

Leader's Guide for



**You Are Called (Episode One)**

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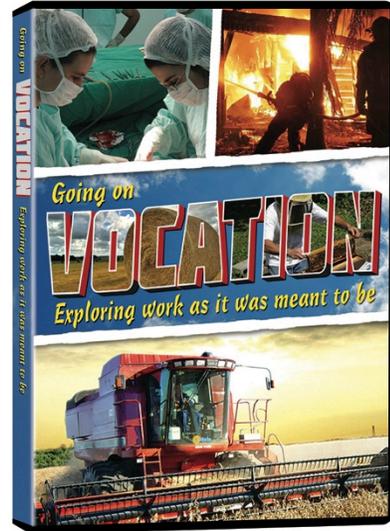
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## Introduction to *Going on Vocation: You Are Called*

Yes, Google, I said *going on vocation*.

Despite what the Internet may suggest as an autocorrect, the term originally had nothing to do with “vacations.” And our workplaces often feel nothing like vacations, either.

Why do we use the word “vocation” to describe the place we feel we are summoned to, whether by God or by our daily circumstances? It comes from the Latin *vocare*, which means “to call,” and for this reason we often refer to “vocation” by its synonym: *calling*. (“Calling” goes all the way back to Old English and originally meant “to summon loudly”—we still use it that way sometimes, whether calling hogs or calling to our friends across a football field.)



People today often also use the word *vocation* synonymously with one’s job, profession, or career, though in reality many people hold jobs they do not feel particularly called to. Or they may use it to describe a calling to ordained ministry or to life in a Catholic religious community.

But in truth, all of us have a calling, even if we work in a secular workplace, or in no paid workplace at all. Our primary calling is to follow Christ. How does that work itself out in our secondary callings? As we go *on vocation* in this video, you’ll hear how ordinary people have found God in workplaces ranging from a beauty salon to a police cruiser to the home. You’ll also hear from experts on Scripture and theology who have struggled with these issues, too, and now share their wisdom.

This study guide is provided to help you make the most of the four video sessions. Scripture, quotes from our brothers and sisters in the past, and open-ended discussion questions will help participants apply the truths presented. Leaders should read through each session and watch the video segment before class.

## Participants in the Video

**Chris Armstrong:** Director of Opus: The Art of Work at Wheaton College.

**Ray Babcock:** Retired airline pilot and beekeeper.

**Vincent Bacote:** Associate professor of theology and the Director of the Center for Applied Christian Ethics at Wheaton College.

**Darrell Bock:** Professor of New Testament studies at Dallas Theological Seminary.

**Sharon Cranfill:** Beauty salon owner in Connersville, Indiana.

**Greg Forster:** Program director at the Kern Family Foundation.

**P. J. Hill:** Retired professor of economics at Wheaton College.

**David Miller:** Director of the Princeton University Faith & Work Initiative.

**Dennis Perkins:** Deputy Chief in Connersville, Indiana.

**Charlie Self:** Professor of church history at Assemblies of God Theological Seminary.

**Adrienne Tressler:** Waitress at the Chrome Grill in Connersville, Indiana.

**Leonard Urban:** Mayor of Connersville, Indiana.

**Gene Edward Veith:** Provost and professor of literature at Patrick Henry College and author of *God at Work*.

**Russell Williams:** Stay-at-home father of three.

## Segment One: *You are called*

### OPENING EXERCISE

List as many words as you can think of which describe your current occupation, whether paid or unpaid. What do you do? What positive feelings and thoughts does it produce in you? What negative ones? How does it serve you, your family, and your neighbor?

List as many words as you can think of which describe your ideal occupation, whether paid or unpaid. What would it be? What positive feelings and thoughts would *it* produce? What negative ones? How would it serve you, your family, and your neighbor?

Compare your current and your ideal occupations. Would you describe your work as more of a curse or a blessing? Why? What unanswered questions do you have about your work?

### WATCH OPENING MONTAGE AND SEGMENT ONE (14 MINUTES)

As you watch, look for the primary calling God has placed on each of us.

