

Biblical Principles of Career Planning for Youth

by Rodney Marshall

Each teen is a unique creation of God. Psalm 139: 13-14. *"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well."* God has intelligently designed each Christian teen for a purpose. Each teen should stand in awe of the creator and in excitement to submit himself to God for the purpose of forwarding His plan in the earth.

God blesses each person with work-related talents. Romans 12: 6-8. *"Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us..."* Although this scripture specifically relates to ministries in the church it effectively teaches the idea each person is gifted differently to accomplish a work for God.

We are to be excellent in our work and an example to others. Excellence comes from development of our God-given talents. Psalm 16:3. *"But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight."* Daniel had an excellent spirit. In fact his excellence resulted in exceptional educational opportunities and a career of political leadership. The Christian teen should prepare for his providential placement in God's world through development in excellence. Oh that they would hear this call to excellence that in the next century Christianity would regain the upper hand in western civilization through application of God's gifts to every arena and department of life and work.

Our larger calling includes impact for Jesus Christ in the broader society through our work. Matthew 5:16 *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."* This impact can take many forms. An eighteen-year-old in Durban, South Africa who told me he planned to develop his life as a farmer. Please understand many people in Africa do not have enough to eat! Thank God this young man has heard the call to meet this basic need for his countrymen. His light will shine before men. What need will your teen meet?

Biblical Roots of Career Satisfaction. Work is part of God's nature.

Genesis 1 "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." "And by the seventh day God completed His work which He had done; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done." Much of modern culture seeks to work little and play much in defiance of God. As image bearers we should seek to imitate God in our work.

Work was part of God's original design for mankind.

Genesis 2:8, 15 *"And the Lord God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed. Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it."* Even after the fall, work is described as a gift from God. Work is leftover from paradise to bring meaning to our lives and improvement to our world. When my eleven-year-old son, Andrew, mows the lawn with

no skips and neatly aligned parallel cut lines he says with great satisfaction as God did, "it is good."

God has created each of us with gifts, abilities, and interests. His will is for us to discover our talents and gifts and use them to His glory in our work.

Ephesians 2:10 *"For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works which he hath before ordained that we should walk in them."* There is no perfect job or career that can substitute for a dynamic relationship with Jesus Christ. "And he answered and said," You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind." Don't expect work to meet all your needs. You are designed to fulfill God's will not for God to make you feel great about every aspect of your life.

God uses work-related issues to spotlight sin in our lives that need the Master's touch and our repentance.

Romans 8:28 *"And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."* "Stop talking on the job, Steven, and get to work," said the supervisor. Steven grows in God by submission in the employer-employee relationship.

We represent Jesus Christ in our place of employment.

2 Corinthians 5:20 *"Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God."* Work is a mission field. "Rachel, we come in for ice cream so we can see you and enjoy a lift during a tough day." This seventeen-year-old's ambassadorship glorifies God and lightens the heavy load of God's creatures.

We shall be held accountable for what we have done with the talents entrusted to us.

2 Corinthians 5:10 *"For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."* We have been gifted to fulfill His purpose. Jonah sought to avoid the gift and calling of God in his life. God made sure he fulfilled his purpose non-the less. Thousand of people were saved from God's wrath through his oratory. How much more should we seek to express our talents in the line of our duty to God.

These scriptures provide a simple study to back up your godly pursuit of the careerpath designed by God for you to fulfill. Do not bifurcate life into the sacred (church) and the secular (work). See life as a whole to be lived fully for God. God has designed you with a purpose. You will be happiest and most satisfied when working for him in your designated role whether it is easy or difficult, comfortable or uncomfortable. We need young people who will dedicate themselves to fulfilling a call from God to produce godly impact in the church and on the broader society. Find His will, prepare to fulfill it and do all to the glory of God.

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