

the
GOSPEL-CENTERED
life at work

LEADER'S GUIDE | SERGE

ROBERT W. ALEXANDER

“Alexander rightly redefines our understanding of work as a meaningful vocation in partnership with God, which God uses to advance his kingdom and to make us more like himself. Churches nurtured on this engaging and insightful study and its gospel-centered principles will become agents of God’s love and redemption in places and in ways they never thought possible.”

Dr. Catherine L. McDowell, Assistant Professor of Old Testament,
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Charlotte

“This is an incredibly important guide. I know of no other book that so fully incorporates the meaning of the gospel and of our work and what it means for my life as a Christ follower in the marketplace. It is equal parts illuminating, practical, inspiring, and encouraging. In the truest sense of the word rich, I am a richer man for having read it. I will recommend it to all that I come across.”

Henry R. Kaestner, Managing Principal, Sovereign’s Capital;
co-founder and chairman, Bandwidth.com

“Following in the footsteps of *The Gospel-Centered Life*, Rob Alexander has written a wonderful small group study on work, which is highly applicable regardless of whether our work happens in the office, on the road, at school, or in our home. Using clear examples, accessible language, and important biblical lessons, Alexander forcefully illustrates the ways that God can use our work to shape us as Christians while also using us to shape our workplace.”

Dr. Christian B. Miller, Director of the Character Project; professor of
philosophy, Wake Forest University

“*The Gospel-Centered Life at Work* is a fresh take on the challenge to integrate our faith and work. Rob Alexander’s dual experience of (1) life in the workplace trenches and (2) life in the pastoral ministries of the church give him a rare capacity to prepare this study. His passion for the Word of God and for the world of work are infectious. What the marketplace needs is not just condemnation and criticism but the kind of life-giving gospel served up in this volume.”

David W. Gill, PhD, Mockler-Phillips Professor of Workplace Theology
& Business Ethics; director, Mockler Center for Faith & Ethics in the
Workplace, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary; author of *It’s About
Excellence* and *Doing Right*

“One of the church’s great lapses in judgment has been the neglect or disregard of work’s importance to spiritual formation. Rob Alexander’s experience in business and church leadership gives him a unique ability to address this hole in discipleship and help men and women discover the transforming power of the gospel in their lives and daily work.”

Bill Peel, Executive Director, Center for Faith & Work at LeTourneau
University; co-author of *Workplace Grace*

“Rob has done an excellent job of releasing the power of the gospel in our everyday work life. Whether you are a lifelong Christian or new to the faith, this book is a must read. As a business owner, this study guide has reshaped me as an employer, service provider, husband, and father to try to become Christ’s ambassador in all that I do.”

Dave Marley, PharmD, CEO, Marley Drug, Inc.

“Too many Christians see their daily work as something separate from their faith, except for their opportunity to share faith. Rob Alexander, in his thoughtful and challenging book *The Gospel-Centered Life at Work*, helps us see that our work is important to God. Even in the tough times at work, God is at work in and through us. This is an important contribution to the life of any Christian.”

Al Erisman, Executive in Residence, School of Business and Economics, Seattle Pacific University; co-chair, Theology of Work Project (www.theologyofwork.org)

“God’s purpose involves us being at work in this world—a vocation, a calling. Rob Alexander says ‘work is one of the primary ways we respond to God in gratitude for all He has done in Christ.’ He includes exercises and excellent discussion questions to help Christians in the working world.”

Will Metzger, Campus Minister, University of Delaware; author of *Tell the Truth*

“Martin Luther King, Jr. said, ‘All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence.’ Yet, we often don’t think imaginatively enough about how our everyday work serves others. In this helpful guidebook, Rob invites leaders—whether in the home or in the marketplace—to explore a biblical understanding of work that changes both us and the communities of which we are a part.”

John Terrill, Director, Center for Integrity in Business, Seattle Pacific University

“Here is a timely and thoughtful study of work as a sacred calling. Rob Alexander has put together a deeply provocative and unfailingly practical guide for the Christian community to think anew about the meaning of discipleship in the workplace. There is so much to ponder in these pages!”

