



VOCATION AND THE CHRISTIAN

What I Want to Be When I Grow Up

September 17, 2022

1 PREPARING

A. THE SOURCE

Ephesians 2:10 (NIV) • “For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

Jeremiah 1:5 (NCV) • “Before I made you in your mother’s womb, I chose you. Before you were born, I set you apart for a special work.”

Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV) • “‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’”

Romans 12:1 (GNT) • “Because of God’s great mercy . . . offer yourselves as a living sacrifice to God, dedicated to his service.”

1 Corinthians 6:20 (CEV) • “God paid a great price for you. So use your body to honor God.”

Matthew 20:28 (TLB) • “Your attitude must be like my own, for I, the Messiah, did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give my life.”

Mark 8:35 (TLB) • “If you insist on saving your life, you will lose it. Only those who throw away their lives for my sake and for the sake of the Good News will ever know what it means to really live.”

1 Corinthians 10:31 (NIV) • “Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”

John 17:4 (The Message) • “I glorified you on earth by completing down to the last detail what you assigned me to do.”

Ephesians 5:17 (TLB) • “Don’t act thoughtlessly, but try to find out and do whatever the Lord wants you to.”

B. WHAT’S TO BE SAID ABOUT “VOCATION AND THE CHRISTIAN”

Deciding on a vocation in life can be very difficult. Many students have a hard time figuring out what career they should choose, and many times they feel as if they need to make this decision by the time they get into college. Choosing a career is a very important decision, but it isn’t something earliteens need to worry about too much. Most college students don’t know exactly what they’ll end up doing in life either, and most adults end up changing careers several times throughout their lives. In fact, there could be many different careers that could be right for one person. Although our careers may change, we need to remember that God has a unique plan for each of us and that He is willing to equip us for a useful life of unselfish service for His glory. In the inspired words of Ellen White: “Success in any line demands a definite aim. He who would achieve true success in life must keep steadily in view the aim

worthy of his endeavor. Such an aim is set before the youth of today. The heaven-appointed purpose of giving the gospel to the world in this generation is the noblest that can appeal to any human being. It opens a field of effort to everyone whose heart Christ has touched" (*Education*, p. 262). God shaped each one of us at birth and gave us a purpose He wants us to fill on this earth.

C. WHERE WE'RE GOING WITH "VOCATION AND THE CHRISTIAN"

As a result of this lesson we would like the students to be able to:

1. Understand that their purpose in life is to glorify God and reach as many people as they can for Christ.
2. Discover their spiritual gifts and the plan God has for their lives.
3. Take what they've learned and apply it to how they can serve God now and in their future careers.

D. MATERIALS NEEDED

Beginning • (Activity A) Bibles, small slips of paper with names of occupations, container, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk; (Activity B) same as A, plus timer, pens or pencils, paper.

Connecting • Bibles, student lessons, pens or pencils, paper.

Applying • Paper, pens or pencils.

2 BRIDGING

A. THE WEEK IN REVIEW

Allow 10 minutes as students are arriving to:

1. Share anything that was meaningful to them in this lesson.
2. Engage in a discussion about the topic of the lesson in connection to the belief highlighted this week.

3. Say the Bible memory text either individually or in a group.

B. OTHER SABBATH SCHOOL COMPONENTS

- >> Song service
- >> Mission emphasis (find a link for Adventist *Mission* for youth and adults at www.realtimefaith.net)
- >> Service project reports

3 BEGINNING

NOTE TO TEACHER: Put together your own program with options from the categories below—Beginning, Connecting, Applying, and Closing. Please keep in mind, however, that the students need to have an opportunity to be interactive (participate actively *and* with one another) and to study from the Word.

A. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • Write a number of occupations on small slips of paper (medical doctor, nurse, accountant, pastor, counselor, musician, businessperson, mechanic, teacher, flight attendant, social worker, florist, etc.).

Get set • If you have a large group, form teams and have one member of each team take a slip of paper from a container. The teams or students (if you have a small class) will have one minute to draw the occupation that is on their slip of paper. The other students can try to guess which occupation it is.

Go • When an occupation is guessed, another member of the team (or another student) takes the slip back, puts it back in the container, and draws another occupation for the class to guess. Let each member of the teams (or student) act out a career, or bring the activity to a close when everyone has had a turn or all the careers have been explored.

Debriefing • Ask: When you were little, what did you think you wanted to be when you grew up? Wait for students to share and compare their childhood ideals. **Who influenced your idea? Is the career you chose when you were younger the same as what you would choose now?**

Have the students find and read **Ephesians 2:10** and **Jeremiah 29:11** aloud. Conclude by summarizing in your own words the ideas from What's to Be Said About "Vocation and the Christian" from the Preparing section.

B. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • Write a number of occupations on small slips of paper (doctor, lawyer, veterinarian, pastor, computer analyst, marine biologist, teacher, etc.). Fold the slips in half. Bring a timer.

Get set • Have students form small groups of three or four. Supply a piece of paper for each group and a pen or pencil for each person. Let each group also choose an occupation slip that they are not to open and look at until you give the signal. Let them know that they will have one minute to write on one side of their paper all the ways they think that occupation would benefit a person who had it. Call time in a minute.

Go • Now, have the students turn their paper over and tell them that as soon as you say "begin," they are to write all the ways they can think of that their occupation would serve God and help further His kingdom. Call time when a minute is up. Have groups share with the rest what their occupation was and what they listed on each side of their paper.

Debriefing • Ask: What makes the difference between a job that serves God and a job that serves you? Are there some jobs that make it harder to serve God than others do?

Say: Most jobs can be used for the glory of God—it mostly depends on your focus. God cares about your career, but He cares more

about your character. God's main purpose for your life is that you become like Him, because that's what will really matter in the end.

C. BEGINNING ILLUSTRATION

In your own words, tell the following story:

A group of young children got together and decided to play school. They each ran and got their pet and brought them to their "school." They wanted each of their pets to learn what they planned to teach. There was a rabbit, a bird, a dog, and a cat.

The rabbit was good at hopping, the bird was good at flying, the dog at running, and the cat at climbing.

The children wrote out their lesson plans and began teaching their "class" how to do the other activities. They had the rabbit hop and they hopped behind the rabbit, showing the other animals how it was done. Then they had the bird fly, and they ran around flapping their arms showing the others how they should do it. Next, the children and the dog ran around trying to teach the rabbit how to run. The cat was able to run and didn't have a problem. Then they had the cat climbing up a post and then a tree. But the rabbit and the dog just couldn't figure out how to climb.

Although each animal could do what it could and may do something another animal could do, they couldn't all do everything the other animals could do. So the children gave the rabbit an A for hopping, and an F for flying, running, and climbing. The bird got an A for flying, a C for bird hopping, an F for running and a D for climbing trees (the bird was able to go up the tree, although it looked more like walking rather than climbing up the tree). The dog got an A for running, and an F in everything else. The cat got an A for climbing and running, but failed flying and hopping.

The children finally stopped playing school with their pets and decided that trying to teach them things they couldn't do wasn't much fun.

Debriefing • Ask: Have you ever felt like the animals in that school? Have you ever been

in a situation in which you were supposed to do things that you were not equipped to do?

Say: The body of Christ, the church, was designed by God to include everyone, but God never intended for everyone to do everything. You don't have to be like your pastor, or like your youth minister, or like anyone else. God gave you specific abilities—called spiritual gifts—which are to be used in the church and in the world by you and you alone. No one else is gifted quite the way you are, and there are many jobs that only someone like you can do (see 1 Corinthians 12). The call to follow Christ is the call to discover our unique giftedness and then to use our God-given gifts and abilities to bring glory and honor to Him.—Adapted Wayne Rice, *More*

Hot Illustrations for Youth Talks (*Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995*), p. 34.

4 CONNECTING

A. CONNECTING TO THE KINGDOM

Read the following quotation from the chapter entitled “The Lifework” in the book *Education*, by Ellen G. White:

“Many are diverted from the line in which they might reach the truest success. Seeking greater honor or a more pleasing task, they attempt something for which they are not fitted. Many a man whose talents are adapted for some other calling, is ambitious to enter a profession; and he who might have been successful as a farmer, an artisan, or a nurse, fills inadequately the position of a minister, a lawyer, or a physician. There are others, again, who might have filled a responsible calling, but who, for want of energy, application, or perseverance, content themselves with an easier place.

“We need to follow more closely God’s plan of life. To do our best in the work that lies nearest, to commit our ways to God, and to watch for the indications of His providence—these are rules that ensure safe guidance in the choice of an occupation” (*Education*, p. 267).

Ask: How can you avoid being “trapped” in the wrong profession? Who are caring individuals who would be willing to mentor you and offer you guidance and wise counsel in the choice of a profession? Encourage various responses.

Ask/Say: Isn't it good to know that your heavenly Father wants you to be yourself and use the gifts and talents He has given you for His glory? In fact, when you have given your life to Him, He is working in you to make you the best that you can be—someone who uniquely reflects His image. God wouldn't change a thing about the way He made you—not your personality, your appearance, your laugh! So whatever you do, do it to honor Him. As it is written: “And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men” (Colossians 3:23, NKJV).

B. CONNECTING TO THE LESSON ILLUSTRATION

Ask someone beforehand to read or tell the story from Sabbath’s section of the lesson.

