

# Just a Job or a Calling?

*I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called ([Ephesians 4:1](#)).*

With these words the Apostle Paul begins the fourth chapter of his letter to the saints in the church at Ephesus. Paul divides his letter into two major parts, a doctrinal part and a practical part. The first three chapters are doctrinal in nature as he looks at the church in her beauty as the body of Christ, emphasizing her oneness or unity in the Lord.

Beginning with Chapter four to the end of the letter he exhorts the church at Ephesus and the church of today on how we are to put that doctrinal truth in practice in our daily lives. It is not the purpose of this article to tell you how to live your life in all its various spheres. Rather it is to draw your attention to your vocation that you are now considering or should be. It is not to draw attention to any particular vocation, but to the idea of vocation, i.e., what you will be doing during your lifetime.

To begin with we all know that we must work. God has commanded that. We read in [II Thessalonians 3:10](#), “that if any would not work, neither should he eat.” The point to be made is that “work” is a calling. That is what the word vocation means. The word vocation comes from a Latin word which, when translated, means calling. This in turn means that each of us has a calling. Traditionally we have spoken of a minister or a teacher having a calling to preach or to teach. This, of course, is true, but certainly not limited to these two occupations. We all have a calling to do something. Thus, whether minister, teacher, doctor, nurse, farmer, gravedigger, housewife, or any other number of occupations, it is a calling. A calling varies and is different from person to person because God has given us different and varying gifts. An example of this is the different members in one’s body. Each member has a specific function which benefits the body as a whole.

This means that whatever occupation that we choose, it is a calling, an assignment from God to do a certain thing. Our labor is an assigned labor. In light of this it follows that we must work as a citizen of the kingdom of God. We are God’s people working in God’s world using God’s tools, all unto the advancement of his kingdom and unto his glory. This has certain limitations in that there are certain occupations that we may not do. One should not even consider professional sports, for all of them are breakers of the fourth commandment which commands us to keep the sabbath day holy. We should not even be watching them on the Sabbath Day. Nor should we work in a location which would prevent us from attending God’s house on the Sabbath Day. That job in a distant location may be ever so attractive, but if it takes us away from

our church then we must avoid it. I put in this same category voluntarily joining the armed forces when we know that it will take us away from the means of grace and place us among those whose lifestyle is a complete contrast to the life of a faithful child of God. At one time the government had what was called the draft. It would call one to mandatory service for a certain period of time. In obedience to those whom God has placed in authority over us one would heed the call. But the draft is no longer in use. However, to do so willingly, voluntarily, is another matter.

Furthermore, our calling must be in harmony with our abilities. We must have the ability to do something. If you are afraid of heights, then you would not seek the work of a window washer on a skyscraper. Or, if you get sick or faint at the sight of blood, then to be a doctor or nurse would not be the best of choices. On the other hand, if we have the gifts to do a certain legitimate job, then we must not waste God's gifts by not using them.

With all this in mind we can see that the matter of a vocation is a serious matter because a vocation is a calling of God. It is more than just "getting" or "having" a job. Therefore it must be given serious thought. What is God calling me to do?

How is it that we are called? How do we know what is God's calling for us? It will not be boomed out of the sky nor whispered in your ear. God uses you. With the mind and senses that God has given you, you must follow the signs that God sets before you. It is a matter of self-assessment, of taking stock of yourself. What kind of person am I? What gifts has God given to me? What kind of person does it take to fulfill the requirements of a specific task? You must know what certain vocations are like. What is expected of one? When you have evaluated yourself and the various vocations, and when you have brought these before the throne of God's grace in prayer, then he will guide you to your life's calling.

Now a parting word to you young ladies. Many of you will consider various types of work and higher education. Higher education is certainly to be commended. In today's society an educated wife and mother is practically a necessity. However, do not forget the calling to be a housewife and mother. Have you ever given thought that being a housewife and mother is a life-calling? Modern society would have you think otherwise. They say that you must find fulfillment in your life in the workplace, in a career. But stop to think for a moment. To be a housewife and mother is really the calling of the woman. To be a help meet unto her husband, the mother of his children, to bring forth the seed of the covenant that God's church may be brought forth and gathered, is the greatest fulfillment. Thus, do not over-emphasize the so-called necessity to work outside of the home. A far higher calling is to bring forth the children of the covenant and nurture them in the fear of the Lord.

Therefore, “walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,” for there God commands his blessing.