cultivating this world. Continuing the tradition of the Dutch theologians Abraham Kuyper and Herman Bavinck, Mouw writes referring to Revelations 21:24-26, “the Bible explicitly encourages us to expect an eschatological ingathering of the fruits of humankind’s cultural labors.”

This statement has profound significance for the potential meaning of present-day work.

If one were to take the supralapsarian view that “subsume[s] all the other decrees under predestination,” it would be easy to conclude that work done today has little eternal value apart from opportunities to evangelize. Many Christians today functionally operate with this theological assumption that eschatologically the only thing that really matters are souls that either go to heaven or to hell. Mouw’s concept of multiple divine purposes, challenges this reductionistic view by presenting the theological possibility that God could also be concerned and glorified by both the salvation of the elect as well as the renewal of cultivated treasures, i.e. the work of human hands. Mouw continues with an important clarifying question, “How will the state of things in our present world contribute to this final manifestation of glory?” The answer to this question is ultimately a mystery, but it does open the possibility for the work that people engage in today to have eternal significance. In Rev 21:5, Jesus states, “Behold, I am making all

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8 Ibid., 61.
9 Ibid., 50.
10 Ibid., 61.
11 Ibid., 50.
things new” and the meaning of “all things” has tremendous import if we consider this to perhaps include the work that people engage in daily.

The normative perspective provides a foundational architecture to consider a theology of work. Protology establishes the importance of our work as the expression of the imago dei. The theology of exile provides the necessary context of redemptive history to align our expectations for engaging the world outside of the church. Lastly, eschatology reaffirms the eternal significance of work not as something that is fleeting and passing away, but as part of God’s ultimate purpose in redeeming humanity and the works of people’s hands. From this normative overview, it is important to state how the Bible presents an extraordinary high view and meaning of work; yet, at the same time underscores how our context of exile must shape our expectations to realign with the reality of the fall and how it breaks into our daily life and work. This exilic context and reality provides a helpful segue into the second perspective—existential.

The Existential Perspective: Death, Resurrection, Glory

The existential perspective represents a perspective that is often overlooked or under-developed in discipleship and leadership formation. Particularly from a Christian perspective, this neglect has led to a crisis of faith for many. Missiologist Paul Hiebert stated in his book Transforming Worldviews, “People experience a worldview crisis when there is a gap between their worldview and their experience of reality.”12 The existential perspective places needed attention to the inner dynamics of personal experience, and

how the gospel renews experiences through the death, resurrection, and glory (DRG) of Christ.

For the normative perspective to be meaningful, it must be existentially accessible using a framework that resonates with human experience. The existential perspective connects the gospel with what people experience internally in their day-to-day lives. As Christians, the gospel not only brings us into a normative reality defined by what Christ has done, but also into an existential reality renewed by union with Christ. As “new creations,” the Holy Spirit is at work within Christians to make them more like Christ through a continual existential process of dying to self, coming more alive to the Spirit, becoming more and more like Christ in all His glory. This dynamic corresponds to the death, resurrection, and glory of Christ, which theologian Richard Gaffin has called the “climactic event-complex.” In Gaffin’s view, the irreducible elements of the work of Christ are encapsulated in three inseparable historic events—Christ’s death, resurrection, and coming glory.

In his earthly ministry, Jesus experienced the myriad of ways sin has brought death into the world, culminating in his crucifixion. However, his unjust death would set into motion a renewal dynamic that would bring a new redemptive power into this world. His righteousness was vindicated when he resurrected from the dead and ascended into His glory as the Sovereign King of kings and as great High Priest. Christ’s death, resurrection and glory (DRG) has released upon this world a power to redeem all things

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14 Ibid.
including our experiences. This gospel complex is at the heart of the work of Christ and what then flows into the life of the believer by virtue of the union they have with Christ through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Because of this union with Christ, the believer’s experience is fundamentally altered and living in a fallen world is now uniquely redefined by the reality of Christ’s death, resurrection, and glory. This framework of DRG thus represents an existential hermeneutic in interpreting the vicissitudes of human experience through the reality of the redemption that Christ accomplished.

Turning to the New Testament epistle of Philippians, the apostle Paul articulates this hermeneutic at work in his interpretation of his difficulties and sufferings:

“Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— “that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, “that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

“Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. “Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, “I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. “Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. (Phil 3:8-15, emphasis mine)

The reader encounters in this passage a unique window into how Paul views his past successes as well as present sufferings, and it is done through his union with Christ and the hermeneutic of “knowing Christ” (Phil 3:8-9). In this passage, the death, and
resurrection, and coming glory of Christ motivates Paul to reinterpret his sufferings, leading him to press forward to the glorious calling that he had received. Passages like this are helpful in understanding how the DRG of Christ applies existentially to the believer today.

Death

The common experience of every human is brokenness, which we encounter daily in the workplace. The death of Christ communicates the reality of this pain as not being illusory nor something that can be merely ignored. The acknowledgement of this brokenness becomes the entry point to experiencing gospel power. There is a Spirit-led invitation to enter into this brokenness in ways that align to God’s redeeming purposes. What is initially experienced as pain, suffering, or discomfort is the entry point for renewal dynamics. A difficult situation that can simply lead to complaining, bitterness, or apathy becomes the opportunity to die to self so that Christ’s redemptive power can enter into this brokenness (cf. Phil 3:10). Like the apostle Paul, Christians can choose to interpret the suffering and pain they experience in the workplace through their identification with Christ, deepening with a growing awareness in the renewal dynamics of that redemptive power. This awareness does not take away the existential pain of brokenness in our world, but it does bring the hope of the potential good that can arise from it as well as the comfort from the Spirit found in the midst of it.

Resurrection

Resurrection is the acknowledgment that Christ redeems death and pain and uses it to bring unexpected renewal into our world. The cross is the archetypal example of this.
Confidence in Christ’s resurrection leads Christians to confront the pain they experience instead of running away from it. Each day in the workplace, the believer has the opportunity and choice to die to themselves and to come alive in faith and obedience, trusting that God is at work in their work. This becomes the concrete occasion or crucible to inhabit spiritual practices of self-denial and mortification of idolatrous desires. As Christians are called to live by faith, it is in this place of trust and perseverance where believers can experience the incredible transforming power to bring about glimpses of his coming glory. There is a purpose and telos to Christ’s resurrection power and that is the full and unveiled experience of God’s glory in the coming New Jerusalem. Until then, this vision of His glory in all its facets and splendor uplifts and motivates the Christian in the present day.