### SCRIPTURE FOUNDATION

“So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.” (II Corinthians 5:17–20)

### WISDOM FROM THE AGES

Those who are fathers or mothers...are also in a truly holy estate, doing a holy work, and members of a holy order. . . . Similarly princes and overlords, judges, officials and chancellors, clerks, men servants and maids...as well as all who render the service that is their due, are all in a state of holiness and are living holy lives before God...Whatever is included in God’s order must be holy. —Martin Luther, *Confession* (1528)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. According to this segment, what is our first and primary calling or vocation?
2. What kinds of work can you think of that are mentioned in the Bible? (See more about this in Appendix B.)
3. What ways of working are mentioned or viewed in this segment?
4. How does each of those ways honor God? Think beyond the video segment. What other kinds of work honor God?
5. How does each of those ways serve others?
6. How might each of those ways express the ministry of reconciliation by bringing God's grace to others? Discuss II Corinthians 5:17–20 in reference to your primary vocation (following God) and secondary vocations (focused on others).
7. What is your reaction to the statement, “Whatever is included in God’s order must be holy”?
8. What would it mean for you to consider your vocations as part of God’s order? As being subject to your primary vocation to follow Christ? (See more on this from some Reformation writers including Luther in Appendix A.)

## CLOSING EXERCISE

(Use these as a good basis to encourage prayer among the group.)

List three new places you might look for the presence of God in your daily life in the coming week.

List three places you know it will be difficult to see God in the coming week and where you will need prayer.

## PRAYER

O Lord, my God,  
grant us your peace; already, indeed, you have made us rich in all things!  
Give us that peace of being at rest,  
that sabbath peace,  
the peace which knows no end.

—*St. Augustine*

## Segment Two: *Finding your callings*

### OPENING EXERCISE

List some of the times in your life when you made major life decisions or experienced life changes (new job or school, marriage, divorce, death of a family member, having a baby, sending a child to college, etc.). For at least several of these things, consider:

1. At the time of the event, how did you sense God speaking to you about the event? (Conversations? Scripture? Prayer? Other events?)
2. In what ways would you have liked God to speak, but felt him absent?
3. Looking back at the event, can you see any ways God was speaking to you that you did not fully grasp at the time?

### WATCH SEGMENT TWO (7 MINUTES)

As you watch, pay attention to the ways that individuals in the video hear God's callings.

### SCRIPTURE FOUNDATION

“Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.” (Jeremiah 29:5–7)

### WISDOM FROM THE AGES

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it. Therefore will I trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone. —Thomas Merton, *Thoughts in Solitude* (1958)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are several ways the people whose stories are told in this segment heard God's callings? (See more about this in Appendix B.)
2. What are some other ways God speaks as mentioned by the expert interviewees?
3. How do these correspond to your own list from the beginning? Do any of them surprise you?
4. What advice does Scripture give to people seeking to know God's will, especially in (but not limited to) the passage quoted above?
5. Read the prayer from Thomas Merton, above. Describe his struggle to find God's will. Can you relate?
6. Now describe Merton's hope. How does he find peace amid a myriad of choices? What would it look like for you to trust in the same way that Merton describes?
7. The stories shared in this segment show that people are called in multiple places and in multiple ways. Does this idea bring a sense of freedom or a sense of duty? Why? (Read more about how God calls in multiple ways in Appendix A.)

## CLOSING EXERCISE

List three ways you have experienced God speaking to you in the past.

List three new ways you might hear God speak to you.

Determine now to be alert for God's voice during the coming week.

## PRAYER

I arise today	God's host to save me
Through God's strength to pilot me:	From snares of devils.
God's might to uphold me,	From temptations of vices,
God's wisdom to guide me,	From every one who shall wish me ill,
God's eye to look before me,	Afar and anear.
God's ear to hear me,	Alone and in a multitude.
God's word to speak for me,	(from ancient Irish poetry. Thanks to
God's hand to guard me,	<a href="http://FaithandWorship.com">FaithandWorship.com</a> .)
God's way to lie before me,	
God's shield to protect me,	

## Segment Three: *The meaning of your work*

### OPENING EXERCISE

List as many people as you can think of who you currently touch or impact directly in some way by living out your calling to Christ. For example: family members, neighbors, employees, supervisors, teachers, or students

Now, list as many people or groups you can think of that are touched or impacted *indirectly* by your current living out of your calling to Christ. (For example: Do you impact the families of your students or employees? The people who make the things you buy or borrow for your family?)

### WATCH SEGMENT THREE (15 MINUTES)

As you watch, look for ways that each person's work is an important part of the whole.

