

What does this mean for people's daily work?

Produced by TOW Project - Topical

<http://www.theologyofwork.org/key-topics/the-equipping-church/what-does-this-mean-for-peoples-daily-work/>



An integrated understanding of work from a biblical perspective needs to include a clear sense of Christian vocation, or calling. As Christians we are called first of all to find our identity in our relationship with God. This is our primary calling. We are called to 'belong' and to 'be' in relationship with God through Jesus, and then we are called to 'do' and to follow Jesus in all of life, including our daily work. It is a vocation centred on Jesus and not on the work that we do. At the same time, this is not discipleship divorced from our work, but rather a call to follow Jesus in all our daily activities—house work, voluntary work and church work, as well as employment, are included. Our calling is not just about our job. It is about our whole life's work, becoming a follower of Jesus in all that we do.

Just as our calling in Christ guides us in our daily work, applying our faith to our daily work helps us grow spiritually. It is a two-way street. Consider the fruit of the Spirit in [Galatians 5:22](#)—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control. It is important to learn *about* the fruit at church, but the place we actually develop the fruit may well be our workplace. For example, doing our present job to the best of our ability—even while hoping to find another, better job—helps us develop patience and self-control. For more on how spiritual formation connects to work see, (*CONTENT NOT YET AVAILABLE) *Spiritual Formation and Work* at www.theologyofwork.org. For further reading, the books, *After You Believe* by N.T. Wright[1] and *The Callings* by Paul Helm[2], explore how daily work contributes to spiritual growth.

The church has an important ministry of vocational guidance which it needs to rediscover. According to the Bible, this is less about us finding personal fulfilment in our work and more about us finding opportunities for service in our work—finding opportunities to serve God and other people through our work. Work, in Christian perspective, is about service, and churches are being challenged to take much more seriously the support and equipping of all Christians for this ministry in daily life.

This does away with any notion that clergy do the work of God, while lay people support the clergy by giving money and volunteering at church. Clergy and church leaders *do* have a unique role, yet lay people in non-church-jobs have an equally important role in God's mission. Lay people *do* support clergy and church workers by giving money and volunteering at church, yet this is not the *primary* way they contribute to God's mission. This is not a matter of diminishing the role of clergy, but of equipping every person to do all their work as a service to God's kingdom.