Toward the end of His life, the Lord Jesus told the disciples the church would do the work that He had done and greater works in these last days. Building on the finished work of Christ, by the power and gifting of the indwelling Holy Spirit, believers do these works as prophets, priests, and kings in what the church has called the "gifts of the Holy Spirit." Through study of the Old Testament saints who filled these offices, Christ (to whom they point), and important New Testament texts, Sylvia builds the paradigm for local church leaders to use to identify and deploy their church members in spiritually-gifted ministry. This paradigm is anchored in the Scriptures and can be used in congregations across the theological spectrum. This book lays out a path for taking seriously the Lord's assertion that in these last days, by the power of the Spirit and the glory of God, the church will do great things.

"Gabe Sylva gives biblical grounding to the spiritual gifts of the church in an analysis of the key roles of prophet, priest, and king. These roles are expressed in Adam's work, developed in the history of OT Israel, and fulfilled in Christ. The finished work of Christ is the foundation for members serving the Lord with prophetic, priestly, and kingly gifts. The author shows how to identify these gifts in a practical way."

-RICHARD P. BELCHER JR.

professor of Old Testament, Reformed Theological Seminary, Charlotte

Gabe Sylvia is a graduate of the United States Military Academy and the Reformed Theological Seminary (Charlotte). He has been serving as the senior pastor at Christ Our Hope Church (PCA) in Wake Forest, North Caroling Since 2017.

Prophets, Priests, & Kings: A New Way to Consider Spiritual Gifts

Prophets, Priests, & Kings A New Way to Consider Spiritual Gifts

Doing the Greater Works of Christ in the Church

Gabe Sylvia

Finishing the Work of Christ Through The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

WS

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SBN 978-1-6667-7116-9



Finishing the Work of Christ Through The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

How does the church finish the work of Christ?

Christ's redemptive work is finished (John 19:30). As a result, the Spirit can complete the work of building the visible kingdom of God until Christ returns.

The "finishing" work of the Spirit depends on the "finished" work of the Savior.

How has this work typically been done in church history? Gifts "neutral" or gifts "engaging."

The gifts' "engaging" framework has been most popular in the recent modern era. Beginning with the work at Western Seminary in the late 1960's to C. Peter Wagner's work* at Fuller Seminary, Christians has sought a tool to identify and deploy the church according to spiritual gifts.

• That tool is the **spiritual gifts' assessment** or **inventory**.

* See his book, Spiritual Gifts Can Make Your Church Grow (Minneapolis, Chosen Books, 2017).

Spiritual Gift Assessments and Inventories Compared

| | #Q's | #Gifts | Criteria for assessment | Scale used |
|----------------------------------|------|--------|---|---|
| Wagner-Modified Houts | 135 | 28 | What extent the statement is true in your life based on past experiences? | Much, Some, Little, Not at all |
| SHAPE | 84 | 21 | What most resonates with personal experience OR what best describes you ? | Not at all, Always |
| www.spiritualgiftstest.com | 105 | 19 | According to who you are not who you want to be or should be | Very Inaccurate, Very accurate |
| www.giftstest.com | 66 | 22 | [Not stated] | Never, Always |
| www.spiritualgiftsassessment.org | 80 | 16 | Best characterizes yourself | "Definitely untrue," "Definitely true" |

My Personalized Results (in rank order per assessment):

W-M Houts: "pastor," "teaching" and "administration"
SHAPE: "teaching," "prophecy" and "administration"
www.spiritualgifttest.com : "apostleship," "leadership" and "teaching"
www.giftstest.com : "teaching," "prophecy" and "faith."
www.spiritualgiftassessment.org : "teaching," "administration" and "wisdom"

Finishing the Work of Christ Through The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Spiritual Gift Assessments and Inventories Are Problematic

- 1. At their creation, they were yoked to psychological categories, specifically the MBTI.*
- 2. There is no uniform number of gifts tested (16 to 28)
- 3. There are no uniform definitions of gifts (some lexical; most deductive)
- 4. Gifts are lifted from their biblical contexts and treated as stand-alone
- 5. Gifts are not connected to systematic theological doctrines
- 6. Assessment criteria is not uniform
- 7. Assessment or inventory results usually have no accountability test
- 8. Multiple assessments will yield uneven results
- 9. Assessments don't deal with covenantal (dis)continuity
- 10. Assessments don't address connectivity with Jesus words

These issues don't make inventories or assessments useless they just point out challenges inherent in each of them.

