

Work & Vocation

Genesis 1:26-31; 2:15-17

Colossians 3:23-25

Why?

Why do we go to school?
Why do we go to college or university?
Why do we want to get a good job?
Why do we want to make good money?
Why do we want a car, a spouse, a house?

Work/Vocation Questions

What should my perspective be on vocation?
How do I discern my work and vocation?
How do I fulfill (fight and hope for) my vocation/work without completely identifying myself through the position, title or performance I have?
What ways are wrong to make money?
“Passive Income” – is that okay?
When does looking for tax savings cross the line and become tax evasion?

Definitions

There are 44 definitions of "work" in some dictionaries.

Principles for Work & Vocation

Genesis 1:26-31; 2:15-17

²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make mankind 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,^[a] and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

²⁷ So God created mankind in his own image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

²⁸ 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.”

²⁹ Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.³⁰ And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

³¹ God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden;¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

Colossians 3:23-25

²³ Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters,²⁴ since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.²⁵ Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for their wrongs, and there is no favoritism.

Genesis: Stewardship, Curse & Recovery

Attitude towards work: Doing your best.

Work/Vocation Answers

What should my perspective be on vocation?

vo•ca•tion (voo'kei jən)

n.

1. a particular occupation, business, or profession; calling.
2. a strong inclination to follow a particular activity or career.
3. a divine call to a religious life.
4. a function or station, esp. a religious life, to which one is called by God.
[1400–50; < Latin *vocātiō* a call, summons =*vocā*(re) to call + *-tiō* **-tion**]

Firstly, we are all called by God to be in relationship with him.

Secondly, we are called to love our neighbours and one another in the church.

Thirdly, we are called to make disciples.

You may be given a specific vocation during certain seasons of your life.

Eg. A student is called to learn, a teacher is called to teach, a fund manager is called to manage.

Wisdom is needed in learning how to apply the three primary vocations within our specific ones.

How do I discern my work and vocation?

Work is not necessarily vocation.

A person may work in order to survive and not necessarily due to divine calling.

Whatever you do, however, should align with the fundamental vocation of the Christian life.

A good approach to work & vocation is to discern how your gifts, talents, passions and resources coincide with the needs of the world.

In other words: Being a steward of what you have holistically, and applying it to the love of God and people.

It may take time and effort to discover your gifts, talents, passions and resources - knowing yourself.

It may also take time to discover the need God is bringing to your attention.

One important note is that your vocation is not the same as that of others.

Do not judge others because their work and vocations are different from yours.

How do I fulfill (fight and hope for) my vocation/work without completely identifying myself through the position, title or performance I have?

Remember that you are not what you do.

Your values is not in what you do, your position, title or performance.

Do what you do because it is where your gifts, talents, passions, resources are best applied for the good of others.

Be who you are outside your work.

This is the reason for sabbaticals, vacations and retirement. Take them!

You take breaks from work but you never cease your vocation.

What ways are wrong to make money?

Lying, stealing, cheating - basically not being in right relationship with others.

Also, remain within legal bounds as a supplemental guide.

Something may be legal but still wrong.

There are few professions that Christians - anything that harms others or perpetuates what is evil.

“Passive Income” – is that okay?

For those who don't know what this is, it is money that is made or given without constant activity and participation.

Rental income, investment dividends, pensions - usually continuous income of some form.

Yes, this kind of income is totally okay.

But we need to be careful that we don't become wastrels, lazy, and self-indulgent as dangers of this lifestyle.

When does looking for tax savings cross the line and become tax evasion?

Tax avoidance/shelters include RRSPs, incorporation, deferments and any strategy to lower your tax rate using legal means.

Tax evasion, in its simplest form, is not reporting your total income and this is illegal.

One of the current controversies in our country is that the government has made it a legal requirement for Canadian residents to report not only domestic but foreign income which some people are loathe to do. This is now considered by the government as a form of tax evasion.