Dr. Van Weigel, Professor of Ethics and Economic Development, Eastern University, St. Davids, PA

“Many of the Christians I encounter every day are struggling to find real meaning in their work. Without a gospel lens, work either becomes a necessary evil or an all-consuming idol. Rob provides the gospel lens so desperately needed today. If you want to see your life and work as Jesus sees it, pick up this book and read. You will find it a paradigm-shifting experience that will nourish your soul!”

Rev. Jeff Gissing, Director of Discipleship at the First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem, PA; teaching elder in the Presbyterian Church

THE GOSPEL- CENTERED LIFE AT WORK

Robert W. Alexander

LEADER'S GUIDE



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INTRODUCTION

LEADER'S NOTE: Read this introduction as a group or ask group members to read it before or after your first meeting. Whenever you read it, be sure to impress on everyone that they have a "calling" or vocation.

We all long to find meaning in our work, to know that our work is valuable to others—and most of all to God. Yet we have all experienced circumstances at work that are hard, painful, and frustrating. Our difficulties show us how much we need God's help for our work to fulfill the good plans he has for this area of our lives.

This study is about the spiritual dynamics of work and life and how God uses our work in the lifelong process of making us more like Christ. This study is a tool to help you build a bridge from your personal faith to your work. It will help you see how Jesus's work for you applies to the work you do every day. (This study builds on themes developed by Bob Thune and Will Walker in *The Gospel-Centered Life* and is meant to follow that study. If you haven't completed that study, you might consider doing so before beginning *The Gospel-Centered Life at Work*.)

God oversees every aspect of our lives, yet at the same time he gives us great freedom in the ways we can respond to our circumstances. The message of the gospel gives us a growing awareness that we are far more sinful than we once thought but at the same time more dearly loved and accepted in Christ than we could ever imagine. Putting our entire trust in Jesus's work for us gives us the courage to be faithful sons and daughters who rely on God's Spirit for the everyday struggles we encounter as we work. Because of Christ's work that cleanses us from sin and unites us to God, his Spirit lives within us to bring us to repentance that restores and

reorients us. In other words the Spirit works to make us more like Jesus (to sanctify us) as we work. This process includes two spiritual realities that happen simultaneously.

The Divine Dynamic: God is changing us to make us more like Jesus through our work, and he uses the people around us (coworkers, customers, neighbors, bosses, peers, subordinates, children, etc.) and the challenges of the work itself to do it. The good, the bad, the beautiful (even the ugly) are intended by our heavenly Father for our good and his glory as he restores all things. *The gospel is transforming us through the joys and challenges of daily life.*

The Human Dynamic: At the same time, God is using *us*, his people, as agents of change to sanctify and transform the world. We are the reflection of God's image, his workmanship, and his messengers of reconciliation in our homes, workplaces, and schools. God calls us to love and impact those around us through the work we do, wherever we do it. *God is transforming the neighborhoods of the world with the gospel through us.*

The Bible promises us that the gospel is constantly bearing fruit and growing (Colossians 1:6) in every sphere of our lives—in our home, work, leisure, and relationships. This is true for us as individuals and as communities of believers. Everything we do is being brought into the light of God's glory as God's power indwells and changes us (1 Corinthians 10:31). God invites us to live every part of our lives as worship and to rely on his strength rather than our own (Philippians 4:13).

Allowing our new identity as children of God to transform our work and daily life is a primary way believers participate in God's work in this world. Life's joys and challenges push us as believers toward God, where we ask him to reveal his purposes for us and to guide and empower us as we respond to the circumstances we face. As we ask, God reminds us that we are his beloved children. He encourages us to live by faith as unique reflections of Christ before a watching world. No matter how tarnished our reflection might be, the promises of the gospel encourage us to celebrate who we are in Christ and free us to trust the Spirit's work as he further refines and polishes that reflection.

