Session 5

Called *for*

Service and Work

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#### Prayer

*Christ has no body now but yours.*

*No hands, no feet on earth but yours.*

*Yours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world.*

*Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good.*

*Yours are the hands through which he blesses all the world.*

*Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes.*

*You are his body.*

*Christ has no body now on earth but yours.*

*Amen*

*-St. Teresa of Avila*

#### Work: A Calling from God?

Work can be difficult and a blessing. For some of us work expresses our calling; for others it is simply a way of sustenance—a way to provide food, shelter and well-being for ourselves and our families.

Select an image that reflects how you see your work (in employment or in retirement) as a calling from God. Once you have selected your image, reflect on the following:

* How does your image capture your experience of work?
* What emotions/feelings surface in you as you look at this image?
* What does this image tell you about your experience of work as a calling from God?

You are welcome to share a reflection(s) with your small group.

**God’s Callings at Work**

**Sherice’s Story**

Some people feel their work is their calling, others do not. Sherice doesn’t feel her work is her calling. But she still feels called by God in her workplace. Listen to her song of giving her life away.

**Your Story**

Reflect in silence for a few minutes on these questions:

* How does this story connect with your own experience? What do you find helpful or insightful or inspiring?
* What does Sherice’s story illustrate about the connections between work and calling?

You are welcome to share a reflection(s) with your small group.

#### Called for Service

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Vocation is self-giving service for the sake of God’s world. Vocation is deeply personal because it is other-focused. God’s call is to you for love of neighbor and service for others. Jesus teaches, “’You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’” (Matthew 22:37-39). The truth about who you are and what you are for is the service you are called to give for others, for God’s world. Jesus gave his life for you, and discipleship entails giving it back. Vocation, then is self-giving service in community for the sake of God’s world. (p.61)

In calling you for a life of service the common good, God can call you *to* work and *in* your work. The work that you do is inherently good when it aligns with God’s purposes, when your work is a service given for the common good. You may experience a deep resonance between who you are and what you are able to do. Your competence and excellence in your work is a sign of God’s work in you.

Your gifts and abilities, then, call you to do certain work, but it is also what you do in and on the job that constitutes your vocation. Any kind of work can be a Christian vocation—there is no higher or better job than another—you are called to love God and serve your neighbor.

Work has always been a means of sustenance, a way to provide good, shelter, and well-being for ourselves and our families, but work is not an end in itself. It is a means to a greater good, a good that is in service the larger community.

From: *The Stories We Live: Finding God's calling All Around Us*. Kathleen Cahalan. Eerdmans, 2017.

Reflect in silence for a few minutes on these questions:

* In what ways are you called to serve?
* For whom is your service to be given?
* Can your employed work (retirement) be a form of service?

You are welcome to share a reflection(s) with your small group.

#### Source of Joy

Joy is not feeling good about what you are doing; rather it is an interior conviction that what one is doing is good even if it does not make one happy or content. What you are doing at work or in retirement can be a source of joy for you if it 1) calls forth your gifts; 2) fully engage your abilities and talents; and 3) genuinely serves others

Reflect in silence for a few minutes on these questions:

Does what you are doing bring you joy?

* Do you get a kick out of it?
* Are you any good at it?
* Does anyone want you to do it?

How does what you are doing bring you joy?

You are welcome to share in prayer (in a word or phrase) a joy from what you are doing?

#### Prayer

*Gracious God,*

*You are the Source of our joy.*

*[share your joy]*

*Bless the work we do,*

*the words we say,*

*the love we share,*

*and the grace we show,*

*on our daily walk*

*through this beautiful*

*and precious world.*

*Faith and Worship*: [http://www.faithandworship.com/prayers\_start\_of\_a\_week.htm#ixzz5QbTJikn1](http://www.faithandworship.com/prayers_start_of_a_week.htm%23ixzz5QbTJikn1).

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