

# Should my ministry and calling be connected to my job in some way?

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<http://www.boundless.org/advice/2012/should-my-ministry-and-calling-be-connected-to-my-job-in-some-way>

## **QUESTION**

*A philosophy that I have heard expressed a number of times by people in the church is: "A job is a job." The focus of life is ministry, and a job is what you do to support yourself. I suppose a good example would be Paul in his career as a tent maker.*

*Although people acknowledge that there are good exceptions and although I don't think this is an official position of the church or anything, it does appear to be a prevailing philosophy. Is a job just a job, or should my ministry and calling be connected to my job in some way? How much should my job guide my life? And how much should the direction of my life be guided by other things?*

## **ANSWER**

The direction of your life should be guided by only one thing: Where is God leading me to bring Him the most glory?

When it comes to kingdom living, there is no dichotomy between a job and ministry. Yes, we can do "vocational" ministry, which means we have a paid position at a church or ministry, but can you imagine Paul not talking about Jesus while he, Paul, was making tents? I doubt Paul took off his ministry hat at any time, whether making tents or preaching at the synagogue.

If you're a follower of Christ, a job is never just a job, nor is anything "just" anything. Everything matters. Everything has God's maximum interest. God is not more interested in what the preacher or missionary does than what the accountant or homemaker or business owner does.

Jobs aren't bad; it's what we do with them that makes them good or bad. We can use a job to fulfill our own personal "American Dream," or we can see it as an opportunity to establish God's kingdom in that particular sphere of society. God is not interested in the "American Dream." He is interested in His plan to cover the earth with His glory and show people who He is and how much He loves them. Those people are everywhere, and many of them spend hours and hours in the marketplace and little or no time in a church or ministry setting. The marketplace is a field that is "ripe for harvest" ([Luke 10:2](#)).

There are small (and big) business owners who see great spiritual fruit borne in their employees and customers as a result of how they approach running their business for God's glory. They see their role in the marketplace as a calling from God, not merely as a way to "make money" to buy more things simply for the sake of having more.

I know one such owner of a packing and shipping store who has employed and offered discipleship to countless college students who've worked for him over the years. They all talk about how their time working there was such a highlight in their spiritual journey.

I also know many people in the marketplace who provide significant financial support for ministries, missions and all kinds of things that God uses to advance His kingdom and spread His glory.

God calls people to the marketplace, to media, to the arts, to medicine, to government, to education, to the sciences, to all spheres of culture and influence because people are there and influence is there, and that matters to God. What God is *not* interested in is people doing those things for their own self-interest or personal glory, which, by the way, also goes on in church and ministry settings as well.

A kingdom lifestyle being lived out in these spheres will shine so brightly it is impossible to go unnoticed. It is simply wrong to think that "a job is just a job" when a person is living for the kingdom of God. And I believe that any church that promotes such an idea is doing a great disservice to its members.

Blessings,  
JOHN THOMAS