

Calling, Work, and Leisure
God's Redemptive Purposes in Your Daily Life
Course Outline

Lesson 1

Course Introduction – What am I here for?
Callings defined; general, effectual, and particular

Lesson 2

Seekers or Sought
Why does God seek us?
The beauty of our effectual (primary) call

Lesson 3

The Sacred/Secular Divide
Historical distortions
“Full-time Christian service”

Lesson 4

Discerning your calling (particular/secondary) at 18 or 80
Gifts/desires/situations/relationships
Self discovery and community discovery

Lesson 5

Stewardship and responsibility in your calling

Lesson 6

Calling traps – conceit, envy, and greed

Lesson 7

Work: Blessing, Curse or Both

Lesson 8

Work in the Spirit: A Christian Work Ethic
Making Much of Christ from 8-5
As Unto the Lord: Excellence, truth, diligence, and generosity

Lesson 9

Historical perspectives on leisure and the church's response

Lesson 10

Distortions of Work: Workaholics and Sluggards

Lesson 11

Conclusion
Living all of Life before the Audience of One

Bibliography

Highly Recommended:

The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life
Os Guinness

Redeeming the Time: A Christian Approach to Work and Leisure
Leland Ryken

Other Resources:

The Callings: The Gospel in the World
Paul Helm

Courage and Calling: Embracing your God-Given Potential
Gordon T. Smith

The Other Six Days: Vocation, Work, and Ministry in Biblical Perspective
R. Paul Stevens

Don't Waste Your Life
John Piper

Institutes of the Christian Religion (3.10.6)
John Calvin

Calling, Work, and Leisure
Lesson 1
Handout

- I. Why study this topic?
- II. Review course outline
- III. Primary answers to purpose
 - a. Eastern
 - b. Secular
 - c. Biblical
- IV. Calling Defined
 - a. General
 - Matthew 13:1-23
 - Acts 2,4,17
 - Matthew 22:14
 - b. Effectual
 - WCF Chapter 10 – paragraph 1&2 attached
 - 1 Cor 1:9
 - 1 Cor 1:28
 - 2 Thess 2:13,14

 - Why us?
 - 1 Cor 1:26-31
 - Eph 2:1-5
 - 2 Tim 1:8-9
 - John 6:44
 - c. Particular
 - Noah – Gen 6:13-22
 - Abram – Gen 12:1-3
 - Moses – Exodus 3:1-10
 - Samuel – 1 Sam 3:10-20
 - Nehemiah, David, Esther, Mary,...

Westminster Confession of Faith
Chapter 10 – Of Effectual Calling

1. All those whom God hath predestined unto life, and those only, He is pleased, in His appointed and accepted time, effectually to call, by His Word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death, in which they are by nature to grace and salvation, by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God, taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them an heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and, by His almighty power, determining them to that which is good, and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ: yet so, as they come most freely, being made willing by His grace.

This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not from any thing at all foreseen in man, who is altogether passive therein, until, being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered

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Lesson 2
Handout

- V. Perspectives on Seeking
- Search is everything; discovery matters little
 - Desire is a problem; vanquish it; nirvana
 - Love as desire; Eros
- VI. We seek Him
- Deuteronomy 4:29
Proverbs 8:17
Amos 5:4-6
Matthew 7:7-8
But do we?
C. S. Lewis: “Amiable agnostics will talk cheerfully about ‘man’s search for God’. To me, as I then was, they might as well have talked about the mouse’s search for the cat.”
- VII. He seeks us
- Ezekiel 34:11-16
Matthew 18:10-14
Luke 19:1-10
John 4:19-23
- VIII. Group discussion
- Which is it? One, the other, or both?
- IX. Why does God seek us? (the fourth perspective on seeking; agape)
- Creator
 - Great Shepherd
 - Father

Mark 10:46-50

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Lesson 3
Handout

- X. Dualism
 - a. Manicheism
 - b. Light and Matter
 - c. Spiritual and Physical
 - d. Sacred and Secular

- XI. The Catholic Distortion
 - a. The spiritual estate
 - b. The temporal estate
 - c. Sacred above the secular

- XII. The Protestant Distortion
 - a. Elevates the secular at the expense of the sacred
 - b. Reduces calling to work

Henry Ford: “Work is the salvation of the human race; morally, physically, and socially.”

