

Your job is important to God

Exodus 35:30–36:1

A well-known leader of a parachurch organization was asked why he decided to leave his secular job and enter ministry. He explained that after graduating from college he had been involved in designing and building bridges. But one day he realized every bridge he built was going to pass away one day. He wanted to be involved in something that mattered for eternity, so he quit his job and entered seminary to study for the ministry.

Many Christians see their secular jobs like that. It's a necessity they tolerate until they can attend the next church activity and deal with matters of eternal significance. Some even feel guilty about working in non-ministry positions and believe if they were really dedicated, they would quit their jobs and get involved in some kind of full-time mission work with the church.

In *Your Work Matters to God* (NavPress, 1987), Doug Sherman and William Hendricks write, "Every day, millions go to work without seeing the slightest connection between what they do all day and what they think God wants done in the world.

"We think your work matters deeply to God . . . It is not something we do apart from God, as the secular world would view it. It is not something beneath God's dignity and concern as

some Christians view it. Work is a major part of human life that God takes very seriously. It has intrinsic value. Through work we serve people, meet our own needs, meet our family's needs, earn money to give to others, and through work we love God."

Exodus 35:30–36:1 teaches that God equips people with different gifts and ordains people in various occupations. All kinds of craftsmen were needed for the building of the tabernacle. God chose Bezalel and "filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts—to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, to cut and set stones, to work in wood and to engage in all kinds of artistic craftsmanship." God also gave to Bezalel and Oholiab "the ability to teach others" (Exodus 35:31–34).

These construction workers were equipped and called by God and were just as important as those who were called to the priesthood. They were challenged to do their work "just as the Lord has commanded." They were partners with God in accomplishing his will.

It's true God calls some into paid ministries like teaching, preaching, evangelism, and mission work. But God also equips people to design and build bridges so the evangelist doesn't fall into the river and drown on his way

to church. The engineer who has been called of God to design bridges is just as important in God's plan as the minister who preaches sermons.

I love how one Christian woman responded when asked what she did for a living. She said, "I am a missionary for Jesus Christ, cleverly disguised as a checkout clerk at Kroger's." Once you grasp that concept, it can revolutionize your attitude toward your work. You are not working just to earn a paycheck or to please your employer, but to serve God and give testimony to your fellowman.

A few years ago I saw a sign over a business that read, "H & S Farm Equipment Company—to God be the glory!" How inspiring! Someone in that company understood that you go to work for the same reason you go to church—to worship and serve Jesus Christ. So, "whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Colossians 3:17) ■

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Day by Day With the Bible

Use this guide to read through the Bible in 12 months. Follow Bob Russell's comments on the highlighted text in every issue of THE LOOKOUT.

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- o Matthew 14:22–36
 - o Acts 20:13–38
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 - o **Exodus 30, 31**

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- o Matthew 16:13–28
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- o Matthew 16:1–12
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 - o **Exodus 35–37**

- Day 6**
- o Matthew 17:1–13
 - o Acts 23:12–35
 - o Psalm 38
 - o **Leviticus 1–4**

What Do You Think?

1. What skills and abilities has God given you?
2. How will you use those gifts to God's glory?