Glory

The glory of Christ reflects where he resides now, seated at the right hand of the Father, and his impending return when all brokenness will be healed and all evil vanquished. This goal or prize (Phil 3:14) is what continually brings hope to the Christian—knowing that one day everything will be redeemed. Until that time, the ministry of the Holy Spirit is quintessential to the believer. In the upper room discourse, Jesus begins to explain to his disciples why it is so important for the Spirit to come.

“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 
*When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. *He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. *All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you. (Jn 16:12–15)
It is the Spirit who reveals the glory that belongs to Christ, and makes it known to the believer. The Spirit will declare these things, leading the believer into all truth. Because of the Spirit’s ministry the ability to perceive this unseen truth becomes possible. Spirit-led imagination is critical during this time of perseverance to see what is unseen (cf. 2 Cor 4:18) and to glimpse the glory that is to come. It is important to clarify that the imagination becomes the faculty through which the believer is able to perceive these unseen truths and realities. It would be a mistake to equate the use of the imagination with things that are not true or simply fictional. Given Scriptural teaching like that found in Hebrews 11:1—“Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen”—for faith to operate the imagination must be engaged. Both faith and imagination are required to see the glory that the Spirit brings upon the believer.

These glimpses of the glory of Christ, which come to the believer in the daily world we experience, are what compel the Christian to press forward even amid difficult situations. Visions of glory profoundly encourage the hearts of believers, and this is often experienced mystically as well as in the mundane of day-to-day life. The role of the Holy Spirit is paramount in the existential perspective as he mediates the union that every believer has with Christ. When individuals begin to experience the pain, power, and hope that the gospel uniquely brings, people begin to experience the transforming power of the gospel. The real struggle that people feel at work is no longer isolated and meaningless. The Spirit invites people during these times to take this pain and allow his power to be at work to bring hope and perseverance as the grace of Christ powerfully works to renew hearts, communities, and the world. This leads to the third and final perspective—situational.
The Situational Perspective: Heart, Community, World

The situational perspective focuses upon the scope of the gospel’s power in the time and space of the world. A key biblical passage that communicates the scope of God’s redemptive purposes can be found in Genesis 12:2-3.

> And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. And I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. (Gen 12:2-3)

In this passage, God communicates a three-fold covenantal blessing to bless Abram, make him into a great nation, and to bless all the families of the earth. The blessing of one man leads to the blessing to the world. This three-fold blessing is ultimately fulfilled by Christ. Jesus is the one who gives rise to the new community of the church who is then is called into the world to bless it. The scope of these blessings can broaden the conception of the work of Christ. The gospel’s power works to transform not only individuals, but communities and the world. The short-hand language used to communicate this at the Center for Faith and Work has been that the gospel transforms hearts, communities, and the world which comprises the three elements of the situational perspective. Together, these three elements expand the scope of how one can consider the gospel’s power situationally in the workplace to bring about a more holistic transformation.

Heart

The first element in the situational perspective to explore is the heart. The concept of the heart in Scripture reflects the core of what the bible considers a person:
It was essentially the whole man, with all his attributes, physical, intellectual and psychological, of which the Hebrew thought and spoke, and the heart was conceived of as the governing centre for all of these. It is the heart which makes a man, or a beast, what he is, and governs all his actions (Pr. 4:23).

The Hebrew concept of the heart is much more robust and less reductionist that our modern scientific conception. It is the controlling center of a person reflecting the innermost desires and motivations that underlie the full scope of human emotion and volition. The heart is the driving center of a person and reflects the core of what defines human action and feeling. The power of the gospel penetrates past surface-level behavior to the deepest recesses of a person’s motivating desires.

Augustine’s theology of disordered desires sheds particular light on the nature of the heart and how transformation at this level occurs. According to Augustine, humans are motivated by their deepest desires and this leads to a particular understanding of the dynamics of sin. The following example from Augustine’s reflections upon the stealing of pears during his adolescence provides some insight into these truths:

Yet sin is committed for the sake of all these things and others of this kind when, in consequence of an immoderate urge towards those things which are at the bottom end of the scale of good, we abandon the higher and supreme goods, that is you, Lord God, and your truth and your law (Ps. 118: 142). These inferior goods have their delights, but not comparable to my God who has made them all. It is in him that the just person takes delight; he is the joy of those who are true of heart (Ps. 63: 11).

In this excerpt, Augustine reflects upon how sin leads people to love lesser things more than the greater things that rightly warrants these higher affections. Human loves can

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become disordered which is at the heart of sin. Sin is disordered desires, and this disordering reveals how good things, like work, can become harmful or idolatrous.

In creation, work was good gift to experience the splendor of being created in God’s image and to display diverse expressions of God’s glory. Yet in the fall, the human heart began to distort this good purpose of work. People began to look at work not as the expression of their identity, but as the source of it. Work began to provide that deeper sense of security and worth that only God can supply. Instead of trusting God and his provisions for all of life, faith was easily displaced from God to work. It is easy for people to subconsciously and functionally believe that their value and worth as a human being come from their job performance and not from God. In this deceit, earthly security becomes directly tied with job security and the paychecks people receive from their work. In this way, work can easily become an idol that people worship to gain from it things that freely come through the work of Christ.

Into this context, the gospel can penetrate into the heart to renew and rightly order its love for God and for work. The gospel reveals God’s unfathomable love, and when the heart experiences this love, it can finally release entrenched idols. Puritan Thomas Chalmers preached about the expulsive power of a greater affection and he argues the gospel presents to this world a love that can uniquely expel lesser loves.

[It is then that a love paramount to the love of the world, and at length expulsive of it, first raises in the regenerated bosom. It is when released from the spirit of bondage with which love cannot dwell, and when admitted into the number of God’s children through faith that is in Christ Jesus, the Spirit of adoption is poured upon us—it is then that the heart, brought under the master of one great and predominant affection, is delivered from the tyranny of its former desires in the only way in which
deliverance is possible.\textsuperscript{17}

As Chalmers argues, when the human heart is dominated by a love for God, there is a freedom to love work the way God intended. There is great inherent value in work as it can once again become the expression of the \textit{imago dei} in humanity. The sense of being a slave to work can slowly be released. When motivated by a love for God, there is a growing desire to see work as the expression of God’s glory. In both the mundane details as well as in larger strategic innovations, all work becomes the expression of God’s glory.

What is fundamentally broken about human beings is not merely what would commonly be call sinful behavior, but ultimately sin is found deep in the underlying desires that powerfully shapes motivations and responses to various life situations. The scope of the gospel must expose these deeply embedded desires so that the motivations for work are known and renewed to reflect the priority of loving God and neighbor. This renewal comes through a process of faith and repentance. It is only God’s kindness that can lead to a process of deep, life-changing repentance that renews the motivations and reasons behind why people work.