The way we reflect God's character in our work will take many forms over the course of our lives. We don't need to sit in an office, have a boss, or even receive a paycheck to be at "work." Work from a biblical point of view is whatever activity a believer pursues in the sight of God, for the glory of God, to the benefit of others. As children, we begin our involvement with work by observing others. We become learners. Soon we become students and apprentices entering the world of work. From there we grow in responsibility to take care of our own households, seek a job, or pursue a career. Perhaps we'll move from paid work to volunteering or a second unpaid career. No matter how old we are or what we do, as believers we are meant to see our daily activities as a "calling" or *vocation* given from God to honor and obey him.

To honor God in our work is rarely simple or formulaic. We face many complicated questions about the best way to reflect his presence in our lives. At times we may sense that God is clearly directing every detail of our day and that we are empowered by his Holy Spirit. At other times, our sin and the sin of others seem to complicate every interaction and decision. That's when we are reminded of our need for the power and reality of Jesus to guide our work and our lives.

- *The gospel is for us* when we see people sin against one another, but we don't know how to respond as children who bear God's image and are called to imitate his ways.
- *The gospel is for us* when work is hard and meaningless, because the Spirit gives meaning to our circumstances, enabling us to love and serve selflessly.
- *The gospel is for us* when we don't know how to relate to a coworker, boss, client, or subordinate, because God's Holy Spirit is powerful enough to change us and give us insight into other's needs.

We need to remember that Jesus offers us forgiveness from sin as well as the Spirit's power to understand how the promises of the gospel apply to our particular circumstances.

In this study we'll examine the ways the early church described living by faith, honoring God, and demonstrating our calling as God's people

in the work he has given to us. The Bible describes believers as *Image-Bearers and Imitators, Bond-Servants and Stewards, Ambassadors and Messengers*. All of these roles have relevance to the work we do. We'll consider these concepts in their first century context to get a fuller sense of how the Bible can encourage us and help us apply our faith to the work we do every day.

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

Each lesson is designed to take around 1-1 ½ hour(s) to complete. If your group has more time available, you can simply spend a little longer in the Discussion and Exercise sections. Each lesson will include the following elements:

<p>Bible Conversation</p>	<p>Exercise</p>
<p>We want to start by talking about the Bible together. As the name suggests, this section is designed to stimulate your thinking and prepare you and your group for the ideas that will be presented in each lesson.</p>	<p>Each of the exercises in this study is designed to help you make practical applications of the concepts being taught, or help you understand the content at a deeper heart level. Be sure to allow enough time for your group to adequately work through and discuss the exercises as directed.</p>
<p>Article</p>	<p>Wrap-Up</p>
<p>The written articles are the primary source of the teaching content for each lesson. They are short, clear teachings of the concepts being presented in the lesson. Each week, your group will take a few minutes to read the article out loud together.</p>	<p>The wrap-up gives the leader the chance to answer any last minute questions, reinforce ideas, and most importantly spend a few minutes praying as a group.</p>
<p>Discussion</p> <p>This section is where we communally process the concepts being taught in the article. Often the discussion will work in conjunction with the next section (exercise) to help flesh out the teaching and apply it to our lives in concrete ways.</p>	

THE GOSPEL- CENTERED LIFE: GOD REALIGNS US TO WORK

BIG IDEA

For many of us, work is just a set of things we must do—jobs and activities that can be stressful, unfulfilling, and demanding, and that seem to have little to do with God. For others, work is what defines and gives personal value or significance. But God has something better in mind for his children than either of these options. A gospel-centered understanding of work—which puts Christ and what he has done for us at the center of all we do—transforms work from a set of things we do for survival or validation to become our *vocation*, a calling from Jesus to love, serve, and follow him. This makes work one of the primary ways we respond to God in gratitude for all he has done for us in Christ. It's also a primary way we participate with God's people to bring healing, hope, and gospel witness to a broken world.

