The book is accessible for college graduates without formal financial education. It is recommended for church libraries and individual Christians who are seeking a principles-based approach to personal financial planning.

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Conversations about Calling

Valerie L. Myers

New York: Routledge, 2014 (254 pages)

In her masterfully researched text, *Conversations about Calling*, Valerie Myers serves up a trove of insights set at the intersection of management, psychology, and spirituality. Moving from a review of the current empirical research on the psychology of calling (chapters 2–5) to a comprehensive overview of the work of modern practitioners and theologians over time (chapters 6–9), Myers ultimately develops her own cross-cultural theory of calling. Working to serve researchers, practitioners, and educators, Myers provides a significantly more holistic and integrated framework than much of the current research. In the end, by pulling together an unnecessarily segmented set of literatures, *Conversations about Calling* makes a substantial contribution to management literature on calling.

The value of Myers' book as an extended work of theory building is in its integration of psychological, theological, and business insights. It is through demonstrating a unique agility in pulling together managerial and theological perspectives that Myers proves to be uniquely qualified among management scholars. Indeed, it is her strong grasp of current social-science theory and empirical research alongside her effectiveness in mining the ontological insights of theology that makes this book stand apart. This cross-disciplinary posture also helps her see many of the limitations of the current management research, and her chapter on the perils of management theory building through incremental progress alone is worth the price of admission.

While Myers spends most of the book building a case for the limitations of the current research, we should ultimately judge her contribution by the quality of her cross-cultural model of *calling*. Specifically, I found Myers' theory of calling to be a helpful extension of the person-organization focus of much of the current managerial and psychological literatures. By pushing management scholars to include ethics and a more overt definition of good work in their modeling of calling, she encourages her discipline to move beyond precise, but narrow, empirical tendencies that often avoid the underlying normative questions. Furthermore, by distilling her theory into a set of testable propositions, she paves the way for management researchers to test the empirical validity of her contribution.

There are a few points that I would have hoped to see Myers develop further. Specifically, while I found her work clarifying and informative, I still left the book wondering when and how to best integrate theology and management as disciplines—something I felt her background left her uniquely positioned to offer. I also hoped she might spend more

time developing her theory to explain the power and limitations of calling as a linguistic concept—when it has power to create new realities and when it is a mere handmaiden to other individual or contextual considerations.

Regarding her method for integrating disciplines, Myers raises a number of intriguing points about how theology might lend insight to management theory. When she started down this path, I found her justification for this move a bit fuzzy. While she is quick to point out the limitations of disciplinary perspectivism and the corresponding importance of learning from other approaches, her argument for pulling from theologians in particular is less clear. Given that she writes for an audience naturally more suspicious of these claims, she would benefit from a more precise treatment of this argument. For example, is the value of theologians limited to insights on theological concepts such as calling, or might their insights extend to other parts of management theory? *Conversations about Calling* remains silent on many of these questions. In fact, the one time that Myers does make a more explicit claim—saying that the "only way to objectively determine whether the management literature should be modified is to compare these approaches with historic theological notions of calling" (157)—I found her argument more provocative than substantiated. Given that I am a part of her audience more predisposed to agree with her, the fact that I still desired a better explanation suggests her claim needs work.

When it comes to Myers' cross-cultural theory in particular, I believe her book would also have benefited from further focus on the power of calling to shape action and the issue of when the concept is merely malleable or is a tool of the surrounding context. As evidence for its malleability, Myers' narrative of the theological evolution of the concept shows how business leaders, theologians, and the church have often appropriated the concept to fit the context or institutional pressure of the day. At the same time, Myers seems to believe that calling as a concept makes possible certain understandings and actions in the world that would otherwise remain unavailable. Indeed, Myers waxes almost evangelical at times about the power of calling to change the world, ending one chapter with a call to "imagine what the world would be like if 80 percent of the population that are religious adherents similarly practiced what they preached in regard … to calling" (218). Ultimately, Myers' theory would be strengthened by more theoretical attention to the reasons why calling holds power to shape the external world, the ways in which it does so, and when and why the concept loses its power as it is molded by other considerations.

Finally, because Myers' argument for the power of calling rests on an argument for the power of individual worldviews to shape ethical action, I believe her text would be strengthened through a more direct engagement with the growing number of management scholars who doubt this argument. For example, groups such as EthicalSystems.org, associated with Jonathan Haidt (Stern School of Business), Max Bazerman (Harvard Business School), and Adam Grant (Wharton Business School), often highlight the relative impotence of deliberative System II thinking to shape action when compared to quicker, reflective, more intuitive System I processes. Given this starting point, these thinkers often turn from arguments for ethical education and turn to focus instead on organizational systems designed to constrain unethical behavior. Given the growing

prominence of these "systems over deliberation" perspectives, it would be interesting to hear how Myers frames her view of calling as fitting into this broader issue of what is most likely to increase the focus on ethics and good work inside the modern workplace.

Ultimately, though I believe *Conversations about Calling* would be strengthened through engagement with the above concerns, these points should not take away from the its broader contribution. Valerie Myers' integration of management theory, counseling psychology, practitioner insights, theology, and the faith-at-work movement is commendable and could very well be generative of further attention to a very important topic. Her definitional precision around calling and the testable propositions of her theory are relevant for researchers interested in the study of calling, theologians attempting to understand entry points into conversations about management, and practitioners and educators looking to shape the behavior of those called to be within business. In all these ways and more, Valerie Myers' *Conversations about Calling* is worthy of a wide readership.

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A Catechism for Business: Tough Ethical Questions & Insights from Catholic Social Teaching

Andrew V. Abela and Joseph E. Capizzi (Editors)
Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2014 (144 pages)

A Catechism for Business undertakes a valuable and much needed project: bringing the insights of Catholic social teaching in a useable form to people engaged in business and commerce. Those of us who are professionally religious, as pastoral workers or as academics, can forget how little of Catholic Social Teaching (CST) is known, understood, and appreciated. A book such as this that organizes material from the primary sources around particular questions in a coherent structure will be a great help to many Catholic business people who want to live a unified life in which their faith informs their working life.

The editors bring an interesting mix of specialties to the work: Dr. Andrew V. Abela is the Dean of the School of Business & Economics at the Catholic University of America; Dr. Joseph E. Capizzi is the Director of Moral Theology in the School of Theology and Religious Studies at the Catholic University of America. Together they have devoted great thought to organizing the questions, which move from the general questions of the economic context and the applicability of CST to business issues, to specific ethical questions such as manufacturing, management, marketing, sales, and international business among others. The sections on marketing and on bioethical questions are particularly well-developed, which is appropriate given the editors' academic credentials.

They have used the documents from the Catholic social tradition, from *Rerum Novarum* to a speech by Pope Francis. The introduction gives a helpful methodology for readers of the book who are facing a business dilemma: "(1) find the question that is closest to