Community

As the gospel renews the deep motivations of the human heart, its power is also at work to renew the way people love one another at work. This leads to the second element in the situational perspective—community. In the context of work, community represents coworkers, colleagues, supervisors, clients, subordinates, and others with whom one

\textsuperscript{17} Thomas Chalmers, \textit{The Expulsive Power of a New Affection} (Minneapolis, MN: Curiosmith, 2012), 20.
comes into frequent contact while working. These people can often become dehumanized because the context of work often leads to the instrumentalization of people for their contribution towards the goals and tasks of an organization. Instead of loving those people in the work community, people are often merely seen as means to an end.

According to the February 2017 Gallup poll, 70 percent of American workers are disengaged from work, and much of this disengagement stems from the way individuals are managed and treated.

Only one-third of U.S. employees are engaged in their work and workplace. And only about one in five say their performance is managed in a way that motivates them to do outstanding work. Employees feel rather indifferent about their job and the work they are being asked to do. Organizations are not giving them compelling reasons to stay, so it should come as no surprise that most employees (91%) say the last time they changed jobs, they left their company to do so.18

As this report demonstrates, there is widespread dissatisfaction within current workplaces around the United States. Much of this dissatisfaction is rooted in the reality that workplaces are often dehumanized and can raise levels of anxiety, animosity, demoralization, dysfunction, and depression for people who regularly experience it. Dehumanization can also lead to systemic forms of racism or sexism as well as seemingly more innocuous forms of unhealthy expectations of work-life balance. Renewing this dehumanization is at the heart of gospel-led communal renewal. The gospel is powerfully at work to humanize our relationships, creating humanizing workplaces that reflect God’s

intention for workplace communities.

When he appears in the New Testament, Jesus’ most commonly used self-designation was “son of man”—a title emphasizing his humanity. The human part of Christ’s hypostatic union is critical to the redemption of work. As the Son of God and son of man, Jesus’ life of obedience and love, leading to his sacrifice upon the cross, qualified him to be the head of a new humanity—Jesus was the second Adam.

45 Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. 46 But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. 47 The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. 48 As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. (1Cor 15:45-48)

Through his death and resurrection, Jesus surrendered his Spirit of Sonship to the Father. In Acts 2, the Father then poured out this gift to humanity in Pentecost, creating a new humanity restored in their human calling. Because of this renewal, there is a power at work through the Holy Spirit to help people view one another not through the lens of selfish ambition but of loving service and submission.

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, 2 complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. 3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. (Phil 2:1-4)

The work of Christ uniquely re-establishes the intrinsic value inherent in all people and places this inestimable value at the forefront of all work relationships. This intrinsic value is irrevocably endowed because every person is created in the image of God. In Christ, people are once again able to see how all people deserve respect and honor even despite the lack of instrumental value one may have in an organization.

67
Dietrich Bonhoeffer in his book, *Life Together*, communicates how the gospel transforms human love, characterized by self-centeredness, to spiritual love which readily recognizes the image of Christ in the other:

Human love constructs its own image of the other person, of what he is and what he should become. It takes the life of the other person into its own hands. Spiritual love recognizes the true image of the other person which he has received from Jesus Christ; the image that Jesus Christ himself embodied and would stamp upon all men.\(^\text{19}\)

The gospel radically places at the forefront of all human relationships a Spirit-led love for one another that is not conditioned upon people’s instrumental value. When this kind of love and humanization occurs, dehumanizing practices can be identified and addressed. Workplace cultures can become less toxic and a sense of productive vitality can begin to emerge. Companies and organizations that promote such humanizing practices can bring about a greater flourishing for both their employees, which can translate to greater engagement, equity, opportunity, productivity, creativity, and satisfaction. When these kinds of values operate in a workplace, there is a real hope to imagine a kind of change that can positively impact the world.

**World**

The third element in the situational perspective highlights the reality that the gospel is not only able to change individual hearts and communities, but it is able to change the world around us through the work that people engage in day-in and day-out. Of the three perspectives, the world can be the hardest to grasp because of the complexity

of modern society. Yet, this final element reinforces that the scope of the gospel’s transforming power to include all the complexities found in the modern world.\textsuperscript{20}

One remarkable feature of the past few decades has been the unprecedented reality that individuals can and have indeed changed the world through their work. Technological advances have democratized access to global information and resources, allowing for a growing list of culture-shaping individuals who have changed the world in ways unthinkable to previous generations. Innovators like Steve Jobs (Apple), Mark Zuckerberg (Facebook), Wendy Kopp (Teach for America), and Jessica Jackley (KIVA) have dramatically changed the way we think about technology, social networking, education, and financing. Today, the concept of changing the world is a much more palpable reality, and the role of imagination has become increasingly paramount in enacting such transformation.

Unfortunately, for many the imagination is the relic and luxury of childhood and seen as something not essential to daily life in the real world. For this reason, the imagination can quickly atrophy and along with it, the capacity to envisage gospel change in a broken world. Change at this level requires the imagination because one must first conceive a renewed reality before it becomes materialized. Spirit-led imagination is quintessential in considering the work of the gospel in the world, and nowhere is this more prevalent that in the prophetic books of the Bible. God used visions like his throne room in Isaiah 6 and the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel 37 to propel Isaiah and Ezekiel in

\textsuperscript{20} The work of Leslie Newbigin’s \textit{The Gospel as Public Truth} has helped reinforce the need for this category to exist as he asserts that the gospel is not merely private conviction but public reality given the nature of Christ’s resurrection being historic.
their calling. God’s use of the imagination was a powerful means by which he could shape the way these prophets viewed their world and the ability to see God’s glory despite the apparent brokenness of their respective situations.

Today, God continues to use the prophetic imagination so that people might be able to glimpse the promise that he is indeed making all things new. The power of the gospel redeems the imagination so that even in the midst of sin, people are able to behold the glory of God made manifest throughout the world as expressed across diverse nations, cultures, and industry sectors. In this way, the gospel provides the most powerful grounding for our imagination as it infuses the reality of the current world with the hope of the new world to come. When compelled by this vision of God’s glory in tangible earthly expression, the Spirit enables people to more fully experience the otherwise latent and veiled glory present in the world.

Walter Brueggemann in his book *The Prophetic Imagination* states, “It is the task of prophetic imagination and ministry to bring people to engage the promise of newness that is at work in our history with God.”  

How is it that God uses the imagination to propel this new work of God’s Spirit? It is easy to live in this world today devoid of a meaningful sense of God’s presence and how human society reflects God’s invisible qualities. Christian ethicist, Max Stackhouse, in his four volume series, *God and Globalization*, presents a theological and religious interpretation of globalization in which he argues:

[N]o sphere has been able to order any of these principalities, and no

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civilization has been able to hold the spheres together without a more or less shared religious awareness that offers guidance throughout the sociocultural ethos. While, in one sense, Religion is but one of the principal powers, with its own moral and spiritual energy, it is also a sphere that points to that ultimate creative power that encompasses and that is in some sense present in every sphere.  