LESSON OVERVIEW

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| I. Bible Conversation | Read and talk about the passage(s) [10–20 min] |
| II. Article | <i>A Deeper Understanding of Vocation</i> [10 min] |
| III. Discussion | Process <i>A Deeper Understanding of Vocation</i> together [15–20 min] |
| IV. Exercise | <i>Extraordinary Purposes in Ordinary Work</i> [15–25 min] |
| V. Wrap-Up | Final thoughts and prayer [5–10 min] |

BIBLE CONVERSATION *10-20 minutes*

We are focusing on three big questions in this lesson.

1. What is our functional set of beliefs (not the spiritual “right” answer, but what we really think) as we approach work and daily life?
2. What were work and life designed by God to look like?
3. How does the gospel speak into the gap between these two realities (1 and 2)?

The questions and Bible passages we explore will highlight the differences between our actual beliefs and what God intends.

They also point to our need for the Holy Spirit to

- continually refocus us on God as we go about our work,
- fill us with faith to trust and depend on him, and
- grow us in our love for God and others as we go about our daily callings.

SET-UP It can be hard to see our life as a seamless, interwoven fabric that integrates our personal faith with the work God has called us to do. Given society’s distrust of faith in the marketplace and our own brokenness, we are tempted to keep faith and work separate. We may want to live for Christ in everything we do, but our faith often winds up being confined to the private sphere of life. Our work doesn’t reflect the fact that it is something God has prepared for us to do. Instead it simply comes to reflect our own goals, desires, and methods for getting what we want. We don’t even know how to ask how faith in Christ connects with what we’re doing.

When this happens, work takes on a role in our lives it was never intended to have. For some, work comes to feel like a burden, something we simply “have to do” in order to survive. For others, it becomes the center of our lives, a false but powerful source of identity. But neither option reflects a gospel-centered understanding of work, which acknowledges that our

work was distorted by the fall but has been made new in Christ as a way to live out our calling from God.

If our perspective on work is mostly about just surviving, we will look to leisure as a deliverance from the daily grind (“I’m working for the weekend. I just can’t wait until I’m retired.”) If we see work as the center and focus of life that gives meaning, purpose, and gratification, we’ll be too busy to do anything else. (“I’ll spend time with my family and church when I finish this project. What I do *is* who I am.”) This first lesson digs deeper into assumptions like these that minimize our calling from Jesus and their impact on our work lives. We will also consider what it means to be called into partnership with God in our daily life.

ASK What excites you or brings you joy about what you do at work/school/home?

ASK What things drive you crazy about life at work/school/home? Why do you do what you do at work/school/home?

ASK Would you take on your current role (worker/student/caregiver) if you didn’t have to? If you didn’t need a paycheck to make ends meet, what would you do?

Next, let’s look at some Bible passages that deal with the good and bad in our work.

READ The first passages we want to look at are Genesis 1:26—2:2, Genesis 2:15, and Genesis 3:17–24.

ASK What do these passages say about God’s relationship to us? What do these passages say about how we respond to God?

LEADER’S NOTE: We’re primarily looking for answers about the kinds of work God is engaged in here. God’s work reflects his character. He creates by making something out of nothing. He sustains all he has made. He comes to redeem what has been broken. We also see that we’ve been created to bear his image and called to

reflect his character. He models both work and rest for us as created beings who enjoy relationship with him, imitate him, and learn from him. Life before our fall into sin was simple, good, and relational. God created a garden for our provision and enjoyment, to give us legitimate, dignifying work in partnership with him while we met our physical needs. God also provided us with boundaries (rest and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil) for our work.

The passage that deals with the fall tells us that even after we sin, God provides for us. We see that we tend to ignore God's boundaries and warnings and often avoid repentance without God's prodding. Finally, we see that even in the midst of toil, sweat, and pain in our work today, we have God's imprint on us in our underlying desire for relationship with our Creator and for purpose and meaning in our work.

READ The final passage we want to look at in this lesson is Romans 8:11–22.

ASK What does this passage say about God's relationship to us? What does this passage say about how we respond to God?

