

## Prophets, Priests, and Kings...at Work? Part 1

### Overview:

One of the challenges of living as a Christian in the workplace is knowing *how* to practically express your faith in a culture that often discourages overt expressions of religious belief. Scripture describes three roles that apply to all believers—those of prophets, priests, and kings. While you’re unlikely to turn these roles into job titles, they provide an empowering framework for our working lives.

### Context:

When Christ came to Earth, he revealed himself to us in three distinct roles or “offices”—as a prophet, a priest, and a king. These roles were foreshadowed in the Old Testament through the civic and religious leaders God established for the Israelites, as Marc Driscoll explains in his book *On Church Leadership*:

“These are mega-themes of Scripture connected to Jesus from Genesis to Revelation. As Prophet, Jesus preached and taught Scripture with authority. As Priest, Jesus cares for people and deals with their sin compassionately. As King, Jesus demonstrated his rule over creation through miracles while on the earth, and today rules and reigns over his people.”<sup>1</sup>

The ministry roles described in the Old Testament and fulfilled through Christ are **realized through the lives of believers in the world today.**

- For example, the Protestant Reformation elevated ordinary Christians as a “priesthood of believers”
- Scripture also teaches that, under the new covenant in Christ, we enter a prophethood (Acts 2:17-18) and assume a princely rule in the God’s kingdom.

Theologian Paul Stevens explains, “**This ministry is not just in the gathered life of the sanctuary, but in the *dispersed* life of the people of God in the world.**”<sup>2</sup>

KEY POINT: As we consider HOW we should integrate faith into our work lives, the three offices of Christ tangibly illustrate three ways we interact with colleagues and clients:

### Discussion Questions:

If you have access to a whiteboard or large piece of paper, divide it into three columns with the headings “Prophet”, “Priest”, and “King”. Use this space to take notes as the group

<sup>1</sup> Mark Driscoll, *On Church Leadership*, Crossway 2008, pp. 66–68.

<sup>2</sup> Stevens, Paul. *Work Matters*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012. p., 53.

“fleshes out” what it means to embody these roles in the workplace.

**Prophet** – Deut. 18:18, John 1:18, John 14:24

Prophets are God’s messengers:

- They **explain the meaning of things** and **provide God’s perspective** on a situation
- Prophets **speak with authority**, but with great discretion. They know how and when to speak.
- As visionaries, they are **forward-looking** and **point out where things are headed**. Prophets **expose injustice and sin**, to **make sure things are done right**. “In marketplace terms, a prophet is often a whistle-blower, particularly when an entire tribe or nation has turned away from God.”<sup>3</sup>
- What would it look like to act prophetically in your role?  
(Examples: Being forward-thinking regarding your team’s projects / Offering biblical wisdom and godly counsel (even if you don’t openly identify it as such) / Speaking up when you see areas of concern / Identifying areas of injustice like compensation issues, discrimination in hiring / Encouraging environmental responsibility)
- Prophets often experienced persecution because they called attention to the people’s sin. Do you worry that exercising a prophetic role you get in trouble with leaders at work?
- Instead of seeing the prophetic role in a negative light (calling out people for sin, etc.) how could a prophet have a life-giving influence in the marketplace?
- Think practically, in your role, where is prophetic influence most needed?

**Additional Resources:**

“Can Whistleblowing be Biblically Justified” by Joe Carter, the Action Institute  
<http://blog.acton.org/archives/55830-can-whistleblowing-be-biblically-justified.html>

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<sup>3</sup> Theology of Work Bible Commentary, “Introduction to the Prophets” <https://www.theologyofwork.org/old-testament/introduction-to-the-prophets/>