- XIII. Laity and Clergy
 - a. Laos 1Peter 2:9
 - b. Laikos
 - c. Idiotes Acts 4:13, 1 Corinthians 14:23
 - d. Kleros Acts 26:15-18, Eph 1:11, Gal 3:29

The First Century View
The pre-Reformation View
The Current View

- XIV. Essence and Function

- VI. William Wilberforce example

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Lesson 4
Handout

I. Know Thyself

A. Gifts

2 Timothy 1:6

B. Desires

Hebrews 13:17

C. Recognizing Needs

Romans 12:6-8

Call	Need	Primary Passion	Danger
Prophet			
Servant			
Teacher			
Encourager			
Contributor			
Leader			
Mercy			

Caution: Mark 1:34-38

The need does not determine the call.

II. Self Discovery within Community

John 17:4

III. A Special Calling

Wisdom and Blessing

GIFTS (How has God gifted you?)

DESIRES (What brings you joy?)

NEEDS (How do you uniquely see the needs of the world?)

TEMPERAMENT (How are you wired?)

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Lesson 5
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I. Christian Freedom and Responsibility
Galatians 5:13
1 Peter 2:16
Psalm 119

II. The Parable of the Talents
Matthew 25:14-24
Observations on the parable:
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Why doesn't God give the same talents to all?

1.
2.

III. The Parable of the Minas
Luke 19:11-26

IV. The Macedonian Church
2 Corinthians 8:1-5

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Lesson 6
Handout

- XV. The temptation of conceit
Chosenness – reason for conceit or recognition of God’s grace
1 Corinthians 26-31
The Tower of Babel
Genesis 11
Isaiah 2:15-17
Lucifer
Isaiah 14:12-15
Our culture’s view of pride
The biblical view – Proverbs 8:12-13, 16:18, 29:23
- XVI. The temptation of envy
Salieri/Mozart
Saul – 1 Samuel 18:5-9
John 21:20-22 Where is your focus?
- XVII. The temptation of greed
Matthew 6:24
Mark 10:17-27
Proverbs 30:7-9
Proverbs 23:4-5

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Lesson 7
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XVIII. God as a Worker

- i. Creator
Genesis 1,2
Psalm 19:1
- ii. Sustainer
Psalm 121:1-4
Colossians 1:16-17
Psalm 104:10-31
- iii. Savior

XIX. Man created in God's image

Man called to work

Genesis 1:27-28

Eccl. 3:12-13

Exodus 20:9,11

Man created to be God's co-worker

Genesis 2:8,15

Psalm 90:16,17

Psalm 127:1

Neh 6:3-16

XX. The Effect of the Fall

Genesis 3:17-19

Romans 8:20

XXI. The Work of Christ

a) Reconciliation w/God

Romans 5:6-11

b) Putting your work in the right perspective

Colossians 3:22-24

Ephesians 6:7-8

c) Transforming you-the worker

2 Cor 5:17

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Lesson 8
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XXII. Characteristics of the Christian Worker

- i. Excellence
2 Timothy 2:15
Colossians 3:23
- ii. Truth
2 Timothy 2:15
Larger Catechism Questions 143-145
- iii. Diligence
2 Timothy 4:1-5
- iv. Generosity
- v. Respect for Authority
Ephesians 6:5-6
1 Peter 2:18

XXIII. Adorning the Gospel

Titus 2:9-10
1 Thess. 4:11

XXIV. Proclaiming the Gospel

Proverbs 10:11
1 Peter 2:9

Westminster Larger Catechism
Questions 143-145

143. Which is the ninth commandment?

The ninth commandment is, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

144. What are the duties required in the ninth commandment?

The duties required in the ninth commandment are, the preserving and promoting the truth between man and man, and the good name of our neighbor, as well as our own; appearing and standing for the truth; and from the heart, sincerely, freely, clearly, and fully, speaking the truth, and only the truth, in matters of judgment and justice, and in all other things whatsoever; a charitable esteem of our neighbors; loving, desiring, and rejoicing in their good name; sorrowing for, and covering of their infirmities; freely acknowledging of their gifts and graces, defending their innocency; a ready receiving of a good report, and unwillingness to admit of an evil report, concerning them; discouraging tale-bearers, flatterers, and slanderers; love and care of our own good name, and defending it when need requireth; keeping of lawful promises; studying and practicing of whatsoever things are true, honest, lovely, and of good report.

