

Connecting Scripture to the *Working Genius*¹

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Introduction

In the mid to late 80s, my reading slowly began to shift from authors such as L'Amour and Clancy to the likes of Drucker, Covey, Blanchard, Peters, and Kouzes. To be honest, I hadn't read much since leaving the Navy and the non-fiction motivation, leadership, and management books sparked a fire. I'd also started reading the Bible for the first time. And as I read, I started to see that there was something deeper at play between the books and the Bible.

I found myself in a Bible study in 1990 called *Your Work Matters to God*². That study shifted my perspective entirely. I realized that work wasn't just about getting things done or climbing the corporate ladder; it was about aligning what we do with what God wants for us. Since then, I've poured over 6,000 pages of content on the theology of work, trying to understand how our daily grind fits into God's grand design.

A few years later, in the late 90s, a good friend gifted me a Maxwell Leadership Commentary Bible³. That Bible was a game changer. Maxwell's leadership principles, connected directly to Scripture, opened my eyes wider to how faith and work could intertwine. Inspired by this, I started searching out Scripture to tie to every leadership and management principle I came across in the business books I read. It became a personal mission to see how these "secular" ideas lined up with Biblical truths.

As I explored these concepts, I couldn't help but see parallels in Scripture. For instance, in *The Working Genius*, there's the genius of Wonder. Wonder is all about asking big questions and pondering possibilities. That's something the psalmists did all the time—marveling at the heavens and the mysteries of God's creation. Discernment? That's pure Proverbs right there. The Bible is full of advice on how to make wise decisions and choose the right path.

Enablement, which focuses on helping others, reminded me of the early church and how they supported one another, living out Jesus's teachings. Galvanizing, the act of

rallying people to action, brought to mind leaders like Nehemiah, who inspired his community to rebuild Jerusalem against all odds. Tenacity, the grit to see things through, is something Paul exemplified in his tireless work to spread the gospel, no matter what obstacles he faced. And Invention, the drive to create and innovate, echoes God's creativity in Genesis when He brought the universe into being.

Connecting Scripture to The Working Genius, and my other *Connecting Scripture* books, are part of the results of that journey. It's about taking the ancient wisdom of the Bible and bringing it into a conversation with Patrick Lencioni's Working Genius model.

The *Connecting Scripture* books isn't just an academic exercise or a collection of interesting parallels. It's about recognizing that our strengths—our geniuses—are God-given, and they have a purpose. My hope is that as you read, you'll start to see your work in a new light—not just as a job or a set of tasks, but as a calling that's deeply connected to your faith.

Let's explore The Working Genius and see just a small fraction of how your working genius fits into God's bigger picture and how you can use it to find more purpose and fulfillment in what you do every day.

What is the Working Genius?

The Working Genius model, developed by Patrick Lencioni, categorizes six distinct types of working geniuses that reflect the natural ways people contribute to teams and projects. The six types are **Wonder, Invention, Discernment, Galvanizing, Enablement, and Tenacity**. These types represent different strengths that individuals bring to their work and understanding them helps people collaborate more effectively.

The types of Working Geniuses are determined through an assessment that is designed to identify a person's natural strengths and areas of frustration.

The model groups these six types into three pairs: **Genius of Invention** (Wonder and Invention), **Genius of Activation** (Discernment and Galvanizing), and **Genius of Implementation** (Enablement and Tenacity). Each person has two areas where they naturally excel (their "Working Geniuses"), two that are competent but not energizing (their "Working Competencies"), and two that drain their energy (their "Working Frustrations").

By identifying these areas, using the Working Genius Assessment, individuals and teams can align tasks with their strengths, leading to greater productivity and job satisfaction. This approach not only enhances individual performance but also improves team dynamics by ensuring that everyone is working in their areas of strength. The Working Genius model is a valuable tool for fostering personal and professional growth, optimizing teamwork, and reducing burnout.

The Working Genius assessment identifies an individual's strengths by evaluating their natural responses to various work activities. Through a series of questions, participants reflect on their preferences, energy levels, and feelings toward tasks aligned with six "Geniuses": Wonder, Invention, Discernment, Galvanizing, Enablement, and Tenacity.

The assessment analyzes these responses to determine the individual's top two Geniuses—areas where they excel and feel energized—along with two Competencies and two Frustrations. The resulting report offers insights into the most fulfilling types of work and highlights how individuals can best contribute to team productivity and collaboration.

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Why Connect *The Working Genius* to Scripture?

Connecting scripture to the Working Genius model can serve several meaningful purposes for individuals who value integrating their faith with their personal and professional development.

