



What is Vocation?

As Christians we often find ourselves in a unique situation when searching for a career. We want to balance the tension between finding a career we love, and knowing God's desire for our lives. Sometimes it can feel like those two things are competing in our hearts and minds. Vocation comes from the Latin word for "a call", the idea being that Someone is calling us to a particular path. At Tyndale we believe that your vocation is that balance between a career suited to you and where God is *calling* you.

Knowing your vocation in life is not always easy, but we at Tyndale's Career Services want to walk with you on that journey of discovery. Below is some general advice and guidance for attempting to find your calling or vocation. Keep in mind though, that these are just basic guide posts, and not guarantees of a step-by-step process to discover your vocation. For a deeper dive into exploring your vocation, we encourage you to make an appointment with the Career Services office.

Discovering your Vocation

The Bible won't tell you what career path is right for you, but it will give you advice on choosing the right career path. God has given us tools and wisdom to be able to discern His call on our lives. For some this means being a high-powered lawyer, and for others it means overseas missions work; for others still it means being a stay-at-home-parent. Every call is unique and special to the *called*.

There are certain truths about the nature of God, such as that God is love (1 Jn. 4:8), and He is slow to anger (Ps. 145:8). Likewise, there are certain truths about the vocation of God's people. In essence we all have one vocation seen in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:16-20), "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." We all have this specific calling placed on our lives. Another calling we all have is to obey Jesus' commands to love God and love others. When we ponder our vocation we must first ask ourselves how a specific career or job might fit into these universal callings.

There are different ways to consider a vocation and how God might use you in that workplace. First is Mission, then Gifts and Passion, and finally, Provision.

Mission

We are called to the Mission of God in some way or another. As outlined above, the Great Commission affects us all. The first thing you should consider is, how important is it that your career be your mission field? It doesn't have to be that way. For some, philanthropy, volunteer hours, and missions work can

take place outside of the business arena; for others, it is necessary that mission and career be intertwined. Wherever we are called we will work towards the goals of God's Kingdom, but sometimes that is done more indirectly. For example, if you were called to be an accountant, you could do all your business accounting work, be a good example to your colleagues, and then after hours provide free advice for those without the means to access an accountant. Furthermore, you may serve on your church's finance committee or volunteer to lead a youth program. Mission doesn't have to be limited to your 9 – 5 career. Some people will use their career to fund their true passion and mission, so there is no straightforward answer.

Vocation can also be a life calling to direct church ministry, and such callings should not be taken lightly. If you feel God is calling you into pastoral ministry, counselling, overseas missions, or any other area where you can affect the course of people's lives, you should take it seriously. Seek wise counsel, pray, and consider the ramifications of pursuing a career leading God's people.

Gifts and Passions

In determining your vocation, the next thing you should consider is your gifting. A variety of spiritual gifts are outlined in Scripture (1 Cor. 12:8-10, 28, 1 Pet. 4:10-11, Rom. 12:6-8, Eph. 4:11) and your theological background may determine what you believe about them. But there is no denying that God imparts on all believers the gifts, skills, and passions to do his work.

When thinking about your vocation there is often an intersection between what we are gifted and passionate about and where God is calling us. Knowing your gifts and passions can help point you in the right direction, or help you to feel peace about a calling placed on your life. There are many tools out there to help determine your spiritual gifts, and if you want to explore them further we recommend making an appointment with the Career Services office, or even better if you have a local pastor who knows you well, speak with them about this.

Provision

This may seem more trivial, but it can be very important to some people. You need to ask yourself, and ask your budget, how much income you need to be comfortable. For some it is important simply to cover basic needs, and for others a spirit of generosity fuels them to do well to be able to provide for others. We must remember money is not evil only the love of money is. Money can be, and is, a very good tool for building up the Kingdom of God.

This factor is also important for those considering going into overseas mission's work, or jobs that necessitate raising an income via fundraising. Your comfort level with asking others for money, and living off the generosity of others, is important to know.

Conclusion

In conclusion, discovering your vocation can seem a tricky task, but at Tyndale University College & Seminary we hope that through your studies, community, and experiences that God will make your path clear. The Career Services office is here to help you navigate your vocation and life-calling.