### SCRIPTURE FOUNDATION

“Then God said, ‘Let us make humankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.’ So God created humankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.’” (Genesis 1:26–27)

The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. . . . Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. (Genesis 2:15, 19)

### WISDOM FROM THE AGES

It will be no slight relief from cares, labors, troubles, and other burdens for a man to know that God is his guide in all these things. The magistrate will discharge his functions more willingly; the head of the household will confine himself to his duty; each man will bear and swallow the discomforts, vexations, weariness, and anxieties in his way of life, when he has been persuaded that the burden was laid upon him by God. . . . From this will arise also a singular consolation: that no task will be so sordid and base, provided you obey your calling in it, that it will not shine and be reckoned very precious in God's sight. —John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you traditionally thought of work as more of a blessing or curse? Compare Genesis 2:15 with Genesis 3:17–19. What might it mean to consider that work was built into the unfallen creation?
2. What kind of work were unfallen men and women commanded to do?
3. What are some of the relationships and networks of exchange talked about in this segment? How do Ray's bees fit into a wider network? What kinds of relationships are reflected in the town of Connersville?
4. What kind of meaning do the people whose stories are told in this segment find in their work? Why?
5. What sorts of things prevent us from finding meaning in our work?
6. What kind of work do you think we will do in the new creation? What would it look like to make the new creation a living part of your life and work in the current fallen world?
7. How would it change your work to think that God was guiding and leading it as Calvin claims in the excerpt above? (See more on Calvin's belief in God's guidance in Appendix A.)

## CLOSING EXERCISE

Consider what new things you will do differently through your work in the coming week to impact your *direct* relationships.

Consider what new things you will do differently through your work in the coming week to impact your *indirect* relationships.

## PRAYER

Father, without you we can do nothing.

By your Spirit, help us to know what is right  
and to be eager in doing your will.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. AMEN. (Cathedral of St. Matthew)

## Segment Four: *Living your callings*

### OPENING EXERCISE

Off the top of your head, list the ways in which you feel God has gifted you. Be sure to pay attention to what you have heard others in the Christian community and in your networks of friends and coworkers say about your gifts, in addition to your own appraisal. Now, do the same for your weaknesses. Where do you experience frustration and find areas for growth? If you are comfortable, share some gifts and weaknesses with the larger group.

How does this list of gifts and weaknesses fit with what you currently do with your life? With your job? With your hobbies and outside interests? With your family relationships?

How are your gifts contributing to the community? Are there ways in which the community could better support you in your weaknesses?

### WATCH SEGMENT FOUR (15 MINUTES)

As you watch, notice ways that the interviewees seek to do good in their communities.

### SCRIPTURE FOUNDATION

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (Ephesians 2:8–10)

### WISDOM FROM THE AGES

O Christians! Go on in doing good to all men with cheerfulness, for it all tendeth to make up the body of Christ. . . . But . . . though God set up lights so small as will serve but for one room, and though we must begin at home, we must far more esteem and desire the good of multitudes, of city, and church, and commonwealth. —Richard Baxter, *How to Do Good to Many* (1682)

Teach me, my God and King,  
In all things Thee to see,  
And what I do in anything  
To do it as for Thee. —George Herbert, “The Elixir” (1633)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the vocations discussed in this segment?
2. How is each of those vocations valuable? How do they show God's handiwork in the world?
3. Read the quote from Richard Baxter. How are our interviewees living out Baxter's recommendation to begin by doing good at home? How do they also "desire the good of multitudes"? (See more about Baxter's recommendations in Appendix A.)
4. What prevented some of these people at times from seeing the ways in which they served others?
5. How could you begin doing good at home, and how could you also do good to many? What issues might prevent you from seeing the way to do this?
6. What would it mean to you to view your vocation as a valuable part of God's handiwork in the world? How can you take to heart the words of Paul found in Ephesians 2:8–10?

## CLOSING EXERCISE

You are called. Your first calling is to faith in Christ, and out of that faith your secondary callings emerge. This week, resolve to live out your callings, using your gifts to their fullest and seeking support when needed for your weaknesses. List some ways you can live as a valuable part of God's handiwork this week.