Here are some reasons why someone might want to connect scripture with the Working Geniuses:

Rooted in Faith: For those who view their work and talents as gifts from God, aligning the Working Geniuses with scripture helps them anchor their understanding of these abilities in their faith. This connection can deepen their recognition of their natural strengths as part of their spiritual calling and purpose.

Divine Guidance: Scripture provides timeless wisdom that can direct how individuals use their talents. By linking the Working Geniuses to specific Bible verses, people can find divine insight into how to develop and apply their strengths in a way that aligns with biblical principles.

Spiritual Development: Integrating scripture with the Working Geniuses fosters spiritual growth by encouraging reflection on how one's work and contributions align with their faith. This approach supports a more comprehensive personal development that includes both professional and spiritual dimensions.

Inspiration and Encouragement: Scripture serves as a powerful source of encouragement and motivation. Connecting the Working Geniuses to biblical teachings allows individuals to draw strength from their faith to persevere, overcome challenges, and remain steadfast in their efforts.

Moral Compass: The Bible offers an ethical framework that helps ensure work is conducted with integrity, compassion, and a sense of service to others. Tying the

Working Geniuses to scripture reinforces these values, encouraging individuals to use their talents in ways that honor God and benefit the greater good.

Sense of Purpose: For many, scripture infuses life with deeper purpose and meaning. By linking the Working Geniuses to biblical teachings, individuals can view their work not just as a job, but as part of a divinely inspired mission.

Ultimately, connecting scripture to the Working Geniuses allows individuals to integrate their faith with their daily actions, helping them live out their beliefs in their work and use their God-given talents in ways that reflect their spiritual values.

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The Stages of Work: In Practice and In Scripture

The Working Genius model identifies stages of work. The stages refer to the different phases or steps in the productivity process where each type of working genius is the most effective.

The model breaks down work into three stages:

Ideation Stage: This is where the **Geniuses of Wonder and Invention** thrive, focusing on generating possibilities, asking questions, and coming up with new ideas.

Activation Stage: This stage involves the **Geniuses of Discernment and Galvanizing**, where ideas are evaluated, decisions are made, and teams are motivated to take action.

Implementation Stage: The **Geniuses of Enablement and Tenacity** are key in this stage, as they focus on supporting the execution of tasks and ensuring projects are completed effectively.

Each stage relies on different Working Geniuses to move from conception to completion, ensuring that all aspects of the work are addressed comprehensively.

Ideation Stage: This is where the **Geniuses of Wonder and Invention** thrive, focusing on generating possibilities, asking questions, and coming up with new ideas.

In Practice: In 2007, co-founders Brian Chesky and Joe Gebbia were struggling to pay rent in their San Francisco apartment. They noticed that hotels in the city were fully booked due to a design conference, and this sparked their curiosity. They wondered if there was a way to help visitors find alternative accommodations during such events. This sense of wonder led them to question whether a broader opportunity existed to address the lack of affordable lodging.

Acting on this curiosity, Chesky and Gebbia decided to rent out air mattresses in their living room and offer breakfast to conference attendees, calling their service "Air Bed & Breakfast." This inventive idea was the seed for what would become Airbnb. Recognizing the potential of this concept, they developed an online platform that allowed people to rent out their homes, apartments, or spare rooms to travelers. This invention of a new business model transformed the hospitality industry, creating a global marketplace that revolutionized the way people find accommodations.

This example shows how Wondering and Invention can drive business success. While all geniuses were used, the founders of Airbnb started with curiosity about solving a specific problem, which led them to invent a new approach to lodging, ultimately creating a multi-billion-dollar company that changed the travel industry.

In Scripture: A Biblical example of the Ideation stage involving both Wonder and Invention in the Bible can be found in the story of David and Goliath. When David arrives at the battlefield and hears Goliath's taunts against Israel, he wonders why no one has taken action against the giant. His curiosity and questioning lead him to contemplate the situation, sparking a desire to do something about it.

Instead of relying on traditional armor and weapons, David invents a new approach by choosing to face Goliath with just a sling and five smooth stones. This inventive solution, drawn from his experience as a shepherd defending his flock, offers a creative and unconventional method to confront the problem. David's initial wonder drives him to question the status quo, and his inventive thinking ultimately leads to his victory over

Goliath. This story exemplifies how Wonder and Invention work together in the Ideation stage.

Activation Stage: This stage involves the **Geniuses of Discernment and Galvanizing**, where ideas are evaluated, decisions are made, and teams are motivated to take action.

In Practice: When Steve Jobs returned to Apple in 1997, the company was struggling with declining sales and a lack of clear direction. Jobs took the time to carefully analyze the situation, discerning that Apple needed to simplify its product offerings and refocus on innovation and quality. He identified that the company's true strength lay in creating beautifully designed, user-friendly products that could transform the consumer electronics market.

