

WORK, CALLING, AND GOD'S PROVIDENCE

1 Corinthians 12

Ephesians 4:16

Awareness

Before listening, reflect:

- What are your God-given gifts or skills?
- How do you define and describe vocation?

Vocation, or the idea that God has called us to a particular work in life, is one way Christians understand how their faith can impact their work. However, we must be cautious not to let our sinful human nature corrupt this ideal, making it more grandiose or out-of-reach than God designed it to be. Together let's study 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4:6 to explore a biblical view of the relationship between our work and calling, and to discover how our work relates to God's providence.

Reflection

After listening, consider:

- Reflect on the conversation in segment 2 about Martin Luther's "stations in life." What are your current stations in life? Is it possible to have more than one calling?
- Whether you are employed, unemployed, retired, or stay-at-home, describe the work you do in terms of its service to God, what it means to do your work well, and how it shows love to your neighbor (keep in mind the story of the Good Samaritan and Christ's definition of neighbor).
- How can we restore dignity to the people and jobs that our culture seems to have deemed undignified?
- We live in a culture that encourages the pursuit of passion and following dreams. As Christians, we desire to do what God wants us to do. Frederick Buechner defines vocation this way: "*Vocation is where your deep gladness meets one of the world's deep needs.*" How does this definition of vocation unite the ideals of both the wider culture and the desire of Christians? How does it expand culture's perspective? Where does it help you see God's providence in your life and in the lives of others?

Related Passages

- **Acts 18:1-4**
- **Genesis 50:19-21**
- **Colossians 3:12-17**

Conclusion

After reflecting on your work, vocation, and God's providence, consider what words of confession, thanksgiving, or submission you need to offer to God in prayer. For guidance, consider these prayers written by Deborah Haarsma and published in the [June 2004 edition of *Reformed Worship* magazine](#):

Lord, we confess that we have stored up treasure on earth, placing our trust in our possessions and our money. We have made work into our master, letting work invade the time you give us to rest, to fellowship with others, and to worship. At other times we “make do” and “get by” in our work, rather than working with our whole heart. We have been overwhelmed by worry and stress, forgetting to place our work in your hands and to trust you for the harvest. We have resented our bosses, unfairly judged our coworkers, and lorded it over those we supervise. Forgive all of our sins because of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Enabled by Christ's love, we shall endeavor to make each day's work a sacrament, work and worship interwoven. We will work with all our heart as unto the Lord, knowing that it is Jesus Christ we serve. O Master Workman, cleanse our work from selfishness, impatience, and desire for recognition. Forgive us, train us, and use us for your glory. Amen.

<https://groundworkonline.com/episodes/work-calling-and-gods-providence>

Printed on July 3, 2024