## PRAYER

Thank you, God, for the privilege of working in this world you have created. Thank you for allowing us to share with you in the joy of creation and in the joy of creating. You also have allowed us to experience your new work of redemption through our work. So we ask today that where there is brokenness we might see Christ the healer at work. Where there is strife that we might participate with Him as a peacemaker. Where there is anxiety that we might experience your peace within. Lord we pray that whatever circumstances we find ourselves in today that we might see in them, through them and beyond them to your eternal kingdom. Through our work, do your work of making us like your Son so that your kingdom may come, and your will may be done on earth as it is in heaven. We ask this in the name of our savior Christ Jesus. Amen. (Hans Hess)

## Appendix A: Selections from *Christian History* magazine #110 *Callings*

### **“Called first to Christ”**

*Be faithful in all things*

**By Beth Felker Jones**

In the early church, the question of vocation was not—as it often is in the twenty-first century—about what sort of occupation a Christian should have. The church fathers didn’t sit around agonizing over whether they should be plumbers or doctors or teachers or farmers. Their agony, instead, was about submission to Christ. No one doubted that the results of answering that call would be dramatic. . . .

Calling, in this context, was not just the special calling of some to serve in offices of the church. Calling belonged to all Christians. It was the call to faithfulness, to share the good news regardless of the cost, and to give up everything to follow Christ. . . .

Ignatius (c. 35–107), one of Christianity’s earliest authors, saw his calling as one to martyrdom. “It is not that I want merely to be called a Christian, but actually to be one,” he writes. And Ignatius was unflinching in his vision. He described the many things “seen or unseen” that he did not want to obstruct his vocation as a Christian. “Come fire,” he writes, “cross, battling with wild beasts, wrenching of bones, mangling of limbs, crushing of my entire body, cruel tortures of the devil—only let me get to Jesus Christ.”

If to answer the call to conversion was to open oneself up to martyrdom in the arena, then it made sense that the early church saw conversion itself—and not so much questions about occupation—as the central category for vocation. . . .

Christians from Augustine’s day to our own have looked back to those first three Christian centuries as a model for worship, prayer, theological reflection, and depth of community. As we wrestle with questions of vocation and kingdom work today, in the midst of the twenty-first century’s own idolatries, these Christians remind us that the question of calling is foremost one of responding to Christ and submitting to him.

—*Christian History* issue 110, pp. 8–12

## **“Liberating those who work”**

*Martin Luther’s thoughts on vocation*

**By David C. Fink**

Luther (1483–1546) had tried life in the spiritual fast lane, and it had done him no good. “Though I lived as a monk without reproach,” he recalled, “I felt that I was a sinner before God with an extremely disturbed conscience.” As he lectured on the Bible in his post as theology professor at the university in Wittenberg, Luther gradually came to develop a radically different understanding of Christian salvation. It did away entirely with “fast lanes” and “slow lanes,” as well as with the idea that vocation necessarily implies a call to abandon one’s nets and leave the world for the cloister.

Luther’s revolutionary new theology of justification by faith alone was based on the insight that human life is lived out at the intersection between two basic relationships: a vertical relationship “before God” and a horizontal relationship “before humanity.” Before God, humans stand in a purely passive, helpless relationship. Luther argued that we, as finite beings, are utterly incapable of meriting our own salvation, or any good thing, for that matter. What makes the gospel “good news,” in Luther’s view, is that it reveals to us the righteousness God grants to sinners as a pure gift.

“What do we do to obtain this gift?” Luther asked. “Nothing at all. For this righteousness means to do nothing, to hear nothing, and to know nothing about the law or about works and to believe only this: that Christ . . . sits in heaven at the right hand of the Father, not as a Judge but as one who has been made for us [i.e. on our behalf] wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption from God.” . . .

This meant for Luther that vocation defined Christian identity. And “vocation” was not a special invitation to join God’s “fast lane” as a priest or a monk, but the transformative power of God’s Word uniting people to Christ in faith.

That may seem like a rather abstract point, but it had radical implications in the sixteenth century. In his *Address to the German Nobility* in 1520, Luther spelled these implications out with startling clarity: the distinction between religious and secular, between sacred and profane, is nothing more than a “specious device invented by time-servers,” for “our baptism consecrates us all without exception, and makes us all priests.”

For Luther this did not mean, however, that all Christians were called to perform the same duties or occupy the same stations. Since human beings are incapable of rendering anything to God in return for his grace, Luther argued that God does not need our good works. But our neighbors do. Therefore God so ordered things that each is assigned his or her proper task to help the body of Christ function.