With this insight, Jobs moved quickly to galvanize the company. He streamlined Apple's product line, cutting unnecessary products and channeling resources into key areas like the iMac, iPod, and later, the iPhone. Jobs also inspired the Apple team with his vision of creating products that would change the world. His ability to rally the employees, foster a culture of innovation, and instill a sense of urgency and focus were critical in Apple's remarkable turnaround.

This example demonstrates how Discernment and Galvanizing work together in business. Jobs first discerned the core issues and the right strategy, then galvanized the entire organization to execute that strategy, ultimately leading Apple to extraordinary success.

In Scripture: A Biblical example of the activation stage involving both Discernment and Galvanizing is seen in the story of Nehemiah and the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls. When Nehemiah learns about the broken walls of Jerusalem, he is deeply troubled and spends time fasting, praying, and seeking God's guidance. Through this period of

reflection, he discerns that the broken walls are a critical issue that requires immediate action, and he feels a clear calling from God to address the problem.

With this discernment, Nehemiah takes action by approaching King Artaxerxes, securing the necessary support to return to Jerusalem. Once he arrives, Nehemiah galvanizes the people, rallying them around the mission of rebuilding the walls. He inspires and organizes the community, ensuring that everyone is involved and working together toward the common goal. His ability to both discern the need and galvanize the people results in the successful restoration of the city's defenses.

This story illustrates how Discernment and Galvanizing are essential components of the activation stage, as Nehemiah not only identifies the critical need for action but also effectively mobilizes the community to accomplish the task.

Implementation Stage: The **Geniuses of Enablement and Tenacity** are key in this stage, as they focus on supporting the execution of tasks and ensuring projects are completed effectively.

Add in Practice

Add in Scripture

The Six Geniuses defined and supporting Scripture

Below are the six geniuses, along with an extended definition of each and five Bible scriptures from the ESV that support each one:

Wonder

The Genius of Wonder is the ability to ponder the possibilities and ask thought-provoking questions (ask big questions). These people enjoy thinking about what better or new opportunities might exist. People with this genius are naturally curious and are often the first to recognize the need for change or improvement. They see the potential for something greater and spend time reflecting on how things could be different. Their strength lies in their ability to wonder about what could be better, to imagine new opportunities, and to raise questions that others might not consider.

Supporting Scriptures:

Psalm 8:3-4: “When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him?”

Job 37:14: “Hear this, O Job; stop and consider the wondrous works of God.”

Ecclesiastes 3:11: “He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man’s heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.”

Psalm 139:14: “I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.”

Proverbs 25:2: “It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search things out.”

Invention

The Genius of Invention is all about creativity and innovation. They have the capacity to generate new ideas, concepts, and solutions. People with this genius thrive on creativity and innovation. They enjoy brainstorming, developing new approaches, and coming up with unique solutions to problems. Their strength lies in their ability to think outside the box, to bring fresh perspectives to the table, and to turn abstract thoughts into concrete ideas that can be explored and developed further.

Supporting Scriptures:

Isaiah 43:19: “Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.”

Proverbs 8:12: “I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, and I find knowledge and discretion.”

Genesis 1:1: “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”

2 Corinthians 5:17: “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”

Ecclesiastes 1:9: “What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.”

Discernment

The Genius of Discernment involves good judgement and intuition. These people have the ability to make sound judgments and wise decisions based on intuition, experience, and a deep understanding of the situation. People with this genius are skilled at assessing options and determining the best course of action. They can quickly identify what will work and what won't, often relying on a combination of analytical thinking and gut instinct. Their strength lies in their capacity to sense what is right and to guide others toward the best solutions.

Supporting Scriptures:

James 1:5: "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him."

Proverbs 3:5-6: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths."

1 Kings 3:9: "Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?"

Hebrews 5:14: "But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil."

Philippians 1:9-10: "And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve *what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ.*

Galvanizing

The Genius of Galvanizing is the talent for rallying, inspiring, and motivating others to take action. People with this genius are natural leaders who know how to get people excited about a project or cause. They excel at mobilizing teams, generating enthusiasm, and ensuring that everyone is on board and moving forward. Their strength lies in their ability to energize and unite others, driving momentum and ensuring that tasks are completed.

Supporting Scriptures:

Hebrews 10:24: “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works.”

1 Thessalonians 5:11: “Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.”

Proverbs 27:17: “Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.”

Joshua 1:9: “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

Nehemiah 2:18: “And I told them of the hand of my God that had been upon me for good, and also of the words that the king had spoken to me. And they said, ‘Let us rise up and build.’ So they strengthened their hands for the good work.”