In these volumes, Stackhouse makes the explicit connection between modern societal spheres and their being rooted in God’s creative power and his moral energy. This interpretation requires a view of the modern world that is filtered through a prophetic imagination to see the globalizing world through a spiritual lens.

For example, consider a person who grows up in a society where the legal system affords due process. Through the sphere of judicial courts, this individual can come to know and experience what it means that God is just. In contrast, an individual growing up in a totalitarian society whose laws are essentially a reflection of the powers that be, will have a harder time experiencing the glory of God’s justice. Likewise, when someone lives in a society where the arts are valued and flourish, people are inspired by God’s immense imaginative faculties. When entrepreneurs grow up in a context where there are efficient and effective financial systems, they have access to the kind of capital that enables them to give rise to something new to create opportunities for others to participate in cultivating this amazing world God created.

As Brueggemann states, “The prophet must speak metaphorically about hope but concretely about the real newness that comes to us and redefines our situation.”  


the Spirit is at work to renew the imagination, the day-to-day realities that people experience become the astounding experiences of God’s presence and glory. This vision can bring a deep sense of hope to propel people to persevere in doing good and working towards change. Christians ought to be able to see the potential of renewal in their work grounded in the confidence that God is orchestrating something that human beings alone would never be able to conceive. When the imagination makes connections like this, the result is a growing worship of God in the mundane of everyday life that rejoices in a God who is making all things new. With all the brokenness that exists in every part of the world, visions of God in day-to-day life compels individuals to know that God is in this brokenness and that he invites all people to partake in this world changing restoration.
PART THREE

MINISTRY PRACTICE
CHAPTER 4

HELPING CHURCHES DEVELOP FAITH AND WORK MINISTRY

The desire to develop a faith and work ministry must begin by considering the broader ecclesiology that informs ministry practice and discipleship. Referring to a sermon from Dutch theologian and prime minister Abraham Kuyper, Pastor Timothy Keller in *Center Church* highlights the important distinction between the organic and institutional church.

Abraham Kuyper taught that the church institutional was the gathered church, organized under its officers and ministers. It is called to do “Word and sacrament” — to preach the gospel, baptize, and make disciples. This he distinguished from the church organic, referring to all Christians living in the world who have been discipled and equipped to bring the gospel to bear on all of life. We should not think of Christians out in the world as merely distinct and detached individuals. They are the body of Christ, the church. As Christians in the world, they are still to think and work together, banding together in creative forms, being the church organic that the church institutional has discipled them to be.¹

Turning to ministry practice, the distinction between the organic and institutional church

is important to highlight. Often the institutional church can implicitly create ministries that prepares and disciples her people for life inside of the church but not for life outside of the church. Functionally the organic aspect of the church is often ignored and the witness of the organic church in the world is thereby greatly lacking or comprised. Because of this, there is a growing awareness and hunger for addressing this area of deficiency in the church’s training of her people. This shift towards preparing people for life outside of the church is one that necessitates faith and work discipleship.

The development of faith and work ministry begins with a proper understanding of the role of the institutional and organic church. This is crucial because this particular area of ministry is one that requires both the pastoral staff and the lay congregant leading and teaching each other in collaborative partnership. For that reason, the significant theological training of lay leadership is a necessary part of developing a sustainable and growing faith and work ministry. As pastors equip lay leaders theologically with a vision of the role of the organic church in the world, lay leaders in turn must apply this learning into their vocational context to provide further training for those working in the particular industries they represent.

This ministry project will focus on training church leaders who in turn will lead others through the Gotham Fellowship. This training will come in two forms. The first through participation in a week-long summer intensive training and the second through the development of a leaders’ handbook for implementing the Gotham Fellowship. Building upon the framework of the normative, existential and situational perspectives outlined previously, these church leaders will be equipped to lead a Gotham-like Fellows program in their churches to lay a foundation for a robust faith and work ministry. This
training corresponds to the three perspectives. Normatively, those who will lead the Fellows program will learn a foundational biblical theology of work highlighting five passages of Scripture. Existentially, they will experience spiritually formative practices that highlight the need to engage God personally through adaptations of ancient devotional practices. Situationally, they will acquire and be trained to utilize tools that help apply the gospel’s power into the three areas of heart, community, and world through corresponding projects.

**Goals**

The goals of the training are three-fold. First, the leaders must be able to teach a Biblical theology of faith and work. Second, their faith and work discipleship must meaningfully engage the existential perspective through the programmatic integration of theological teaching and spiritual practices in the context of a committed community. Third, the leaders must be able to explain the dynamics of how the gospel can renew hearts, communities, and the world using three projects that will be taught to them during the training—the self-counseling project, the redemptive feedback project, and the cultural renewal project. These three goals are an attempt to equip both church staff and lay leaders learning alongside one another with a robust foundation and framework to develop people holistically with the power of the gospel to renew all things. The proceeding section will delineate further each of these three goals.

**Teaching a Biblical Theology of Faith & Work**

During the week-long summer intensive, five passages of Scripture will be studied inductively, followed by direct teaching on the significance of these passages
with respect to work. These five passages are: Genesis 1, Jeremiah 29, Ezekiel 37, Isaiah 6, and Revelation 21. Together these passages will provide theological contours for approaching the biblical foundations for faith and work integration. Genesis 1 introduces the critical notion that work is the expression of human identity and not the source of it. Jeremiah 29 provides clarity on the expectations that God’s people should have during the time of exile while lays the context for developing the concept of exilic discipleship. The vision of dry bones found in Ezekiel 37 clarifies the critical importance of the prophetic imagination and how God uses visions to lead his people through death and resurrection to behold redemptive glory. Isaiah 6 in conjunction with Revelation 21 presents an eschatological vision of the multiple divine purposes that God has in view when considering the manifestations of his glory. Leaders should be able to comfortably use these five biblical passages to help congregants grow in their biblical and theological awareness of the meaning and context of work in the scope of God’s redemptive narrative.

Integrating Spiritual Formation Practices

The next goal of existential engagement arises from the integration of spiritually formative practices. During the week-long training experience, participants in the intensive will be introduced to a variety of spiritual streams that have fed the church since its inception. CFW wants to broaden the exposure that leaders have to various modes of spirituality including five movements articulated by Richard Foster: contemplative, holiness, charismatic, social justice, and evangelical. The intensive is designed to train on average sixty participants at a time, providing a diversity of spiritual formation and
experience that allows for robust discussion and engagement across differing spiritual traditions. The hope of this exposure is to broaden the leader’s appreciation for the diversity of spiritual practices and to create a welcoming environment for those coming from differing traditions.