*At Western Conservative Baptist Seminary, the first spiritual gift assessments were connected to the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator as the spiritual component to it.

The Work of the Church as Prophets, Priests and Kings

"Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in Me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask in My name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it—John 14:12-14

- In what manner was the work of Jesus accomplished?
- How will this work be done?
- How is it possible that what the church will do is "the works I do" and "greater"?

These are the questions the *munus triplex* answers. The three offices of prophet, priest and king, in Latin, the *munus triplex*, is an ancient formulation found in the Bible.

It was first systematized by John Calvin in his work, the Institutes of the Christian Religion.

Drawing on the OT, Calvin explained when Christ came to redeem us from our sins, He did it through the offices of prophet, priest and king. After Calvin, describing the work of the Lord in this way became standard. For example:

WLC Q. 42 Why was our Mediator called Christ?

Our Mediator was called Christ because He was anointed with the Holy Spirit above measure and so set apart and fully furnished with all authority and ability, to execute the offices of **prophet**, **priest**, and **king** of His Church in the estate both of His humiliation and exaltation.

Prophets, Priests and Kings: OT typology

Of course, Calvin didn't invent these—nor did Jesus as He came onto the NT scene. The Lord's work in these offices was part of a long-standing paradigm for redemption. In fact, these offices constitute how God made Adam and Eve. For example:

Adam the **prophet** received God's instructions and was tasked to convey them to Eve and his children after him.

Adam the **priest** was given the tasks of "keeping" and "guarding" the Edenic Temple. These terms were later used to describe the work of God's priests in their tabernacle and Temple service (e.g., Numbers 1:53, 4:37).

Adam the **king** is the clearest to see in the mandate to be fruitful, multiply, rule and have dominion over the earth.

Adam chose *not* to adopt these roles and plunged mankind into irreparable sin and alienation from God. However, having been given to mankind upon our creation, God did not abandon the offices, He raised up men to serve in them.

Why?

To both carry the plotline of the story of God's people AND make them ready for the 2nd Adam, God raised up prophets, priests and kings among His people.

Prophets, Priests and Kings: OT typology

We identify these men using "typology." Typology is a hermeneutical tool used to interpret Scripture. Typology consists of the precursors, the "types" and the fulfillment, the "anti-type" (or archetype).

For something to be considered a "type" of Christ two things had to be true.

First, there should be **historical** correspondence between OT persons or events and those in the NT; e.g., Melchizedek as High Priest // Jesus as High Priest; David as King // Jesus as King; Jonah as prophet to enemies // Jesus as prophet to God's enemies

Secondly, there should be **theological** correspondence between the OT persons or events and those in the NT; e.g., Aaron the priest's gifts and sacrifices // Jesus the Priest giving of Himself; Jonah in the fish for three days // Jesus in the tomb for three days

Other examples of general typology include:

Bronze serpent on the pole (Numbers 21:9 // John 3:14) The Passover Lamb (Exodus 12:43-49 // 1 Corinthians 5:7) The water-giving rock (Exodus 17:6 // 1 Corinthians 10:3-4). Prophets, Priests and Kings: "types" of Jesus Christ.

As it was Adam's role to live with God according to these three offices, it was then left to the 2nd Adam to do so without Adam's fault (see Romans 5:14).

As we saw, the Bible teaches "types" of Christ in the Old Testament. That is, men who were prophets, priests and kings among God's people who had two responsibilities.

First, they were given to the people by God to minister to them. They had essential roles in carrying the plotline of redemptive history.

The prophets brought God's word to the people: Moses (Deut. 18:15).

The **priests** mediated between God and the people: giving gifts, making sacrifice, praying and teaching them God's law: Melchizedek (Genesis 14; Hebrews 7), and Aaron (Exodus 29; Numbers 6).

The kings ruled, defended and developed the nation: David (2 Samuel 7).

