

Is My Work a Calling?

by Mark D. Roberts

<http://www.thehighcalling.org/articles/daily-reflection/my-work-calling>



Ephesians 4:1-3

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

Ephesians 4:1

As an ordained pastor, nobody would flinch if I said I have been called to my line of work. We're familiar with the notion that clergy have a calling. But could this also be said about teachers, butchers, attorneys, and carpenters? What about parents and those who volunteer their time to care for the poor? Do they have a calling to their work? Or is this something reserved for pastors and priests?

Ephesians 4:1 reveals that each and every one of us has a calling. We are to "live worthy" of this calling, which includes the summons to belong to God and to participate in his restorative mission in the world. Since our work is a central part of our life, it is surely essential to how we respond to our calling and should be informed by this calling. But what is the relationship between our calling and our work?

We find a wise, concise answer in a marvelous [article on "Vocation" at the *Theology of Work* website](#). I commend to you this whole article, from which I am taking the following excerpt:

"We have seen that: 1. Everyone is called to belong to Christ and to participate in his creative and redemptive work. 2. Everyone is commanded to work to the degree they are able. 3. God calls us to a whole life, not just to a job.

"Putting these together leads us to conclude that your profession is probably not God's highest concern for you. God is much more concerned that you come under the saving grace of Christ and participate in his work of creation and redemption, whatever your job may be. Exactly what kind of work you do is a lower-level concern.

"Although getting us into the right job or career is not God's highest concern, that doesn't mean it is of no concern. In fact, the distinctive work of the Holy Spirit is to guide and empower people for the life and work to which God leads them."

Is your daily work a high calling? Yes, indeed, because it is one main way you respond to the calling of God. But your work is not your highest calling. Rather, through your work, you respond to this supreme calling to "belong to Christ and to participate in his creative and redemptive work." This is true no matter what your

work entails. It's true if you're an entrepreneur or a student, a stonemason or a mother, a pastor or a soccer coach. Through your work, you are able to respond to the highest calling of your life. And in this response, your work becomes, as the saying goes, a high calling.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER REFLECTION: How do you understand the relationship between your work and God's calling? How might your life be different if you came to understand every part of it as a response to God's highest calling?

PRAYER: Thank you, dear Lord, for calling us to belong to you and to share in your creative and redemptive work. Thank you for creating us so that we might work in this world. Thank you for helping us see that everything we do, including our work, is a response to your calling.

Help me, I pray, to see my work in light of your calling. May what I do for most of my day be an expression of my gratitude and faithfulness. May I seek to honor you in everything in my work life, whether I'm adding up a column of figures or leading a Bible study during the lunch break.

Today, I pray especially for those who are wondering how they should be working, for those looking for a job, for those wondering about a career change. Guide them, Lord, into daily work that allows them to use their gifts in service to others and to you. Help them to see their work as a high calling, a fitting response to the highest calling of all. *Amen.*

P.S. from Mark: Many thanks to Will Messenger and the Theology of Work Project for making available the article on "Vocation" from which I quoted above. The resources at the ***Theology of Work*** [website](#) are vast and valuable.

Image courtesy of [Laity Lodge](#), one of our sister programs in the Foundations for Laity Renewal.