In addition to the introduction to these five spiritual movements, two modified devotional practices will be exercised and highlighted: lectio divina and the prayer of examen. The exilic adaptations of these practices will model how devotional life can be contextualized with the hope of increasing the likelihood that these practices can be absorbed meaningfully into the current rhythms and patterns of daily life. These devotionals will be done corporately including a time to process the impact of these practices together.

Applying the Gospel in Real-Life Situations

The third goal highlights the ability to apply the gospel in real life situations at the levels of heart, community and world. The self-counseling project begins with a specific work situation where the individual identifies an internal or external sinful expression. A series of eight questions models how the gospel begins with the heat of a real-life situation and then is able to expose the deeper desires that motivated the particular behavioral response. Once these deeper desires are identified, the unique power of the gospel is able to lead individuals to a deeper love for God and the subsequent ability to put to death idols that have been constructed. The putting to death of these idols presents the opportunity to come alive to new desires and corresponding behavior that bring forth light and life. This simple yet powerful tool is extremely helpful in connecting rich
gospel-centered theology to real life issues and struggles.

The second project is the redemptive feedback project which acknowledges the reality that people are constantly giving and receiving feedback, whether formally or informally, in the context of work. These words either flow out of a heart that has been renewed by the gospel and desires to bring flourishing to others, or are the expressions of a self-centered heart that seeks to dehumanize others for the sake of personal gain and ambition. This project provides an overview of how the gospel—through the death, resurrection, and glory of Christ—redeems our ability to give and receive feedback. The goal of this project is to give and receive concrete feedback in the context of work. Those who go through this process begin to understand the power of words to shape and reflect a reality of hope.

The final project is the cultural renewal project which targets change in the world. This tool begins by understanding and identifying an area of brokenness that an individual experiences in the context of work. This area of brokenness can be small or large, but the key is that they are close enough to the area being addressed so as to have had a personal experience with this brokenness. Once identified, the next set of questions focuses upon imagining change. This requires reflection and application of the biblical theology learned during the course of the program. The hope is that people who experience Spirit-led imagination are able to see how things could change and how this change would reflect concretely the glory of God in the world. The third and final set of questions focuses upon implementing change beginning with small steps towards realizing the vision for renewal. An important and necessary part of this project is growing in the discernment of hearing God’s invitation towards change and the wisdom
that brings to life situations. These steps are not ultimately about human initiation but about discerning God’s presence and invitation to join him in his renewing work in the workplace.

**Strategy**

The Center for Faith and Work receives requests regularly from around the world to aid in the development of faith and work ministries. Given the growing demand, CFW has sought to be strategic about the training provided to accelerate the ability of churches to grow this ministry in their respective church and beyond. For this reason, CFW has identified three key qualifiers to increase the strategic impact of the training.

The first qualifier is prioritizing large churches with regular Sunday worship attendance of over 500 people in large cities around the world. The goal of prioritizing large churches is twofold. First, large churches typically have the capacity to devote both staff and financial resources to developing a dedicated faith and work ministry. Second, churches located in large cities can become regional resource providers for smaller churches in their region. The hope of CFW is to accelerate the growth of these ministries so that they, in turn, can provide better faith and work programming and training in their geographic area.

The second qualifier is requiring both church staff and lay leaders to be present at the week-long summer training. A growing vision of faith and work ministry requires the cooperation and joint vision of both of these groups of leaders. When church and lay leaders do not share a common vision for faith and work ministry, there can be growing frustrations and misunderstandings that slow or even impede the development of faith
and work ministry. CFW has witnessed on several occasions situations where lay leaders have been quite excited about developing faith and work ministries in their church, but the senior church leaders did not match their enthusiasm. This kind of response unfortunately reinforces the perception that churches do not care about the work that congregants are engaged in daily. Unfortunately, disconnects like this happen frequently enough that this has become an important qualifier to ensure that the training received would have the greatest likelihood of adoption and growth.

The third qualifier is not a prerequisite for acceptance into the summer training, but rather a post-requisite to target the training of lay leaders to increase the potential for growth, scalability, and authenticity. As noted in the previous qualifier, the involvement of both church staff and lay leaders is absolutely critical in developing faith and work ministries. Pastors and lay leaders together bring the requisite gifts and experiences to create robust and meaningful programming. The combination of biblical and theological teaching applied in the context of real-life industry experiences outside of the church is what brings a sense of credibility, value, and authenticity. When pastors speak or create curriculum about work apart from the experience and knowledge of those who have actually worked in these industries, their perspective can often feel more like a caricature that only reinforces the notion that the church knows very little about what is happening in the community outside of the church. In order to create a trusting, collaborative relationship between church staff and lay leaders, the church must begin to invest significantly in lay leadership development, providing substantial biblical and theological training that aligns these leaders with the mission and theology of the church. When training like this happens, lay leaders feel appreciated and valued, and pastors often grow
in their trust of these leaders leading to more substantial ministries within the church context.

The Gotham Fellowship was created to be a robust expression of training lay leaders with substantial theology and spiritual formation, in the context of a vocationally diverse community. In CFW’s experience, this program has helped pastors as well as lay leaders grow significantly in their understanding and appreciation for the diversity of work present in their community while affirming that all of the participants have been called equally by God to bear witness to the gospel in a myriad of ways. Starting a program like the Gotham Fellowship is not a requirement but is highly recommended given the results we have consistently seen in churches that have adopted this intensive program. Gotham creates a mezzanine level of lay-leaders who, due to their training by the church, have grown not only in their commitment to their church but also to their craft and work. The results are a growing vision of what God is doing throughout a city and how the church in its organic and institutional forms is critical for a growing faith and work movement. Given the resource intensive nature of Gotham, CFW does not recommend this program to all churches, but those who are able to launch it will create a platform from which to build a robust faith and work ministry. For this reason, in addition to this weeklong summer training, the creation of a Gotham Leaders Manual is an important part of helping churches launch successful Gotham Fellowship programs.
CHAPTER 5

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS AND EVALUATION

The training process for church and lay leaders to launch and lead a Gotham Fellowship consists of two parts. The first part requires attendance to a week-long summer intensive training, while the second consists of preparation utilizing a leader’s manual that provides an overview of the twenty-six lessons. The summer intensive provides an immersive experience centered on the three perspectives of normative, existential and situational. The leader’s manual provides teaching notes aimed at aiding in the week-to-week preparation of the Gotham curriculum. The goal is to combine these two training opportunities to adequately equip and prepare churches to successfully launch a Gotham Program.