—*Christian History* issue 110, pp. 20–22

## **“Doing much good in the world”**

*Reformers Calvin, Bucer, and Baxter talk about calling*

**By Jordan J. Ballor**

Genevan reformer John Calvin (1509–1564) emphasized the universality of Christ’s lordship and the corresponding mandate for all believers to act as responsible stewards in God’s world. While today we connect Calvin’s belief in Christ’s lordship with his teaching that God sovereignly predestined our salvation, his arguments also had implications for the job market. . . .

For Martin Bucer (1491–1551) the Christian’s calling meant a responsibility under God, directed toward promoting the good of others. Christians must figure out for themselves how to best express Christ’s love for their neighbors amid a variety of competing responsibilities, differing depending on social station.

Christian ministers need to proclaim the gospel and administer the sacraments—but farmers also have to tend to their crops, parents to raise and nurture their children, and civil authorities to promote justice and punish evildoers. As Bucer put it, “Children should be encouraged to enter the best profession, and the best profession is the one which brings most profit to neighbors.” . . .

Richard Baxter (1615–1691) argued that the Christian realized his or her calling in the world through four main structures: personal ethics, household management (the older meaning of the word *economics*), ecclesiastical ministry, and civil government. . . .

In his *A Christian Directory*, a four-volume collection of moral instruction, Baxter discussed 27 directions for “faithfully serving Christ, and doing good.” He instructed Christians to “study to do good, and make it the trade or business of your lives”—*including* in trade or business.

—*Christian History* issue 110, pp. 26–30

## Appendix B: An interview with Will Messenger of Theology of Work Project, excerpted from *Christian History* #110 Callings

*A voice from heaven, a descending dove, an announcement from God: that picture of Jesus' baptism looms large in the mind of those who open the Bible looking for words about vocation. Or if not the dove, then Moses at the burning bush, shoeless before the voice of God. Calling: clear, unmistakable, dramatic. And probably to something very special. Was Moses called to herd sheep? Was Jesus called to make tables? Will Messenger, executive editor at the Theology of Work Project ([www.theologyofwork.org](http://www.theologyofwork.org)), talks to Christian History about what vocation looked like to Biblical writers.*

**CH:** *Why is the true story larger than the dove and the bush?*

**WM:** The stories the Bible tells can be interpreted to give us three overarching guidelines about calling. First, everyone is called to belong to Christ and to participate in his creative and redemptive work. Second, it is rare for God to call someone directly and unmistakably to particular work. Third, everyone is commanded to work to the degree they are able, but God does not usually provide a particular “job offer.” In any case, God frequently calls people to a whole life, not just to a job.

**CH:** *How often does God call people directly and unmistakably to take up a particular task, job, profession, or type of work in the Bible?*

**WM:** That kind of calling is actually very rare in the Bible. In Biblical times and in fact throughout history, most people had the job of slave, farmer, or homemaker—still the case in much of the world even in the twenty-first century.

No more than a hundred or so people were called by God in the Bible in a direct, unmistakable way. God called Noah to build the ark. God called Moses and Aaron to their tasks (Ex. 3:4; 28:1). He called prophets like Samuel (1 Sam. 3:10), Jeremiah (Jer. 1:4–5), and Amos (Amos 7:15). He called Abram and Sarai and a few others to undertake journeys or to relocate. He placed people in political leadership, including Joseph, Gideon, Saul, David, and David's descendants. God chose Bezalel and Oholiab as chief craftsmen for the tabernacle (Ex. 31:1–6). Jesus called the apostles and other disciples (Mark 3:14–14), and the Holy Spirit called Barnabas and Saul to be missionaries (Acts 13:2). The word “call” is not always used, but the unmistakable direction of God for a particular person to do a particular job shines clearly.

**CH:** *So what does calling look like if it doesn't look like that?*

**WM:** In the Bible God guides and empowers people for all kinds of work. At the very beginning of the Bible, God chose to involve human beings in the work of creation, production, and sustenance. Work continues through to the very end of the Bible: there is work from the Garden of Eden to the new heaven and new earth (Gen. 1:27–28, Gen. 2:15,

Rev. 21:24–26). For most of us, calling means going about our so-called ordinary work, guided by Scripture and prayer rather than by dramatic pronouncements or events in our lives.