Secondly, they represented the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

They were "types" of Christ, that is, they *illustrated* and *exemplified* the work of the Messiah who would come. They also made His coming understandable, e.g., as He brought the word, they would recognize Him in company with the prophets of old.

Jesus Christ: the Archetype Prophet, Priest and King.

Prophet: "in revealing to us, by His word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation" (WSC 24)

Isaiah 61:1-2 // Luke 4:16-21

Priest: "in His once offering up of Himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile us to God and in making continual intercession for us" (WSC 25)

Hebrews 2:14-18, 7:23-25, 9:11-14

King: "in subduing us to himself, in ruling and defending us and in restraining and conquering all his and our enemies" (WSC 26)

Luke 1:32-33

The Church: the "ectypes" of Christ, the Prophet, Priest and King.

An "ectype" is a copy or imitation of something.

Using the three-office paradigm (the *munus triplex*) this move completes it. What the "types" *illustrated,* what the Archetype *accomplished,* the "ectypes," the church, *applies*. Jesus taught this.

The Promise of Greater Works: John 14:12-14

The Provision of Greater Works: Ephesians 4:11-12

The Practice of Greater Works: Spiritual Gift Lists

Now, the church does "greater prophetic," "greater priestly" and "greater kingly work. This work is the continuation / application of the work of Christ in the way He did it.

This work presupposes the finished redemptive work of Christ in the same way the coming of the Holy Spirit is not to redeem but to apply redemption to God's people.

The Promise of Greater Works: John 14:12-14

John 14 is part of the Upper Room Discourse. Jesus is giving His final instructions to the disciples before He proceeds to the Cross.

Among His message to them is that He departs to be with the Father but will "come to them" (John 14:18). What they do not understand fully is He will send His Spirit to be with them and in them (John 14:26; Acts 1:8).

This message is significant for more reasons than maintaining His presence among them giving them comfort. He tells them they have work to do:

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.

This is not altogether unexpected since the "types" of Christ did His work among the OT people of God before Him. Now, in the last days, Jesus explains, the church continues to do "the works that I do and greater works than these."

What makes them "**greater**"? (a) they are done during the Last Days, (b) they are done worldwide among Jews and Gentiles, (c) their impact, scope and purpose: applying the finished work of the God-man, Jesus Christ.

Now, the church is tasked with applying the finished work of Christ among the elect of all eras, nations and tongues. We do the "greater prophetic," "greater priestly" and "greater kingly work.

The Provision of Greater Works: Ephesians 4:7-12

The question is, "How?" Looking to the work of the OT types some of it is clear.

Still, with the coming of the Holy Spirit, the true Provision of God, the way in which the work of Christ is accomplished is not located simply in leaders (prophets, priests, and kings).

We know this from Paul's letter to the Ephesians. This is most clearly seen in 4:11-12:

"And [the ascended Christ] gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ."

The true Provision of God, the Holy Spirit, will supply the church with its humanly "provision," that is, those who will equip the saints for the work of ministry. These foundational gifts and roles are

• Apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds and teachers.

These roles are *not* superior to other gifts and roles (see, e.g., 1 Corinthians 12:18). But they are ahead of the others, namely, they are needed so that others might be gifted.

Of course, some played non-repeating church-establishing roles (apostles and prophets) that ended with the death of the last apostle (Ephesians 2:20). But the gifts and roles themselves continue* to supply the equipment the church needs to do the greater works of God.

The Provision of Greater Works: The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the foundation and true provision for the church's greater works.

We considered Ephesians 4:11-12 first because Paul explains those foundational gifts coming at Christ's ascension rather than at Pentecost.

The Person of the Holy Spirit

He is active

He is a Person

He is God

The Work of the Holy Spirit

The power of God

Mediating the presence of Christ

One of the principles of this paradigm is the illustrative nature of the gift lists in the New Testament. They represent local church needs and instructions given by Paul and Peter.

