

THE FAITH : WORK INTEGRATION MATRIX

By Katherine Leary Alsdorf

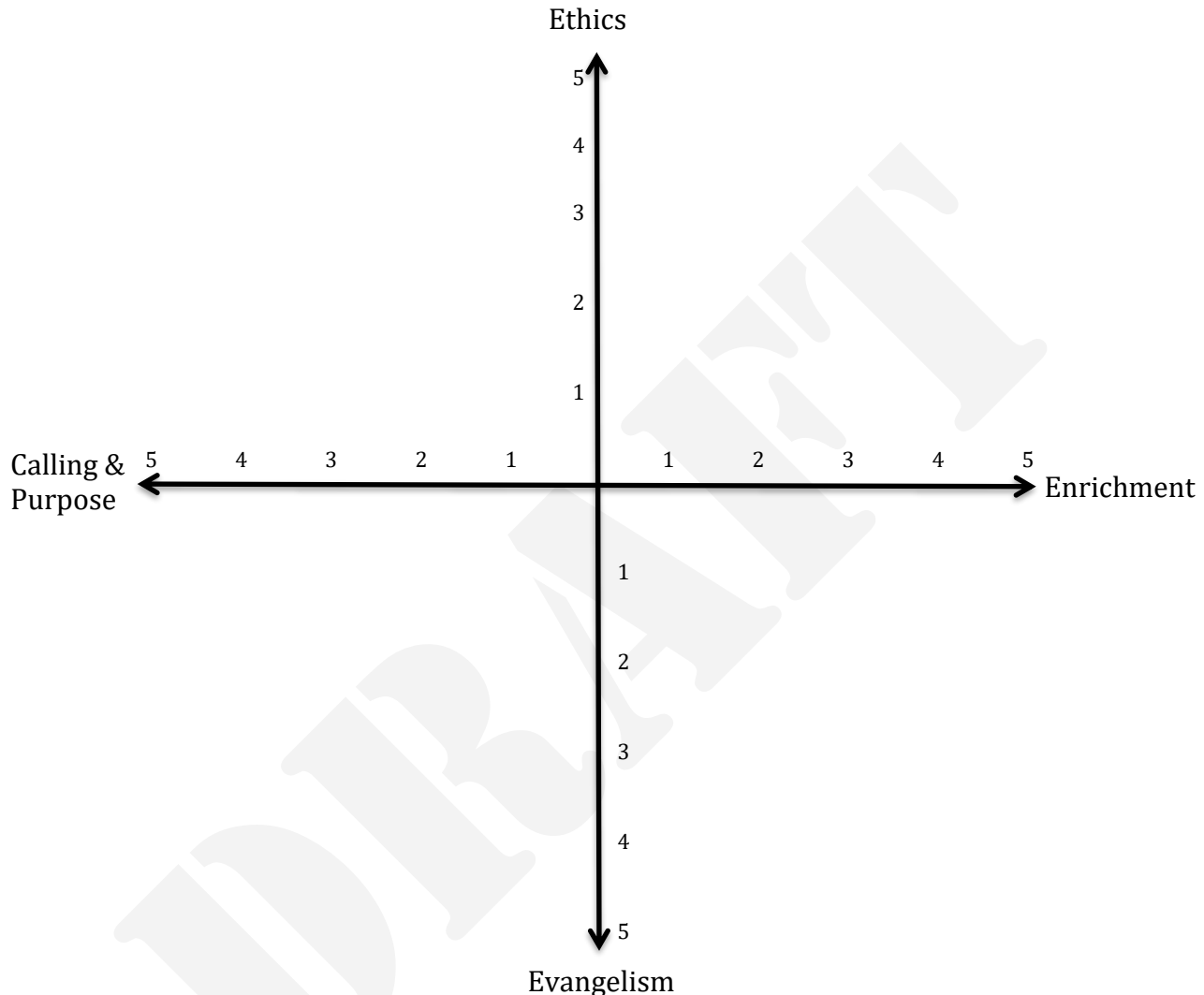
One way to dig deeper into how the gospel can shape our work is to look at the four perspectives identified by Dr. David Miller in his research into the historic faith and work movement.¹ He found that ministries, over the past 100 years, tended to emphasize one of four different ways for faith and work integration.

