

Vocational Stewardship

Overview: When it comes to understanding the role we play in God’s kingdom, we often underestimate the opportunities we have to make a difference. Many churches help members of their congregation discover their spiritual gifts, but overlook the vocational skills and resources that could be used to advance God’s purposes. This discussion will help group members discover their unique vocational power and brainstorm ways to steward these gifts.

Handout: “Discover Your Vocational Power Chart” – Print a copy for each group member and have them brainstorm the ways they have power in each of the seven areas. Jot ideas in each wedge of the pie then distill those ideas into the three categories listed at the bottom of the chart. Encourage both immediate and long-term application.

Discuss:

In addition to calling you, God uniquely equips and positions you for his purposes. We “live out” this call by stewarding the resources he gives us. This “vocational stewardship” is the intentional, strategic deployment of our vocational power to advance God’s kingdom.

“That I am who I am is not a result of chance, a mere cosmic accident. Rather it is the result of God’s intention. There is a reason why I am who I am, although that reason may not be immediately apparent to me. I was placed here for a purpose, and that purpose is one in which I am, in part, to discover, not invent. The facts about me are indicators of the divine intent for my life, indicators which are to be interpreted in light of God’s revealed word.”

- Lee Hardyⁱ

In her book *Kingdom Calling*, author Amy Sherman identifies 7 forms of vocational power. As a group, read through the seven descriptions, then brainstorm ways you have power in each of the 7 areas. Use the “Discover Your Vocational Power Chart” to record and sort your thoughts.

7 FORMS OF VOCATIONAL POWERⁱⁱ

1. **Knowledge / Expertise:** Your education and training combined with on-the-job experience. Since work intrinsically matters, we have a duty to “serve the work”. We should pursue professional development opportunities to make an even greater contribution through our daily work.
2. **Platform:** Your ability to get the message out by drawing attention to an issue, cause, person, place, or organization. Stewarding your platform is a serious responsibility as it requires a commitment to communicate the truth, with accuracy and a regard for human dignity.
3. **Networks:** We all exist within relational networks which allow us to share resources and opportunities. God can advance the kingdom through your professional contacts, civic relationships, partnerships, or involvement in organizations.

4. **Position:** Your standing within an organization gives you certain rights and responsibilities. Holding a position of power offers specific privileges, however, even if you aren't at the top of an organization, manage the power you've been given.
5. **Influence:** You don't have to hold a formal leadership position to exert influence. Start by using the measure of influence you currently have and ask God for the courage to "lead up" by influencing those with greater power than you.
6. **Skills:** Making time to inventory your skills can open new avenues of service. Ask yourself, "For whom could I deploy these abilities?"
7. **Reputation:** Your name recognition can give access to powerbrokers, the ability to mobilize large groups of people, or draw attention to a need.

ⁱ Hardy, Lee. *The Fabric of This World: Inquiries into Calling, Career Choice, and the Design of Human Work*.

ⁱⁱ Sherman, Amy. *Kingdom Calling: Vocational Stewardship for the Common Good*.