The challenge in seeing the gifts lists as exhaustive include: no list is the same; gifts are repeated; gifts are omitted; some lists have gifts when others have roles. In fact, each listed gift can be readily grouped according to the three offices.

| | Prophetic | Priestly | Kingly | | | |
|-------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| | 1 Cor 12:4-11 | | | | | |
| 12:8 | the utterance of wisdom | | | | | |
| | the utterance of knowledge | | | | | |
| 12:9 | | faith | | | | |
| | | gifts of healing | | | | |
| 12:10 | prophecy | the working of miracles | | | | |
| | various kinds of tongues | | the ability to distinguish between spirits | | | |
| | | | the interpretation of tongues | | | |
| 12:28 | prophets | miracles | apostles | | | |
| | teachers | gifts of healing | administrating | | | |
| | various kinds of tongues | helping | | | | |
| | Romans 12:3-8 | | | | | |
| 12:6b | if prophecy | | | | | |
| 12:7 | the one who teaches | if service, in our serving | | | | |
| 12:8 | the one who exhorts | the one who contributes | the one who leads | | | |
| | | the one who does acts of mercy | | | | |
| | 1 Peter 4:7-11 | | | | | |
| 4:11 | whoever speaks | | | | | |
| | | whoever serves | | | | |
| | Ephesians 4:11 | | | | | |
| 4:11 | the prophets | the shepherds | the apostles | | | |
| | the teachers | | the evangelists | | | |

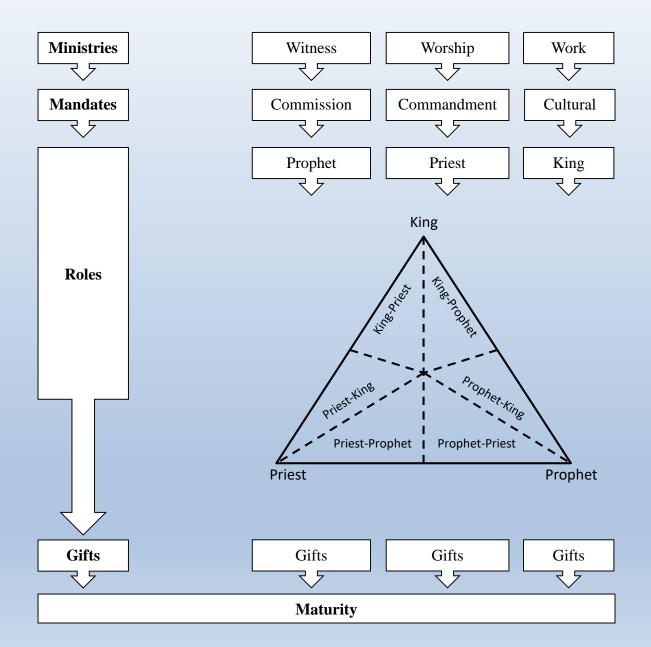
The PPKa is a tool to evaluate the gifting of the Holy Spirit. It differs from spiritual gift assessments in the following ways:

- 1. It draws explicitly from the biblical prophet-priest-king framework.
- 2. It is based on weaving together Jesus' teaching and that of the epistles.
- 3. It doesn't introduce extra-biblical criteria for evaluating giftedness (e.g., psychology).
- 4. It is not dependent on a certain theological tradition.
- 5. It includes an external-verification for accuracy.
- 6. It only targets a top-score maintaining its flexibility.

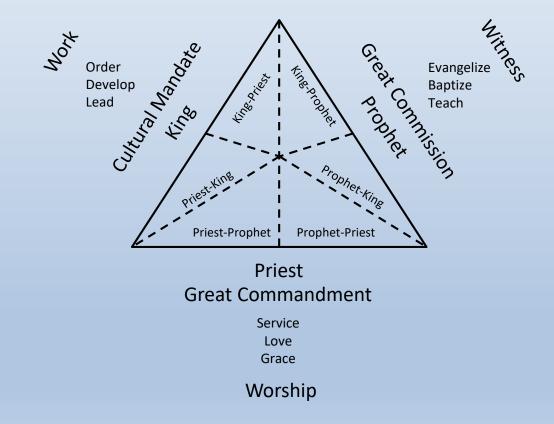
Four things are required for this to be used effectively.

- 1. Zeal to serve the Lord based on His word
- 2. Prayer
- 3. Commitment to the inerrancy of Scripture
- 4. Membership in a local church

The Roles in Their Larger Ministry Context



The Roles in Their Larger Ministry Context: Key Words



What is an "ectype" prophet?