LEADER'S NOTE: When we trust in Christ to forgive our sins and bring us into God's family, all things become new, starting with the spiritual life he gives us and the presence and power of the Holy Spirit within us. We respond to God by giving him our whole lives in love and service. God adopts us and we respond by calling him "Abba Father." God makes us heirs; we respond by sharing in the sufferings of Jesus. God is glorifying us alongside Jesus. We look forward to our ultimate glorification because it represents our freedom and a return to the way life was meant to be. In fact, the whole creation eagerly awaits the renewal and restoration God will someday complete.

TRANSITION TO ARTICLE: These passages give us a biblical understanding of God's calling to follow him in all spheres of life, including the work he gives us. God's design is for men and women to know themselves as

partners in his continuing work in the world. Through our work and by his power, even now God is redeeming, sustaining, and re-creating all things. To get a fuller understanding of this reality, let's read an article together and then go through some discussion questions.

ARTICLE *10 minutes*

TURN TO ARTICLE: *A Deeper Understanding of Vocation*

Read aloud, taking turns at the breaks between paragraphs.

LEADER'S NOTE: We're not looking for terribly profound answers to the following questions. Instead we want the group to draw one or two meaningful ideas from this lesson. Hopefully this will move group members from cynicism about the fallenness and drudgery of work to recognition that work is a gift from God with the potential to be used for good.

DISCUSSION *15-20 minutes*

Let's think about some of the main ideas from the article.

ASK What ideas from the article resonated with you?

ASK How does a gospel perspective drive this new way of viewing work?

ASK How does a gospel perspective correct and challenge some of the misguided ways we might have come to understand our work?

Let's make these ideas a little more personal.

ASK How might making Jesus the functional center of your life change the way you view your work?

EXERCISE *15-25 minutes*

We've begun exploring our need to exchange misguided views of work for ones better aligned with God's Word, Jesus's work on our behalf, and his purposes for us. *Extraordinary Purposes in Ordinary Work* helps us see simple ways we participate in God's work that may be obscured by our cultural assumptions. In this exercise, you'll see how your everyday work parallels God's work of creation, provision, and redemption in the world.

TURN TO the *Extraordinary Purposes in Ordinary Work* exercise. If there is time, read through the exercise and have the group brainstorm some ideas to get started.

You can also assign these exercises for homework if you're running out of time.

WRAP-UP *5-10 minutes*

Take questions, comments, and lead group in prayer.

A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF VOCATION

A friend who just lost his job sits across from you with tears in his eyes. “I know I have a purpose,” he says. “I need to know that what I do matters, that I’m doing what God wants me to do.”

A young mom shares with her friends at playgroup, “I just wasn’t prepared for the drudgery of caring for a baby. I love her so much, but how do you cope with doing the same thing day after day on little or no sleep?”

“My work is so stressful,” a hardworking executive confesses. “Even when I’m home I’m connected to work electronically. I know my family wishes I wasn’t always ‘checking in,’ but they don’t understand what’s expected of me. I don’t even have the time to think about God and what he wants. It seems like just one more thing to do.”

“I’m trying to get my schoolwork done, but everyone around me is partying,” a college student says. “I don’t know if I’ll get a job when I graduate anyway, so usually I go for the fun. I’m a Christian, but I don’t know how that connects to life right now. Maybe I’ll work on that later.”

“Homeschooling my children was so much work, but I loved it,” a mom said. “But now my oldest son doesn’t want to go to church or do anything. What was it all for?”

How about you? Most likely you also have questions about the meaning, significance, and motivation for what you do. We all want the work we

do to make a difference, yet we feel the gap between the realities of daily work and our lives as Christians.

We wonder:

- Am I doing the right thing?
- What should I do with the rest of my life?
- My work is unpaid; does that mean it's not important?
- Why is work so stressful?
- What if I lose my job? Who will provide for my family?
- Why do I get so afraid when I make a mistake at work?
- Is it possible to go to work and not get involved in gossip and politics?
- Am I a good parent?
- Is what I'm doing making a difference?