*CH: Absent doves and burning bushes, how did people in the Bible determine God's calling?*

**WM:** One way was through seeing what needed to be done to make the world more like what God intends. In many cases this involved earning a living to support oneself and one's family (Prov. 13:22), or working to meet the needs of individuals beyond family (Prov. 14:21, Luke 3:10–11).

People were also called to serve the good of the larger society, as when Jeremiah told the exiles in Babylon to “build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce” (Jer. 29:5–7).

The Spirit also guided, and guides, people as they pay attention to their skills and gifts. Paul famously claimed that God gives people gifts for accomplishing the work he wants them to do, and he named some of the gifts and skills that God imparts: “prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness” (Rom. 12:6–8).

When Paul discusses the gifts of the Spirit, he is usually referring to their use in the church, but if all work done by Christians is done for the Lord (Col. 3:23), then the Spirit's gifts are also given for use in any workplace. We do need to be careful here. The present generation of Westerners is the most gift-analyzed in human history, yet this can lead to self-absorption, crowding out attention to the needs of the world. These passages say that God gives gifts for the common good; they say nothing about work being for our personal satisfaction.

Besides, in many cases, God gives gifts only after you take the job in which you will need them. Paying too much attention to the gifts you already have can keep you from receiving the gifts God wants to give you.

To return for a moment to the role of personal satisfaction in discovering our vocations: God clearly considers people's truest, deepest desires important in determining their calling (Ps. 37:4 and 145:19; Matt. 5:6). But human motivations often become confused by the brokenness and sinfulness of the world. What makes a person happy—or seems to—might be far from meeting the needs of the world, or from using skills and gifts for the common good, or even from fulfilling true desires. Knowing what we truly desire requires spiritual maturity—not to mention the discernment of the Christian community, the body of Christ on earth (Rom. 12:5). . . .

The Bible says that *how* people work is at least as important to God as what job or profession they have. “Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much,” said

Jesus (Luke 16:10). Over a lifetime people can serve Christ best by making the most of every job for his purposes, whether they feel called to every job or not.

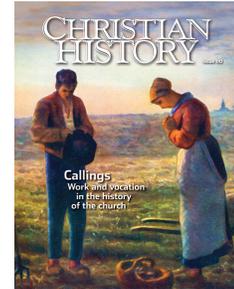
In the end the Bible seems to clearly say that God calls and guides people to various kinds of ordinary work—in various kinds of ordinary ways. But the stories in the Bible also tell us that getting the right job does not bring salvation, nor even (necessarily) happiness.

Moreover, the truest aim of work for the Christian is to serve the common good. Over a lifetime, that comes from doing each day's work to the best of one's ability in Christ. At the end, the Bible makes clear, people will not be judged on getting the right job or fulfilling their potential. The calling to belong to Christ is God's only indispensable calling.

—*Christian History* issue 110, pp. 4–6

## Further Resources

*Christian History* magazine issue 110, *Callings: Work and vocation in the history of the church*



“Vocation Overview” and “Vocation in Historical and Theological Perspective,” Theology of Work Project website,

<http://www.theologyofwork.org/key-topics/vocation-overview-article> and <http://www.theologyofwork.org/auxiliary-pages/vocation-depth-article/>.

Great list of resources at the end of the overview article: <http://www.theologyofwork.org/key-topics/vocation-overview-article#conclusions-about-calling>



William Placher, *Callings* and Mark Schwehn and Dorothy Bass, *Leading Lives that Matter* (two anthologies of short excerpts about vocation: the first from great Christians of the past and the second from great writers and artists, many also Christians)

“Books on Vocation and Calling, Books on Work and Jobs,” a list of resources, by Byron Borger of Hearts and Minds Bookstore, [http://www.heartsandmindsbooks.com/reviews/books\\_on\\_vocation\\_calling\\_book/](http://www.heartsandmindsbooks.com/reviews/books_on_vocation_calling_book/)

Patheos Faith and Work Channel, <http://www.patheos.com/Faith-and-Work.html>

*Going on Vocation* website, [www.GoingOnVocation.com](http://www.GoingOnVocation.com)

*Going on Vocation: You Are Called* is distributed by Vision Video, [www.visionvideo.com](http://www.visionvideo.com). Study materials prepared by Christian History Institute, [www.christianhistoryinstitute.org](http://www.christianhistoryinstitute.org).