

A VISION FOR YOUR FUTURE

By Robert J. Tamasy

A noted research organization reports as many as 80 percent of all workers do not sense fulfillment in their jobs. They feel overlooked, under-utilized, or realize their work responsibilities and their interests share little common ground. This sounds like a lot of unhappy, discontented people.

This is very problematic because our professions or vocations fill many hours of our week. In addition, right or wrong, our work has a major effect on how we perceive ourselves – our sense of self-worth. If you do not like the job that consumes a large portion of your life, inevitably this will greatly shape your attitude and overall outlook.

Perhaps you are among these dissatisfied people but have become resigned to your “fate”: “I have bills to pay!” you might be thinking, or “Work is just a necessary evil, right?” That is what many people think, but perhaps the problem is a matter of limited vision. In the Bible’s Old Testament, Proverbs 29:18 says, “*Where there is no vision, the people perish.*” There are many applications for this truth, including the reality that if people lack vision for what their future could be, they often remain mired in a dismal present.

One solution might be to find a new job. But many times that is more easily said than done. Poor attitudes often shift from one job to the next, as well. You could try to make your job more enjoyable by redefining it, changing your responsibilities so they align more closely to your interests. That may be possible. A third and perhaps better alternative might be to embrace a new vision for carrying out the job you have.

The story is often told about three bricklayers working side by side. When asked what they were doing, the first replied, “Setting bricks.” The second answered a bit more ambitiously, “Building a wall.” But the third showed true vision when he responded, “I am building a cathedral for the worship of God.”

Talking about work, we often use the term “vocation,” which is derived from a Latin word and literally means “calling.” What if we started each day with the mindset – the vision – that we were pursuing our *calling*, whether it was a permanent or temporary assignment? As someone has observed, if you cannot do a proper job of serving God where you are, you definitely cannot serve Him where you are not.

Here are a few suggestions from the Bible on how you can capture a new, fresh vision for your future:

Understand who your “boss” really is. We have a very natural tendency to assume we are working for the head of our organization, or the one that signs our paycheck. The Bible offers a different perspective. “*And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus...work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.... It is the Lord Christ you are serving*” (Colossians 3:17-24).

Never fail to do your best. If someone you greatly admired and respected asked you to perform a very important duty, would you give it your best effort? The Bible says God has done that for us. *"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do"* (Ephesians 2:10).

Imagine the impact you can have. Like the bricklayer cited above, even small, seemingly mundane tasks can take on great significance if we understand we are playing a key role in a grand, potentially life-changing enterprise. *"For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building"* (1 Corinthians 3:9).

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Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. Are you among the vast majority of people who feel unfulfilled in their jobs, or are you part of the minority that consider their jobs meaningful, rewarding and challenging? Explain your answer.
2. What does "vision" mean to you? How can a person's vision on the job influence his or her attitude and performance on a daily basis?
3. How would it change the way you approach your work if you remained continually aware that ultimately you are working for God?
4. The last Bible passage cited states we are "God's fellow workers." What do you think that means? Can you be a "fellow worker" with God even though nothing in the work you do has a spiritual focus? Why or why not?

If you would like to look at or discuss other portions of the Bible that relate to this topic, consider the following brief sampling of passages: Proverbs 14:23, 16:2-3, 21:2, 22:29; 2 Timothy 2:2, 3:16-17; James 2:18