These questions are not just about work. They are spiritual questions about faith, meaning, significance, identity, and the struggle with sin. The struggle to bring work and faith together is as old as the fall of humanity. Ever since Adam and Eve sinned, they experienced God's good gifts of work, childbirth, and relationships as broken and hard. We know this isn't the way it's meant to be, but we wonder how (and if) our lives can be made whole again.

In Genesis 1 and 2, we see God at work, creating, separating, filling, examining, and declaring all things good. God's intent was for human life to bind together work, family, personal spirituality, and worship into a seamless tapestry. The need to apply faith to work wasn't necessary before the fall since Adam and Eve enjoyed a perfect relationship with God, each other, and creation. One day in the future, the effects of the fall will come to an end. We will see the end result of Christ's first and second comings. All of life will be made new. Heaven will come to earth and sin, sorrow, suffering, and brokenness will be banished. Life in its fullest sense will be restored through Christ's completed work.

Right now we live “in between.” Life is still broken, but something new has happened. God has come to earth to be with his people. Jesus, God-with-us, purchased healing and wholeness for us by his death on the cross. When we come to him in faith and repentance, our sins are forgiven. We are given the gift of eternal life and a whole new life right now. The power that raised Christ from the dead is now working to remake us and everything we do (Ephesians 1). This is the essence of the gospel message.

Because of these realities, even the simplest tasks we perform by faith become acts of worship reflecting God's character and ways. This is the new *vocation* or calling of those who live by faith. Faith changes everything we do. The sixteenth-century Christian reformer Martin Luther put it this way:

When a father goes ahead and washes diapers or performs some other menial task for his child in Christian faith, God, with all his angels and creatures, is smiling, not because that father is washing diapers, but because he is doing so in Christian faith.¹ (Author Paraphrase)

Do you see how living by faith can transform our idea of vocation? By faith we depend on Jesus to walk with us. We rely on his Spirit to guide us so that our relationship with Christ brings life to the wearisome, broken aspects of life. We can participate in God's work wherever he has called us. Whatever our role—student, dishwasher, waitress, stay-at-home mom, working mom, office staff, church staff, small business owner, doctor, plumber, artist, contractor—we do all things with Christ, because of him, and with the Spirit's help (Philippians 4:13).

Christ transforms our work from something we do to fulfill our own goals into something much more significant. All our work becomes kingdom work, done in the service of the King for his good purposes. This gives meaning and significance to the simplest of tasks. Christ called us to live for him; he prepared good works for us to do, and as we respond

1. Martin Luther, adapted from “The Estate of Marriage,” (1522) in *Luther's Works Volume 45: Christian in Society II*. Walther I Brandt, ed. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1962), p. 41.

in faith, we realize that all we do is in his hands (Ephesians 2:8–10). This is what vocation means for those who know Jesus. It's not something relegated to a narrow sector of life. *Everything* is transformed.

The idea of partnering with God through your vocation may not be the way you naturally think about life. For some, life feels like a burden when we don't see that God is sustaining the world and advancing his kingdom through us, his children. For others, work becomes something we hope will provide things we think God can't or won't give us—what the Bible calls our idols. Work then becomes a way to pursue those idols and ultimately pursue meaning and fulfillment apart from Christ. We don't really believe that Christ alone can truly satisfy us. When that happens, work soon becomes a trap where we are either proud of what we have achieved or discouraged by our failures.

Our tendencies will always be to minimize God's presence in our work, making everything a grind for survival, *or* to elevate our own efforts and accomplishments apart from God. In light of this we must see that the believer's work is a partnership with Jesus, who already achieved success on our behalf and offers mercy and grace in every struggle (Hebrews 4:14–16). We need to hold onto gospel truths to live out our vocation in this broken world. These truths include:

- *Daily forgiveness:* We need the forgiveness Jesus purchased for us on the cross for the ways we live for our work instead of God's purposes (1 John 1:9–10).
- *Daily help from the Spirit:* We need the Spirit to change us so that we live for God as partners in his kingdom (Luke 11:13).
- *Daily faith perspective:* We need God to help us see life from his perspective instead of our own (Ephesians 2:8).
- *Resurrection power:* We have to ask for the power that raised Christ from the dead to give us strength and help (Ephesians 1:15–23).
- *God's power and control:* When work goes badly wrong, when we or others fail, we need to remember that God has the final word. All things work for the good of those who love him and are called according to his purposes (Romans 8:28).