The prophet **conveys** the will of God as contained in the Scriptures in his own life and in the lives of those in his charge.

- God's representative to man in word and truth; God's mouthpiece.
- Sometimes, he is chosen, set apart and ordained for the task: teaching or ruling elders.
- Other times, a prophet speaks God's word to people in exhortation, correction, defense or evangelism
- Evangelize, baptize and teach: Matthew 28:18-20

What is an "ectype" priest?

The priest **assists** in the **application** and implementation of the revealed will of God in his own life and in the lives of those in his charge.

- God's representative applying the blessings of our salvation upon us.
- He encourages and facilitates direct access to God.
- Priests prayerfully plead that He would bend His power on behalf of the people
- Priests lead the people in enjoying that power.
- Priests are agents of God's compassion, mercy, help and giving.

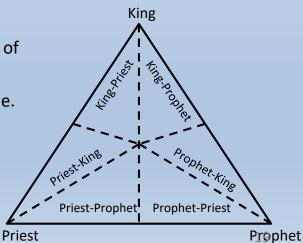
What is an "ectype" king?

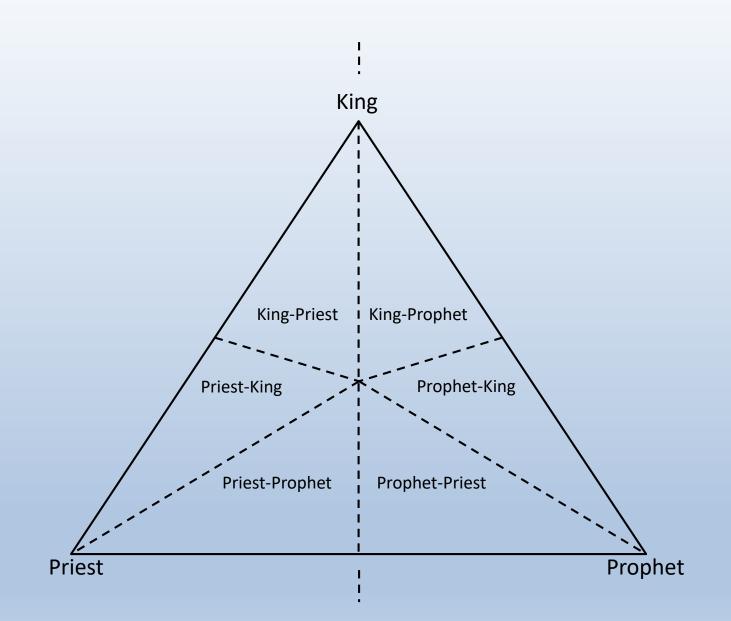
The king **orders** the ministry organization in such a way that the prophets and priests can serve, and the church can receive their ministries.

- The church's work must be led, managed, changed, protected and guided.
- There are times when its government is set apart, ordained and installed and other times in other parts of the work when it is not necessary to be so.

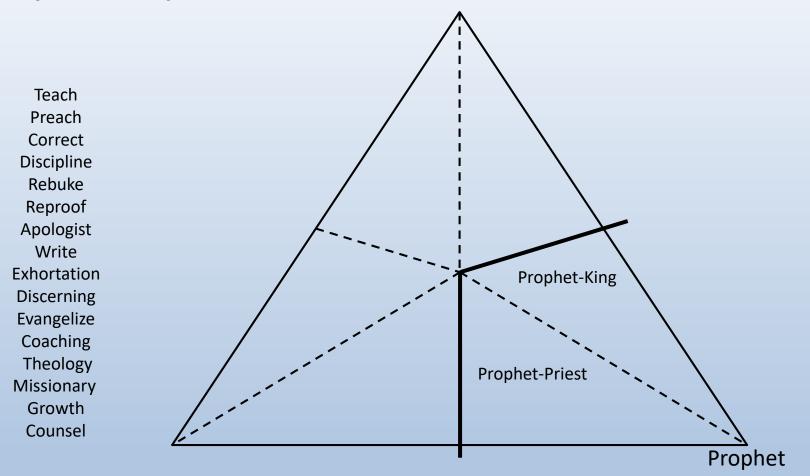
General Principles of the Paradigm:

- 1. God sovereignly distributes gifts and they are all "good."
- 2. Spiritual gifts are the "street level" demonstrations of the offices (prophet, priest and king) given by the Holy Spirit.
- 3. Every believer has a gift designed for use in and on behalf of the local church: 1 Corinthians 12:7.
- 4. No gift is of greater honor than another; all are essential for a faithful and effective local church ministry.
- 5. The Spirit gives each local church the gifts needed for its ministry.
- 6. The proper use of the spiritual gift will result in God-honoring, Christexalting and church-building effects.
- 7. Gifts listed in Bible texts are representative and not exhaustive.
- 8. The boundaries between aspects in one area (e.g., king-priest) as well as between different areas (e.g., king and priest) are not firm. People might be gifted equally between areas, i.e., king-priest and it could be hard to tell which is dominant.
- 9. Inside the triangle represents **all** the gifts in a local body *per* the offices of Christ.
- 10. The believer's gifting is somewhere in one of the six areas of the triangle.
- 11. The believer's assessment scores will demonstrate a leading gift and a secondary gift. The leading gift is essential; the secondary gift clarifies where the believer will serve.

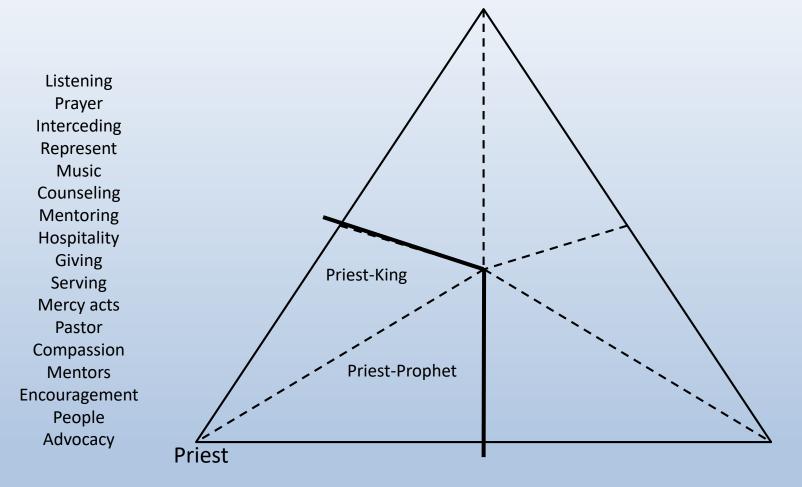




Keywords: Prophet

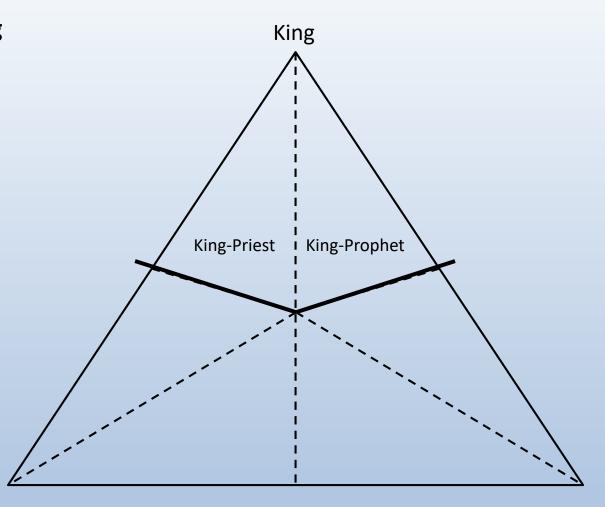


Keywords: Priest

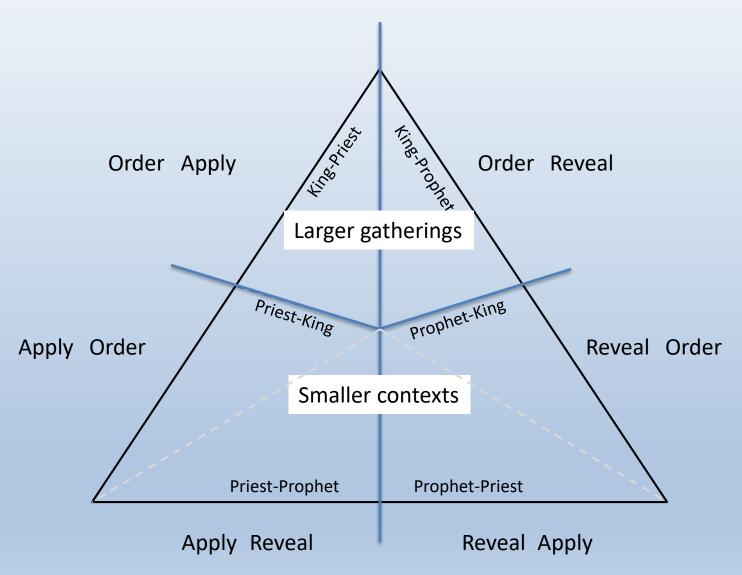


Keywords: King

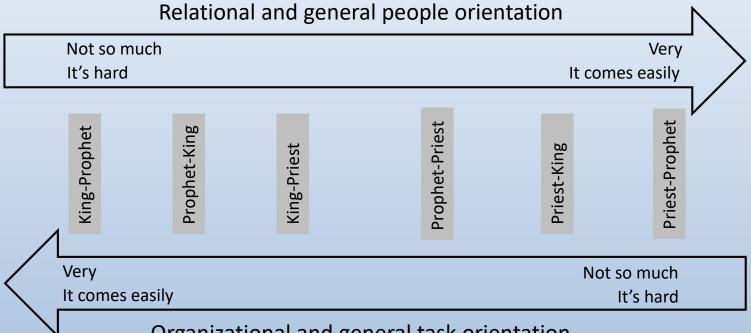
Pastor Director Staff leader Build Procedures Policy Count Systematize Plan Organize Leader Money Defend / protect Administrator Overseer Finance Visionary Resourcing Gather Hospitality Cooking Tasks



Key Words and Potential Ministry Size Indicators



The Relational : Organizational Spectrum



Organizational and general task orientation

Summary Descriptions of the Roles

Living with God is the focus; organization is key

Priest-king.

Applying the word is very important to this person. An efficient organization is key to that. This person is a ministry team leader. Having a helpful and efficient organization (no matter the size) is key. Department chairmen and ministry leaders would be among these people.

Organization is the focus; Living with God the goal