Implementation

This year’s summer intensive training will take place August 14-18, 2017 in Princeton, New Jersey. Approximately fifty to sixty participants will be selected based on the criteria stated in the previous chapter. These participants will experience a holistic synthesis of the normative, existential, and situational perspectives. The following figure outlines the daily programming of this week to provide a sense of how these three
perspectives are being combined throughout the week. The sections that are shaded in blue represent the normative perspectives, the sections shaded in yellow represent existential perspectives, and the sections shaded in green represent situational perspectives.

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<tr>
<th>Mon</th>
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<tr>
<td>8:00</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
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<td>Cafeteria</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>Gen 1</td>
<td>Jer 29</td>
<td>Isa 60/Rev 21</td>
<td>Eze 37</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Biblical</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>Heart Renewal</td>
<td>Calling Exilic Multiple Divine</td>
<td>Common Grace Sphere Glory/Love</td>
<td>Cosmic Pneumatology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>SCP Overview</td>
<td>F&amp;W Breakout (Regional)</td>
<td>Examen/Debrief</td>
<td>Discernment/Debrief</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Mackay (by cohort)</td>
<td>Mackay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Welcome</td>
<td>SCP</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Debriefing F&amp;W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introductions</td>
<td>SCP</td>
<td>Debrief</td>
<td>Gilbert TED</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00</td>
<td>Spirituality</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Debriefing F&amp;W</td>
<td>CFW Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00</td>
<td>CFW Overview Week</td>
<td>F&amp;W Breakout (Cohort)</td>
<td>CFW Team</td>
<td>CRP Overview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Developing a Ministry Plan (Ministry Team)</td>
<td>CRP on own</td>
<td>Debrief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00</td>
<td>Frameworks NES/HCW/DR</td>
<td>F&amp;W Breakout (Cohort)</td>
<td>LG Debrief</td>
<td>Dinner with Alumni Panel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00</td>
<td>Dinner at PTS</td>
<td>Lectio / Debrief</td>
<td>Dinner</td>
<td>Dinner</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:00</td>
<td>Heart Renewal</td>
<td>On own</td>
<td>Free time NYC</td>
<td>On own</td>
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Figure 1. Summer Intensive Schedule

During this week, participants will be taught key frameworks on the first day and will subsequently experience the integration of these frameworks throughout the rest of the week. This training is designed to closely align with the three-fold goals of the week.
Each morning, participants will be taught a biblical theology of faith and work highlighting five key biblical passages. Second, this theological learning will be combined with spiritually formative practices, such as the prayer of examen and discernment. The practices will be done communally so that participants can experience the movement of God’s Spirit within the diversity of the group. Third, CFW will provide an overview of three key projects used during Gotham—the self-counseling project, the redemptive feedback project, and the cultural renewal project—and will review the first and third of these in detail.

The second part of implementation is the creation of a leader’s manual. This manual will provide an overview of the twenty-six classes in the Gotham curriculum. Each lesson will begin by highlighting the goal and key concepts of the class and then include more detailed teaching notes for the assigned readings. Each lesson ends with a review of key concepts and provides a reminder of next week’s assignments. This format is intended to provide clarity on key concepts that should be emphasized, as well as to provide flexibility in how an instructor could lead the class, given the depth and breadth of content presented in the readings. (See Appendix A for a sample lesson.)

In addition to the summer intensive training and the leader’s manual, CFW will also provide an online learning platform for participants in these Fellow’s programs. This online platform will allow participants to view the assignments and allow facilitators and teachers to track the fellow’s progress on these readings and assignments. CFW will also use this online learning platform to provide further practical resources to help churches launch a Gotham. Resources such as marketing materials, sample budgets, and recordings of classes are designed to aid churches in boosting their confidence while launching their
own program.

**Assessment**

CFW will utilize two main online surveys to assess the effectiveness of this training—the first survey will be sent out shortly after the summer intensive with a follow-up survey sent out after the completion of the first-year Gotham program. The first survey will consist of three main sections to evaluate the effectiveness of the summer intensive specifically regarding the three stated goals of the week stated above. The first section will measure the impact of the theology that was presented and the participants’ confidence in being able to present this theology to others. The second section will measure the impact of the integration of the three perspectives in the week and the participants’ comments on how this affected their learning. The third section will measure the effectiveness of the training on the self-counseling project and cultural renewal project.

The second survey will be presented after a successful launch of the Gotham program to evaluate the effectiveness of the weekly leader’s manual, as well as to measure the impact of the program upon its respective fellows. This survey consists of two main sections. The first will evaluate the effectiveness of the manual in preparing teachers and facilitators to lead each class. The second section will provide quantitative and qualitative information on the impact and response of their fellows. Quantitative information will include data such as numbers of fellows, numbers of dropouts, and attendance. Qualitative results will be gathered through testimonies that the leaders of the respective Gotham programs will assemble to gain a sense of the impact of the program
upon participants’ lives. Through these two surveys, the hope is to improve these two training tools so that CFW can more effectively prepare churches to launch Gotham programs that will accelerate faith and work ministries around the world.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

When Redeemer Presbyterian Church began the Center for Faith and Work in 2002, it was uncertain what this kind of ministry would look like in the coming years. With no road map to follow, the early years of CFW were characterized by contextualized experimentation. From a theological perspective, there was a deep conviction held by the church leaders that the gospel changes everything. Yet, the dynamics of this change were yet to be understood and developed. How is it that the gospel changes work? To answer this question, the philosophy expounded by John Frame called triperspectivalism presented an epistemological framework from which CFW could build a robust foundation.

The normative, existential, and situational perspectives became three key, interwoven elements in the development of CFW’s flagship leadership program—a nine-month intensive fellows program called Gotham. Over the years, this program has drawn much attention from Christians living in New York City and from churches around the world given the levels of transformation that people consistently experienced as a result of going through this program. CFW was consistently seeing year after year a growing interest in this demanding program. Over time, CFW and the church at large began to see the strategic impact of this program in the life of the church. These leaders were able to articulate and apply rich theology in the context of their work, and their language and disposition towards work caught the attention of those around them. Given this unexpected success and the growing demand from other churches, there was a need to train other churches to run this program with the larger hopes of developing
contextualized faith and work ministries that were collaboratively led by both church staff and lay leaders.