Meaningful work is not all there is to life, but a meaningful life is not possible without the knowledge that God is at work, using our everyday efforts for his extraordinary purposes. As we make the gospel the true center of our work, God will use us in his kingdom and use our work struggles to make us more like him.

1

EXERCISE

EXTRAORDINARY PURPOSES IN ORDINARY WORK

This exercise is designed to help you think about your work in a new way—as a partnership with God. God does three amazing things in this world: he makes something out of nothing (creation); he stays in charge of everything he has made (providence); and he restores what’s broken (redemption).

As you partner with God in your work, you are also creating, providing, and redeeming. It’s easy to miss this, so this exercise will give you a chance to think about how different aspects of your abilities and work reflect your partnership with God. Before you begin, take a moment to think about how your work fits into these three categories of God’s work:

- Creative work (work such as designing, development, and artistic endeavors)
- Providing work (production and distribution of services or goods for others’ benefit)
- Redemptive work (fixing brokenness, relieving toil, and removing pain)

Note: It’s okay if you don’t fill in every answer or if you just fill in one of the three aspects. To get you started we’ve given examples from different jobs and suggested how they might connect to the three aspects. The list isn’t exhaustive, but it can help you think of ways that your work is connected to God’s work.

EXAMPLES OF CREATIVE ASPECTS

“I enjoy creating products, methods, services or ideas.” (e.g., engineer, chemist, teacher, author, student)

“I construct new spaces or organizations.” (e.g., contractor, electrician, homeowner, plumber, entrepreneur)

“I like to find ways to connect people who wouldn't normally hang out.” (e.g., home group leader, person who loves hospitality)

“I help give birth to people, ideas, or beauty.” (e.g., parent, artist, musician, pastor, writer, poet)

“I look for creative ways to talk about Jesus with those around me.” (e.g., anyone)

“I envision roles for other people that they themselves don't see yet.” (e.g., educator, manager, trainer)

EXAMPLES OF PROVIDING ASPECTS

“I assist people in finding shelter that meets the needs of their household.” (e.g., social worker, realtor)

“I help in the harvesting and/or restoring of natural resources.” (e.g., farmer, biochemist, engineer)

“I assist in providing the efficient use of a utility.” (e.g., utility worker for water, electric, gas, etc.)

“I help people govern themselves in a way that promotes flourishing.” (e.g., politician, activist)

“I educate people and provide a place for community and learning.” (e.g., educator, parent)

“I help others find space (time or place) to pursue rest and leisure.” (e.g., artist, musician, park ranger)

EXAMPLES OF REDEMPTIVE ASPECTS

“I help physically, spiritually, or psychologically broken people.” (e.g., counselor, social worker, pastor, HR specialist)

“I help to reconcile broken relationships.” (e.g., friend, guidance counselor, labor specialist)

“I clean, fix, repair things or people affected by the fall.” (e.g., HVAC repair, mechanic, handyman, tailor)

“I troubleshoot to avoid potential problems.” (e.g., engineer, network administrator, programmer)

“I fight or prevent criminal activity and promote ethical behavior.” (e.g., judge, lawyer, watchman)

“I assist and give hope to people in personal or natural disasters.” (e.g., fireman, policeman, military)

In the spaces below, take a few minutes to jot down how your work reflects aspects of God’s work.



CREATIVE ASPECTS

1.

2.

3.

PROVIDING ASPECTS

1.

2.

3.

REDEMPTIVE ASPECTS

1.

2.

3.

LEADER'S NOTES: If you do this as a group exercise rather than take it home, encourage people to share their insights after everyone has had time to think about their answers.