King-priest.

Having an ordered and smooth organization is very important to this person. It is the best way to serve the people; to facilitate the application of God's word. Policies and order are the pathways to help. Revealing is the focus; organization is key

Prophet-king.

Word-revealing is primary. Larger or central group teaching is the strong inclination; less intimate and more public. Create or revitalize ministries for the proclamation of the word.

This is a "reveal > order" person who believes the Word must be revealed. He is a ministry creator or curriculum writer. Organization is key, revealing is the goal

King-prophet.

Visionary tendencies are proven. Orders chaos by biblical precept and principle. This person is committed to order biblically (e.g., regulative principle of worship). The organization is to advance truth; it is the means to revealing the Word; would tweak the structure for better impact of the word..

Revealing is the focus; Living with God the goal

Prophet-priest.

Word-revealing is primary; teaching is strong but the intent is impact (vs. delivery) and the audience is smaller, i.e., one-on-one or in small group, thus the *priestly* aspect of it. This person would want to see the *direct impact* of teaching on someone's life so biblical counseling, shepherdess, small group leaders, evangelism or apologetics are passions or desires.

This is a "reveal > apply" person.

Living with God the goal; revealing is the key

Priest-prophet.

Applying the word over time is the intent and goal. Wordcentered servant looking for creative ways to help people appropriate the word. These are servants who are helping, serving, and assisting. This person is about ministries to see people changed: "people" people.

Keywords: personal, patient and relational.

Detailed Descriptions of the Roles

King-Priest

Priest

- Leads for the good of another
- An organizer
- An implementer
- An administrator

Bible people: Jethro (Ex. 18:10-23), Naomi (Ruth 2:19-23), Peter (1 Pet. 5:1-11) King

King-priest. This is an organizer, administrator or implementer. He knows the plight of people and wants to see them led well. He can organize and manage people. This person sees the organization's role to help people.

How does **this** gift assist the church?