This training would take place through two primary forms—a week-long summer intensive and the utilization of a leaders handbook that would provide rigorous preparation for the twenty-six classes in the curriculum. Through these two training opportunities, the goal is to be able to accelerate the growth of faith and work ministries in churches around the world. As churches engage in more meaningful and transformative faith and work ministries, the laity are equipped to live out a theology that was presented over five centuries ago by Martin Luther. It is one thing to call all people priests of God, but another to equip and open their eyes to see what that means in the particular work that they engage daily. When this connection is made, there is a deep excitement because the relevance and the power of the gospel becomes palpable Monday through Friday. The church is no longer merely where people go on Sunday, but rather who they are throughout the week. Marva Dawn said it well in the preface of her book, *Keeping the Sabbath Wholly*:

To say “I am going to church” both reveals and promotes bad theology. In the earliest days of Christianity, “the church” was a living and vibrant gathering of God’s people, who met together to be strengthened and then went out into the world to manifest the gospel in their actions and their very beings. Now the church has become a static *place*, to which believers go for tired and tiring rituals. We are NOT “going to church”! We are going to a *sanctuary* to participate in an *order of worship* together with other *people of God* gathered in *community*, to be nourished by all that we do there together so that we can go out into the world and be *church*.  

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Dawn articulates something that has been lost in many churches around the world. The church is most powerful and active not on Sunday mornings, but on Monday mornings when she is scattered throughout cities and towns around the world witnessing the power of the resurrected Christ. When God’s people are equipped and sent on mission to see their workplaces as sacred and their work as a critical part of their holy calling, then there is a real possibility to see the power of the gospel released in ways that we have yet to see in our world. If this is indeed true, perhaps the problem with work is not that people expect too much from it, but too little. It is the deepest hope at CFW that in the coming years Christians will lead the way in testifying to the amazing gift of work and how it can uniquely bring flourishing to our communities and manifest the glory of God.
APPENDIX A

Class 1 | Gospel as Public Truth

Overview

Goal

- To understand the role of worldview and why the gospel needs to be the basis of a Christian worldview.

Assignments

- *Every Good Endeavor*, Keller (Book)
- *Rethinking Worldview*, Bertrand (Gotham Reader 1)
- *Truth to Tell*, Newbigin (Gotham Reader 1)
- “Kicking the Secularist Habit,” Brooks (Portal)
- What is Cultural Renewal, 1-3, Keller (Audio)
- Making Culture, Crouch (Audio)
- The Gospel and the African, Keller (Audio)

Key Concepts

- A Nuanced Understanding of a Christian Worldview
- Gospel as Public Truth
- Tri-perspectival Approach to Worldview Formation: Normative – Situational – Existential

Overview

- Religious faith is commonly viewed as a personal and private matter, and in many respects faith is a deeply personal reality
- Following Christ demands the totality of our being—who we are and what we do—and this impacts us at the very core of our being
- Should the gospel be merely a private reality or should it affect the public realm and the way we think about the public square?
- Historically, many have argued that the public square should be stripped of
religion, yet this is an impossible task as some underlying belief structure will always inform the way we approach public life, whether it’s Christianity, atheism, pragmatism or utilitarianism

- In this class, we will ask the question: Should our faith be merely privatized or should it enter into the public square?
- How does the gospel of Jesus Christ affect the way we understand our Christian faith and the way we live it out in the world?

**Agenda/Timing**

<table>
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**Prayer & Spiritual Formation**

**Teaching**

- Rethinking Worldview

**Discussion**

**Teaching**

- Kicking the Secularist Habit
- Truth to Tell
- Gospel as Public Truth

**Discussion**

**Teaching**

- Triperspectival Approach

**Class Closing**

- Homework
- Preview Class 2
- Prayer
Class Opening

Goal

- To understand the role of worldview and why the gospel needs to be the basis of a Christian worldview.

Overview Class 1

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Key Concepts

- A Nuanced Understanding of a Christian Worldview
- Gospel as Public Truth
- Triperspectival Approach to Worldview Formation: Normative – Situational - Existential

Prayer & Spiritual Formation

- Devotional: Glimpses of a Greater Glory highlights
Teaching Outline

Rethinking Worldview (Bertrand)

- Recently, there has been a shift in our understanding of worldview
- The concept of a Christian worldview developed out of a philosophical tradition that focused upon normative elements anchored in the contours of the Biblical narrative—creation, fall, and redemption
- Bertrand helps us understand how this dominant normative approach has left many dissatisfied, as it often does not inform the way people live and make decisions day-to-day
- It is not a functioning roadmap for people as they live and make decisions in this world
- This discontent has led to a certain shift in our understanding of worldview
- Bertrand will help us understand that worldview formation is ultimately a spiritual, not merely intellectual, process

Teaching Notes

1. Worldview

“To the extent that we exert ourselves against the pressures, we are forming a worldview, and to the extent that the pressures are shaping our responses, they are changing and polishing and demolishing that worldview. And this is happening constantly, whether we are alive to the struggle and engaged in it or not.” - [The Aggressive Environment]

“Yes, you can change your worldview, but only insofar as you can change your actions (and only insofar as your actions actually shape your worldview.)… As valuable as they are, study and the application of reason are not enough. Your worldview is not simply the product of study and reason, so it’s wrong to suggest that changing it is a simple intellectual exercise.” - [Changing our Worldview]

1.1. Different worldviews are seen more clearly in a pluralistic society like NYC than elsewhere.
1.2. Worldviews are not merely intellectual, but rather spiritual
1.3. Consensus that worldviews are both given and chosen.

2. History of “worldview” within Christianity
2.1. The Reformed concept of worldview finds its stream of thought flowing from the German word, weltenschauung meaning philosophy
of life. This word has most frequently been translated as “worldview” which is not necessarily the best translation, but the widely accepted one.

2.2. Reformed groups saw the importance of having a philosophy truly grounded in Scripture, so were therefore thinking about it much earlier than most.

2.3. For further study, see David Naugle, *Worldview as Concept*.

3. Christian Worldview

3.1. The main contour of the Christian worldview is the story of redemption: the world was created good, but all is fallen because of humanity’s rebellion against God, and through Christ, God is at work restoring and redeeming all things.

3.2. Normatively grounded worldviews (expressed by people like Francis Schaeffer, Chuck Colson, Nancy Pearcey - *Total Truth*) state that worldview is helpful for philosophical or theoretical questions. Yet Christians tend not to draw upon their worldview when thinking about existential life questions, i.e. *What job do I take? Should I date this person?*

3.3. Thus, a revision is required in the Christian understanding of worldview - one that appreciates the importance of norms but brings together situational and existential dimensions.

3.4. Bertrand very uncomfortable with the tension of “us vs. them” – we see this as played out in the creation of culture wars in States.

