



elev8

life on another level

Student Workbook

YEAR 2

**Seasons and
Celebrations**

Vocation

Bible Readings

Ecclesiastes 11

Luke 5

Colossians 3:17 to 4:18

Romans 12



Learning Outcomes

At the end of this week you will be able to:

- Locate the theme of vocation in the Bible
- Express the theme or story in your own way
- Apply your learning from this issue to your own life and community

Notes from Bible Reading

Scripture A word or phrase that stood out to me:

Observation What is happening in this Bible reading?

Application Something that I learned about who I am or how I should live:

Prayer What I would like to say to God, ask of God, or what I think God is saying to me:

Key Question What does the Bible have to say about vocation?

Engage

Go around the group and share one thing for each heading that has happened since you last met:

- Plus – What has been good or enjoyable?
- Minus – What has been difficult or painful?
- Interesting – What has been unusual or thought provoking?

Share about your ideal job.

- What would you do?
- What would you feel like doing it?
- How would it affect other people?
- What would you achieve or what impact on the world after you worked in that job for a few years?

Explore – Locate

- *What stood out to you in the Bible readings this week?*
- *What did you find meaningful or significant?*
- *Is there anything that you didn't understand or found confusing?*
- *Any questions or comments you may have?*

Read together: Xxxx

Careers and job choice are another one of those issues dependent on the culture you exist in.

In Jesus' times (and for many centuries later), individuals rarely had a choice in what they would do as a 'job'. People largely did whatever their parents did as a career as the skills of the trade were usually passed down through the family. A carpenter's son generally took over the dad's business, as did fishermen, farmers, priests, etc. Think about what career options someone born as a slave had back then!

It is important to note that the Bible doesn't actually have a lot to say about how to choose your career or job. Don't think that God is intentionally being unhelpful by not giving guidance on what career you should pursue, but rather see it as God giving you greater freedom to choose what you might want to pursue.

God is a big supporter of free will for humanity. God's will in our lives is not like a single tightrope that unless you follow absolutely each and every step, you will fall and be a huge disappointment to God. It is more like a national park with heaps of options of valid tracks, but venturing into some areas might be more risky or inappropriate or have possible negative consequences.

Remember the Garden of Eden was filled with a huge multitude of fruit trees (it wasn't just the two trees) that Adam and Eve were free to eat from.

So although the Bible doesn't give you directly the job you were destined for (read horoscopes if you want man-made pseudo predictions of destinies or put all possible jobs ever and pull them out of a hat), it does have a lot to say about your attitude towards working (or your approach to studying).

Ideas that can be found in these passages:

1. Work or engaging in meaningful activity is part of God's will for humans (Ecclesiastes 11:6; Colossians 3:23-24) as we were created to 'work' in some way.
2. In whatever job we are in we should always be conscious of being identified as a reflector of God and to act and live that out (Colossians 3:22, 4:1-6).

(continued...)

Explore – Locate *(...continued)*

There is no separation between 'work life' and your life where you reflect God, reflecting God is a 24/7 lifestyle. You are missing the point if all they see about Jesus in you is that you attend church and don't do as much bad stuff as others.

3. Our culture likes people who are clear about what job they will do for the rest of their lives. This attitude and practice helps people get ahead and succeed in most societies. There are plenty of stories of Jesus not challenging someone to change their career or working circumstances (Paul continued his trade as a tentmaker even when he travelled preaching). However occasionally Jesus does challenge people to change their careers (Luke 5).
4. We may be more attracted to or suited for certain roles of responsibilities at certain times in our lives (Romans 12:6-8), but these roles were often in addition to an individual's 'day job'.

Explore – Express

Get an A3 piece of paper and trace both your hands on it.

Around your right hand drawing (or you can do your left hand if you're left-handed), write in blue ink the top 10 jobs you might want to do. Around your left hand drawing write the top 10 jobs you definitely don't want to do.

Share with the group why and why not for the jobs you have listed.

Discuss:

The idea of 'vocation' is not just the job someone has, but having a sense of being chosen and well suited for a particular job. We spiritualise it by saying someone being 'Called' (by God) into that job/career/activity. Do you think there are jobs you are more well-suited to? Why or why not?

Society likes the idea of individual's having a strong sense of the job/career they will have for at least the main part of their 'working life'. What do you see as the advantages and disadvantages of thinking that God has a particular career path for you (or others)?

Apart from pastors and missionaries, how well do you think the church does at supporting Jesus followers to see their current job as their 'vocation' and chosen by God to reflect and be Jesus in that space? What else could be done to support people in their vocation (the more specific ideas the better)?

If someone has found their 'Calling' or 'niche' or particular vocation, how can we celebrate as a local Christian community an individual's strong sense of vocation?

What other issues dealing with discovering a person's vocation and being confident to reflect Jesus wherever they work has been raised in your reading or personal reflections or prompts by God?

Explore – Integrate

- Knowing that God gives you freedom to choose your vocation, how does that make you feel? How confident do you feel about working what you could do with help and support from other mature Christians or peers?
- How can you reflect Jesus more in your current workplace (or school if you haven't got a job yet)? What obstacles make it hard for you to do so?
- Knowing that God created me for work, what should my attitude be towards paid or unpaid work?

Extend

Discuss with your group the challenges you are tackling. Use the time to ask for any help you might need.

Questions that may be helpful include:

- What challenges are you working on at the moment?
- Do you need any support or assistance?
- Are there any challenges that you have completed that we need to recognise and celebrate?
- Are there any new challenges that you want to work on?

Encourage

Tell another student in your group something you value or appreciate about them.

Share one thing you would like to pray for and pray for one another.

Pray and give thanks for the job or career of people you know.

Pray for those who don't have employment or engaged in meaningful activity to seek out and trust in God.

Pray that everyone (including you) might be reminded that we need to live worthy lives, especially through the eyes of God.