Enablement

The Genius of Enablement is the ability to support, assist, and enable others to succeed. People with this genius are skilled at helping others achieve their goals by providing the necessary support and resources. They are often the ones who step in to help, offer encouragement, and do whatever it takes to move a project forward. Their strength lies in their willingness to serve others, to contribute to the success of the team, and to ensure that everyone has what they need to be successful.

Supporting Scriptures:

Philippians 2:4: “Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

Galatians 6:2: “Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”

Romans 15:1-2: “We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.”

1 Peter 4:10: “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.”

1 Thessalonians 5:14: “And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.”

Tenacity

The Genius of Tenacity is the drive and determination to see tasks through to completion. They get things done. People with this genius are highly focused and persistent, often working tirelessly to achieve their goals. They are not easily discouraged and have a strong sense of responsibility to finish what they start. Their strength lies in their ability to stay the course, overcome obstacles, and ensure that the work is completed to the highest standard.

Supporting Scriptures:

Proverbs 16:3: “Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.”

James 1:12: “Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.”

Colossians 3:23-24: “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.”

Galatians 6:9: “And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.”

2 Timothy 4:7: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”

These extended definitions and supporting scriptures illustrate how each of the Working Geniuses aligns with biblical principles, encouraging individuals to use their God-given strengths in their work and relationships. By embracing these geniuses, individuals and

teams can achieve greater productivity, enhance teamwork, and experience personal growth.

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The Working Genius Pairings: In Practice and Scripture

Pairings

A Pairing is a combination of two specific geniuses within the model and 15 different pairings. In the “in practice” and “in scripture” examples below, there are other geniuses involved, but not pointed out in these examples. **Add additional info about this**

1. Creative Dreamer

The term "Creative Dreamer" is a combination of two specific geniuses within the model: **Wonder** and **Invention**.

In Practice: A "Creative Dreamer" might be the person who comes up with a groundbreaking concept for a new product, a unique marketing campaign, or an innovative approach to solving a complex problem. They thrive in environments where blue-sky thinking is encouraged and are often the source of visionary ideas that can drive significant change or create new opportunities for growth.

In Scripture: A biblical example of the "Creative Dreamer" pairing, combining the Genius of Wonder and Invention, can be found in the story of **Nehemiah** when he rebuilds the walls of Jerusalem.

Nehemiah as a Creative Dreamer:

Wonder: Nehemiah first shows the Genius of Wonder when he hears about the broken-down walls of Jerusalem and is deeply moved by the situation. He asks profound questions about the state of the city and its people, reflecting on what could be done to restore its former glory. His concern for the future of Jerusalem leads him to envision the possibility of rebuilding the walls, even though the task seems overwhelming.

Invention: Nehemiah then demonstrates the Genius of Invention as he develops a plan to rebuild the walls. He doesn't just stop at pondering the need; he creatively strategizes how to gather the necessary resources, rally the people, and navigate the political and social challenges involved in such a massive undertaking.

Nehemiah's plan includes practical steps for rebuilding, as well as innovative ways to motivate and protect the workers.

The Outcome:

Through Nehemiah's combination of Wonder and Invention, he leads the people of Jerusalem to rebuild the walls in an astonishing 52 days, despite significant opposition. His ability to dream big and think creatively about how to achieve that dream was instrumental in restoring the physical and spiritual integrity of Jerusalem.

Nehemiah's story exemplifies the "Creative Dreamer" pairing in the Bible, where deep concern and visionary thinking lead to practical, innovative solutions that bring about significant change.

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Epilog

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Notes

¹You can learn more about the Working Genius model and take an assessment through several resources:

1. **Official Website:** The primary resource for the Working Genius model is its official website: <https://www.workinggenius.com>. This site offers detailed explanations of the model, examples of how it can be applied, and access to the official assessment.
2. **The Book:** Patrick Lencioni has written a book titled *The 6 Types of Working Genius: A Better Way to Understand Your Gifts, Your Frustrations, and Your Team*. This book delves into the concepts behind the Working Genius model, providing insights into how it can be used for personal and team development.
3. **The Assessment:** There is an official assessment available on the Working Genius website that allows you to discover your two primary Working Geniuses, two Working Competencies, and two Working Frustrations. The assessment takes about 10 minutes and provides a detailed report on your results.
4. **Podcasts and Webinars:** The Working Genius team regularly produces podcasts and webinars that explore different aspects of the model, share success stories, and provide tips on how to implement the Working Genius in various settings. The Working Genius podcast can be found on Apple, Podbean,

Spotify, and other popular streaming sites.

5. **Workshops and Training:** Many organizations and consultants offer workshops and training sessions focused on the Working Genius model. These sessions can be helpful if you're looking to implement the model within a team or organization.

Add other notes, references

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