3.5. When worldview is grounded only in the Normative, (what I believe vs. what you believe) people become adversarial.

3.6. We must start with a shared experience - we live in the same world.

Questions for Discussion

- What is a worldview?
- Do you choose a worldview or does it choose you?
- What’s the basis of a worldview?
- How does a Gospel worldview penetrate & shape our everyday lives?
“Kicking the Secularist Habit” (Brooks)

- As a secularist, Brooks helps us understand the public nature of religious faith
- He describes how our modern world is dominated by religious viewpoints
- Brooks correctly reverses popular conceptions of secularism being the dominant reality and illustrates how religious perspectives are the norm in our global world

Teaching Notes

1. From a sociological perspective, secularization theory postulated that the more educated a society became, the less religious they would become
2. However, the opposite has been shown around the world
3. Despite the rise in education, religion has not diminished and today we see a rise in religious fundamentalism
4. Brooks helps to show how religion is an important public phenomenon in our time and how it influences world events
5. We cannot simply ignore the prevalence and importance of religion in the public square

Truth to Tell (Newbigin)

- For many, the gospel is a private and personal matter, guiding personal convictions and values
- In the introduction to his book, Newbigin challenges this subjectivizing of the gospel and proposes that the gospel is ‘the starting point for a wholly new way of understanding the cosmos and the human situation in the cosmos’
- Because the resurrection of Christ was a public, historic event, its implications cannot merely be private but have to impact the way we view all of reality.
- When the Christian Church affirms the gospel as public truth, it is not engaged in a self-serving exercise
- It is not simply promoting its own growth, though surely the Church rejoices when there are more people who are grasped by the truth as it is in Jesus, and are committed to following the true and living way that Jesus is
- When the Church affirms the gospel as public truth, it is challenging the whole of society to wake out of the nightmare of subjectivism and relativism, to escape from the captivity of the self turned in upon itself, and to accept the calling which is addressed to every human being to seek, acknowledge and proclaim
the truth. For we are that part of God’s creation which he has equipped with the power to know the truth and to speak the praise of the whole creation in response to the truthfulness of the Creator

Teaching Notes

1. “The calling of all people is to seek, proclaim and understand the truth.”
2. The meaning of repentance is a change in understanding the world and not just a private sorrow and regret of personal sin – it’s seeing a whole new world order.
3. Religion is objective, based in history, and therefore not only about individual and personal ethics.
4. The death and resurrection of Christ are public realities.
5. We cannot say that Christ is simply ‘true to me’ – this makes it a personal or private reality.
6. Because these acts happened in history there is public significance.

“A serious commitment to evangelism, to telling the story which the church is sent to tell, means a radical questioning of the reigning assumptions of public life. It is to affirm the gospel not only as an invitation to a private and personal decision but as public truth which ought to be acknowledged as true for the whole of the life of society”

“There is a gospel to announce today because, in the light of the resurrection the whole story of Jesus can be seen not as a series of ghastly misunderstandings and disappointments but as the supreme action of God’s holy love and the whole story of Israel can be seen – as the two disciples on the Emmaus road began to see it – as having its fulfillment in this action.”

Discussion

- How do you respond to this statement: “(The church) is to affirm the gospel not only as an invitation to a private and personal decision, but as public truth which ought to be acknowledged as true for the whole of the life of society.”
- According to Newbigin, in what sense is the gospel unchanging and how does it address common objections to the veracity of the gospel?
- We often think of repentance (metanoia) as a personal turning away from sin, but how does Newbigin point to a much larger understanding of repentance? Why is it so critical to accept the public truth claims of the gospel?
- After reading this article how would you respond to someone who said the gospel is a private and personal matter and shouldn’t be pushed on others?
Conclusion

A Triperspectival Approach To Worldview Development

1. A Shift in Worldview Understanding
   1.1. Bertrand helps us understand that in order for worldviews to be functional we must interact with them
   1.2. Christian authors like James K. A. Smith and Mark Bertrand are helping us see the need for a larger perspective regarding this concept of worldview
   1.3. I like to compare this shift to the shift from web 1.0 to web 2.0. When the internet was first being popularized, web 1.0 was characterized by static, normative content. Websites were online brochures communicating content and static information. As the internet developed, web 2.0 became much more prominent as it was characterized by more dynamic and interactive, user-driven content (e.g. Facebook).

2. Moving Beyond the Normative.
   2.1. As we look at the history of the concept of the ‘Christian worldview’ its roots are anchored in philosophical, Biblically-grounded norms
   2.2. In order to be effective as a life-shaping worldview, we must move beyond this normative perspective towards a perspective that takes into account our constantly changing worlds and the myriad of desires that characterize our hearts
   2.3. In other words, a Christian worldview must also take into account the existential and situational perspectives of reality

3. Moving Towards a Tri-Perspectival Approach
   3.1. As we move forward in this curriculum, three perspectives will form the skeletal structure for our approach to gospel worldview development – normative, existential and situational
   3.2. For more on understanding these three perspectives, refer to The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God (John Frame)

3.2.1. The normative perspective will highlight the main contours of the Scripture narrative – following the trajectory of Creation, Fall, and Redemption – as our norm for understanding God, ourselves, and the world
3.2.2. The **existential** perspective will focus upon how we experience the gospel in our day-to-day lives. Later we will explain how this follows the pattern of death, resurrection, and glory.

3.2.3. The **situational** perspective will draw our attention to how the gospel is at work in the pattern of heart, community and world.

4. The three frameworks that flow out of the three perspectives will provide the basic structures of a gospel-centered worldview.

   4.1. If this sounds too abstract, don’t worry as we will be developing these concepts as the curriculum progresses.

   4.2. Through these three perspectives, our hope is that this curriculum will develop a gospel-centered worldview that will equip people to respond to the complexities of living in our modern world.

5. In summary, here are the three perspectives and the frameworks we will be using to unpack each perspective.

   5.1. **Normative:** Creation – Fall – Redemption (CFR)

   5.2. **Existential:** Death – Resurrection – Glory (DRG)

   5.3. **Situational:** Heart – Community – World (HCW)

**Class Closing**

**Homework**

- *The Allegory of the Cave*, Plato (Gotham Reader 1)
- *The Prince*, Machiavelli (Gotham Reader 1)
- *Excerpts from Autobiography*, Benjamin Franklin (Gotham Reader 1)
- *Humanity Even for Nonhumans*, Nicholas D. Kristof (Optional)
- *Put a Little Science in Your Life*, Brian Greene (Optional)
- *Lecture on Calvinism: Calvinism as a Life System (Chapter 1)*, Kuyper (Gotham)
- *The Gospel to the City*, Keller (Audio)

**Preview Class 2**

**Class Goal**

- To become more aware of functional worldviews that shape our lives and to learn about the situational framework.
**Key Concepts**

- Identifying Formal and Functional Worldviews
- Kuyper’s Framework: Relationship to God, Man, and World
- Situational Framework: Heart – Community – World
BIBLIOGRAPHY