Ruling elder

Ministry organizer Department chair

Diaconate chair / ministry leader Lay ministry leader <u>Gifts</u> listed such as: Leadership Administration

rophet

Priest-king

- Individual deed
- Servant leader role
- Manager, director
- Team leader

How does this gift assist the church?

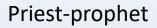
Sunday School team leader Ministry team leader / director Department membership Diaconate chair or clerk Ruling elder

> Gifts listed such as: Faith Helps / service Mercy Hospitality Administration

Bible people: Zerubbabel, the apostle James (Acts 15:13-21)

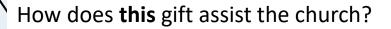
Priest-king. Organizational or ministry team leader.

King

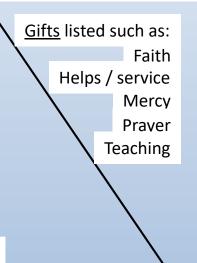


- Individual deed
- Directly assisting church folks
- Teaching
- Biblical counseling
- Prayer and intercession

Priest-prophet. These are servants who are the arms and legs of the body teaching, helping, serving and assisting.



Sunday School leadership team leader Small group leader Liturgist Prayer partner Music ministry Deacon



Bible people: Abigail (1 Samuel 25:23-31), the apostle John (3 John), Barnabas (Acts 9:27), Aquila (Acts 18:26), Epaphroditus (Philippians 2:25-29), "Titus 2 woman."

King



Prophet-priest

- Individual word
- Personal ministry
- Personal and close
- Counselor
- One-on-one evangelism
- Apologetics
- Prayer

Prophet-priest. For this person, teaching is the strong inclination. It would come with the desire to teach and, likely, experience and positive feedback over a history of teaching. The teaching venues are one-on-one or in small group, thus the priestly aspect of it. This person would want to see the *direct impact* of teaching on someone's life so biblical counseling, evangelism or apologetics are passions or desires. This person is a mentor to others.

How does this gift assist the church?

Small group teacher / leader Lay counselor

Gifts listed such as:

King

Discernment Evangelist Exhortation

Bible people: Elijah (1 Kings 17:8-16, 18:18-19), John the Baptist (Matthew 3:1-12), Peter (Acts 10), Philip (Acts 8:26-39), Priscilla (Acts 18:26).



Prophet-king

- Individual word
- Teaching or preaching
- Church revitalization
- Church planting
- Advisory leadership role

How does **this** gift assist the church?

King

Church planter Teaching elder

Sunday school leadership team leader Sunday school teacher Gifts listed such as:

> Discernment Evangelist Exhortation Pastor-teacher Leadership

Priest

Prophet-king. This would be a preacher or large group teacher (e.g., Sunday school, Bible study or conference).

Bible people: Deborah (Judges 4:4-9), Samuel (1 Samuel 7:3, 5-11), Ezra (Ezra 8:15-36), Timothy (1 Timothy 4:6-16).

Prophet

King-prophet

- Corporate word
- Visionary leader
- Preaching elder
- Session leader
- Church planter

King-prophet. For this person, visionary tendencies are evident and obvious. This person sees bigger pictures and how things fit together. Having considered the claims of the Scriptures, this person would be able to see how a local church should line up with what's been revealed.

Bible people: Moses, the Judges, Barnabas (Acts 9:26-27), Paul (Acts 20:7-12).

How does **this** gift assist the church?

King

Department chairman <u>Gifts</u> listed such as: Teaching Prophecy Exhortation Pastor-teacher Leadership

Administration

Priest

Prophet

Toward the end of His life, the Lord Jesus told the disciples the church would do the work that He had done and greater works in these last days. Building on the finished work of Christ, by the power and gifting of the indwelling Holy Spirit, believers do these works as prophets, priests, and kings in what the church has called the "gifts of the Holy Spirit." Through study of the Old Testament saints who filled these offices, Christ (to whom they point), and important New Testament texts, Sylvia builds the paradigm for local church leaders to use to identify and deploy their church members in spiritually-gifted ministry. This paradigm is anchored in the Scriptures and can be used in congregations across the theological spectrum. This book lays out a path for taking seriously the Lord's assertion that in these last days, by the power of the Spirit and the glory of God, the church will do great things.

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