

***Glorifying God in Our Vocation***

Luke 3:10-14

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**Introduction:** Reformation Sunday is an opportunity for us to give thanks to God for the recovery of the gospel and its application in the Christian life. Though observed on the last Sunday in October in commemoration of Martin Luther's posting of the 95 Theses, we can appreciate it more by peeling back the historical layers that led up to this moment in time. Before Luther challenged the sale of indulgences he had surrendered himself to God as an Augustinian monk, believing that the truly spiritual life was lived through religious orders. After coming to a biblical understanding of the gospel (grace alone, faith alone, Christ alone), Luther then considered how Christians ought to live their lives in light of the gospel. His teaching on vocation erased the distinction between sacred and secular callings and empowered otherwise "ordinary" Christians to serve God and others with dignity and love.

**01. We glorify God in our vocation when we use our creative abilities and physical efforts to improve the lives of others in the present and the future.**

**02. We glorify God in our vocation when we serve others in kindness and love, and when we bear our work-related burdens in a Christ-like manner.**

**03. We glorify God in our vocation when we live within our means, give to others in need, and rest in the assurance that He is in control.**

**04. We glorify God in our vocation when we refuse to wrap our identity in our career and continue to trust Him when our career comes to an end.**

1. Although Luther erased the distinction between sacred and secular, he did not diminish the need for people to serve in various offices of the church. Think of all the areas where people serve in the church and discuss how our lives would be affected without their help. What areas of the church are you praying for others to fill? What areas of the church might you be able to serve? See 1 Corinthians 12 for further insight.

2. Since God gave Adam work to do in the Garden of Eden, we know that work is good. However, after the fall humans began using their talents in sinful ways (see Genesis 11:1-9). What kinds of work are inherently sinful and therefore off limits for Christians? How can our gifts and talents turn otherwise good work into a sinful endeavor? How can we redeem "lesser" jobs with our Christian attitude?

3. Do you tend to think of pastors or missionaries as being more spiritual than "ordinary" Christians? What biblical evidence do you have for this position? Are you ever tempted to compartmentalize your faith while at work? How have you been blessed by Christians in the workplace?

4. Discuss the following statement attributed to Martin Luther: "God doesn't need our good works. Our neighbor does." In what way does the gospel actually free us to do good works? Are you liberated in the knowledge that we serve God and others in love, rather than from fear or attempting to pacify?

5. If you are a young person considering a career or someone who is currently serving in a dream job, speak to a Christian who is retired. Ask what life was like during the early period of their transition and seek their wise counsel on how to avoid tying your identity to your career.

**For Further Reading:** Timothy Keller, *Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work* (Penguin Book, 2012).