145. What are the sins forbidden in the ninth commandment?

The sins forbidden in the ninth commandment are, all prejudicing the truth, and the good name of our neighbors, as well as our own, especially in public judicature; giving false evidence, suborning false witnesses, wittingly appearing and pleading for an evil cause, out-facing and overbearing the truth; passing unjust sentence, calling evil good, and good evil; rewarding the wicked according to the work of the righteous, and the righteous according to the work of the wicked; forgery, concealing the truth, undue silence in a just cause, and holding our peace when iniquity calleth for either a reproof from ourselves, or complaint to others; speaking the truth unseasonably, or maliciously to a wrong end, or perverting it to a wrong meaning, or in doubtful or equivocal expressions to the prejudice of truth or justice; speaking untruth, lying, slandering, back-biting, detracting, talebearing, whispering, scoffing, reviling, rash, harsh, and partial censuring; misconstruing intentions, words, and actions; flattering, vain-glorious boasting, thinking or speaking too highly or too meanly of ourselves or others; denying the gifts and graces of God; aggravating smaller faults; hiding, excusing, or extenuating of sins, when called to a free confession; unnecessary discovering of infirmities; raising false rumors, receiving and countenancing evil reports, and stopping our ears against just defense; evil suspicion; envying or grieving at the deserved credit of any, endeavoring or desiring to impair it, rejoicing in their disgrace and infamy; scornful contempt, fond admiration; breach of lawful promises; neglecting such things as are of good report, and practicing, or not avoiding ourselves, or not hindering what we can in others such things as procure an ill name.

Calling, Work, and Leisure
Lesson 9
Handout

XXV. Defining Leisure

- i. Latin “licere” – to be allowed
- ii. Latin “schola” - school

XXVI. General Areas

- a) Cultural pursuits
- b) Recreation
- c) Entertainment
- d) Hobbies/crafts
- e) Social activities

XXVII. How leisure has come up short

- i. Quality of leisure
- ii. Leisure is to be “worked at”
- iii. Feeling guilty about leisure
- iv. Leisure as idolatry

XXVIII. A Historical Perspective

- i. Greeks
- ii. Romans
- iii. Middle Ages
- iv. Reformation & Renaissance
- v. Utilitarianism
- vi. 20th Century

XXIX. God and Leisure

- i. Gen 2:1-3
- ii. Mark 6:30-32
- iii. Proverbs 8:30-31
- iv. Zechariah 8:5
- v. Psalm 104:26
- vi. 1 Chronicles 15:29

XXX. The Social Aspect of Leisure

- i. Family
- ii. Friendships
- iii. Romance
- iv. Church
- v. Celebration & Festivity
Jeremiah 30:18-19
Jeremiah 31:4, 13-14

XXXI. Summary

- i. Leisure – An arena of moral choice
- ii. Allow leisure to be leisure
- iii. Pleasure and enjoyment are legitimate
Psalm 16:11
Psalm 36:8
- iv. Leisure to the glory of God
Philipians 4:8

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Lesson 10
Handout

XXXII. Sluggards/Sloth

- i. Proverbs 6:6-11
- ii. Proverbs 20:4,5,26
- iii. Proverbs 12:11,24
- iv. Proverbs 18:9
- v. Proverbs 19:24
- vi. Proverbs 21:25-6
- vii. Proverbs 24:30-34
- viii. Proverbs 26:14
- ix. Hebrews 6:10-12
- x. 2 Thess. 3:10-12

Points of entry

- a) Philosophical
- b) Cultural
- c) Biographical

Sluggards view of:

- a) Calling
- b) Work
- c) Leisure

A transitional text: Ecclesiastes 4:5-6

XXXIII. Workaholics

- a) Fear of failure
- b) Fear of man
- c) Greed
- d) Need for attention
- e) Avoidance of relationships

Workaholics view of:

- a) Calling
- b) Work
- c) Leisure

XXXIV. Similarities

- i. Empty pursuits
- ii. Self indulgence
- iii. Bondage only Christ can break

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Lesson 11
Handout

XXXV. Review

XXXVI. God' Redemptive Purposes in our Work

Cultural Renewal

Cultivating the potential in the raw material we've been given
What is it in your role in life?

Work to the glory of God or work to the glory of me?
Genesis 11:1-4

Where is your identity?
Paul's – Philippians 3:1-11

XXXVII. God's Guidance

Our plans/God's plans

Proverbs 21:5/Proverbs 16:33

Proverbs 16:3/Proverbs 16:9

Our choices are ours, but all things happen according to His plans.
How do we reconcile those two concepts?

What about evil?
Proverbs 16:4
Genesis 50:18-21

How do we get God's guidance/wisdom?
Proverbs 16:3 – "Commit"

Character formation leads to wise plans/decisions
Proverbs 11:3
Proverbs 12:5
Proverbs 15:22

XXXVIII. Living life before the Audience of One

Andrew Carnegie

General Charles Gordon

You