

Vocation

Simply Said

Vocation is the cultivation of the Kingdom of Jesus here on earth through our intentional + contributive work.

What is Work?

The word Vocation is translated to mean “calling”. At the end of Genesis 1 (*before the fall*), God gives a general calling to all of mankind: to work. Man is to take all the resources God has provided and tend, rule over, create through them, and work. Work is “rearranging the raw material of God’s creation in such a way that it helps the world in general, and people in particular, thrive and flourish.”¹ Work has always been in the DNA of man and will be a perfected part of Eternity on the new Earth.

How Sin Has Impacted Vocation

Evil Work – because of sin, our world is filled with people who impart evil in the world. Such as, slavery, pornography, murder, drugs, intentional manipulation, etc.

Sacred | Secular Divide – because of sin, we have created a false divide between secular and sacred work. People have been convinced that “Church” or “Christian” work is sacred while work outside these realms is secular.

Idols + The Wrong Gospel – because of sin, work creates + exposes idols. Some idols from work are money, power, self, prestige, image, etc. Work can also communicate a false gospel: “Work is our means of self-fulfillment + self-advancement.”

Work to Live – sin has created cultures and places in our world where people lack the resources and must do anything they can to provide + survive.

Pointless Work – because of sin, we demean work and use it as a means to create a “workless” life.

How Christ Redeems Vocation

God Provision – the heart of the gospel changes work from a self-advancement tool into a human ecosystem within which God provides to his creation through the good work of people.

God’s Justice – Jesus uses his followers to bring justice to the world through their work in the world.

God’s Glory – Jesus is the ultimate picture of how God meets us in the ordinary — bread and wine, homes and hallways, ink and page, and in conversations and hugs. Creation is charged with God’s presence + glory. God meets us in the day in and day out of our ordinary work.

Sacred Work – Jesus finished work bridges the gap between man + God. Through this, we all function as “consecrated Priests”² and representatives of Christ. All our work is Sacred.

Worship – Work is a physical act of worship as we utilize our gifts and callings to contribute good to the world. “Your work is your prayer.”³

What is Our Role in the Practice of Vocation?

Our role is to serve God by embracing work that contributes to the good of others. When able, we seek to work within our callings (*displayed by our unique limits, giftings, joys, or responsibilities*). We display the glory of God through our competent, excellent, and righteous work that we use to point to the future Kingdom of God.

¹ Timothy Keller, *Every Good Endeavor*

² Martin Luther, *Three Treatises*

³ Ben Witherington, *Work: A Kingdom Perspective on Labor*