1. **Ethics** – attention to personal virtue, business ethics, and broader questions of social and economic justice. Recognizing that work is part of God’s created order, we therefore attempt to do it in ethical, moral and just ways. Niebuhr categorized ethics in terms of the right, the good, and the fitting.
2. **Evangelism** – emphasizes living out the Great Commission and being a winsome witness and disciple to those who do not know the gospel. In the faith:work context, this can mean many kinds of behaviors ranging from being overtly persuasive about the goodness of the gospel to praying behind the scenes for those we work with.
3. **Calling & Purpose** – attention to the intrinsic and extrinsic meaning and purpose of the work we are called to do. The search for meaning and enjoyment of the work we do can be pressing throughout a career and ties to our understanding that God created us for a purpose and gave us unique gifts, circumstances and experience to suit that purpose. This area involves greater self-knowledge and greater knowledge of God and his work in the world.
4. **Enrichment** – accents God’s power to restore, nurture, bless, and transform us and our work. The focus tends to be inward, with practices such as prayer, meditation, fasting, healing, and support groups to draw nearer to God and his power.

The attached questionnaire is a helpful tool for comparing how your church emphasizes faith and work integration with other churches. It may also stimulate some new ideas.

¹ Miller, David, *God at Work: The History and Promise of the Faith at Work Movement*, Oxford University Press, 2007

Faith: Work Integration Matrix



Instructions:

1. On the next page, answer the questions in each of the four categories using the scale of 1 (very low) to 5 (very high). Circle your answer.
2. Add the scores in each section and divide by 10 to get an average.
3. Plot each category score on the matrix above.
4. Draw a line connecting the four points – this is a picture of the depth and breadth of your congregation's faith and work integration
5. Reflect on the shape of these four scores and what it reveals about your and your congregation's work in the world. To what extent is it an accurate reflection? Are there things you'd like to change, adding or reducing some of your emphases?

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Answer each question below from the perspective of a pastor/leader thinking about the whole of, or some part of, the congregation you serve (or will serve).

Ethics

Low High

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

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1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1. They strive to live out self-giving, grace-filled lives of integrity
2. They exhibit behaviors of honesty, self-control, discerning right from wrong, and perseverance in their work
3. Their personal ethical behavior and their public behavior at work are consistent
4. They maintain accountability relationships with one or more people to better deal with temptations toward inappropriate relationships, dishonesty, etc.
5. They seek to understand and navigate the ethical issues present in their workplace and profession
6. They are able to use their influence to improve behaviors and practices in their workplace
7. They contribute to creating or maintaining a workplace culture that gives human dignity to all employees and customers
8. They understand the peril of pride that can come from believing that they accurately and fully understand God's will and discern right from wrong
9. They seek to understand issues of economic justice that are affected by the work they do (e.g., working conditions, environmental impact)
10. They seek to understand opportunities for broader economic justice to which they might be able to contribute

Total Score: ____/10 = ____ This is your "Ethics" average score.

Evangelism

Low High

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1. They are committed to ask God to reach friends and colleagues who don't know him
2. They feel confident that the faith they know would greatly benefit other people they know
3. They see and respond to opportunities to give a reason for the hope they feel and exhibit
4. They believe that they have some distinctive gospel behaviors or fruit that might point others to Christ
5. They are comfortable explaining what it means to be a Christian to those who don't know Christ
6. They are bold in explaining the gospel of Jesus to those who are skeptical or even dismissive
7. They invite non-believers to activities outside the church with Christian friends
8. They invite non-believers to church events or worship
9. They are careful to describe their faith in language that is not "insider language"
10. They are looking for cracks in the secular worldview that God might give as opportunities to discuss the gospel

Total Score: ____/10 = ____ This is your "Evangelism" average score

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Calling & Purpose

Low High

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1. They seek to understand the intrinsic value of the work they do in God's kingdom
2. They understand their responsibility to provide for themselves and their families through the compensation work provides
3. They see ways that their work utilizes the gifts and experience God has given them
4. They understand that all work—whether as a carpenter, homemaker, pastor, business person, artist or doctor—is pleasing to God
5. They recognize the underlying idolatries that cause them to seek money, power, and recognition instead of God's will
6. They seek spiritual discernment about work questions—alone in prayer and in community with other believers
7. They are able to find God's purposes in the routine and even demeaning tasks of one's work
8. They have experienced God's healing and/or transformation in times of work disappointment and disruption
9. They have experienced God's leading and power in the midst of a work challenge or opportunity
10. They believe that they are "called" to the work they are doing at the moment

Total Score: ____/10 = ____ This is your "Calling and Purpose" average score.

Enrichment

Low High

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5

1. They find nurture from personal prayer
2. They find nurture from scripture
3. They experience physical and/or emotional healing through prayer
4. They are nurtured through corporate worship
5. They are enriched through small supportive groups
6. They seek personal gospel transformation to better live out God's purposes for their life
7. They understand God's plan for work and Sabbath and live out healthy rhythms that maintain their relationship with God
8. They are accountable to another or others to maintain a lifestyle of practices that help grow their relationship with God
9. They are seeking to listen to God and better discern his will
10. They experience the transformative power of the gospel to change certain idols or attitudes of their heart

Total Score: ____/10 = ____ This is your "Enrichment" average score.