Ask: What does this story have to do with our topic today? Do you think God has a specific career planned for each of us, or do you think that there could be several possible jobs that could be in His will for us? Would God ever call someone to do something that they are not naturally gifted at? Explain. (He might call someone to something they are not naturally gifted at, but He would gift them as they needed it, as long as they were relying totally on Him and not taking the glory for themselves. And sometimes He lets specific weaknesses stay with us so that we will rely on Him and not our own abilities. Paul wanted to do more in his ministry, but God left him weak with “the thorn in his side,” so that God could be glorified in his weakness.)

C. CONNECTING TO LIFE

Divide your students into groups. Give each

group a piece of paper, a pen or pencil, and one of the following Bible characters: Joseph in **Genesis 39**; David in **1 Samuel 17**; Daniel in **Daniel 6**; the woman at the well in **John 4**; Mary and Martha in **John 11:12**; **Luke 10:38-42**. Ask the groups to review their stories and see if they can find the spiritual gifts of the Bible characters in the stories.

Have the groups report their findings to the class when they have finished.

Debriefing • Ask: If they lived today, what jobs do you think these Bible characters might do that would glorify God? Explain your opinion.

5 APPLYING

A. APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Refer the students to the Friday Applying section of the student lesson.

Say: Now that we have looked at the spiritual gifts of some Bible characters, let's take a look at your spiritual gifts. As earliteens you are just beginning to recognize your spiritual gifts. Who would like to share with the class what you have written to complete the activity included in the Friday section of your lesson?

Share the following ideas in your own words:

This week your challenge was to begin trying to serve in some way you have never tried before. By serving in a variety of ways, you can discover your weaknesses as well as your strengths, and you can learn what types of ministries fit your spiritual gifts best. Here are some ideas of ministries to try:

- >> Help run the PA system at church
- >> Help out in children's Sabbath school
- >> Call or send notes to people who haven't come to church in a while
- >> Help with potluck
- >> Give a Bible study
- >> Visit elderly people in your church

- >> Sing or play a musical instrument in church

B. APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Have students write down some of the gifts and abilities God has given them. Give them a few minutes to think and reflect.

Ask: Are you willing to surrender all the things you wrote down to God so He can use you and your gifts in whatever way He desires?

C. APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. What are behaviors that make any job into a witness or a ministry?
2. What jobs do you think don't glorify God at all?
3. What do you think is your purpose for being here on this earth?
4. What are some important questions one should ask oneself before choosing a career?
5. What are some ways that you can use the gifts and abilities God has given you to glorify and honor Him?
6. Is it hard or easy to use your gifts for God?

6 CLOSING

SUMMARY

In your own words, conclude with the following ideas:

God has given each of you many gifts and abilities. Everything good that you have comes from God, and He wants you to take those gifts and use them to honor Him. One day, when you stand face to face with God, you will want to hear the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!" **[Matthew 25:21, NIV]** If you use your talents to serve God, you can be confident that your Father is pleased with you, and that He'll

bless you and reward you beyond your wildest dreams.

When it comes to knowing your career in life, God wants you to trust and depend on Him. God promises in His Word, “For I know the plans I have for you, . . . plans to prosper you and

not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” (**Jeremiah 29:11, NIV**). God has great plans for you, and if you just keep following and obeying Him, He’ll bless you and lead you to the place you’re meant to be.



STUDENT LESSON

VOCATION AND THE CHRISTIAN What I Want to Be When I Grow Up

September 17, 2022

Sabbath

FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 17, Spiritual Gifts and Ministries:** “God bestows upon all members of His church in every age spiritual gifts that each member is to employ in loving ministry for the common good of the church and of humanity. Given by the agency of the Holy Spirit, who apportions to each member as He wills, the gifts provide all abilities and ministries needed by the church to fulfill its divinely ordained functions.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 36, 37

WHAT I WANT TO BE WHEN I GROW UP

Hope and Nikki have been best friends since they were little. Growing up, they always used to dream about what their life would be like when they became adults. Hope had a dream of becoming a doctor. She loved learning about the human body, and she loved to study about health, diseases, and nutrition. When Hope was young, she loved to look for information on her computer to learn how she could “do surgery” on patients and perform all types of operations

in a virtual space. When she was a teenager, she volunteered at the hospital as a candy striper. Eventually Hope decided that she wanted to become a nurse. Now Hope is almost done with nursing school, and she’s at the top of her class. She loves what she’s doing, and she desires to honor God and serve others by being a caring nurse.

Nikki, on the other hand, wasn’t quite sure what she wanted to be when she grew up. Sometimes she thought it would be fun to be a veterinarian, since she loved animals so much. But then she decided that it would be too hard to see animals in pain. Other times she thought it would be fun to be an animal trainer. She also thought about taking pictures and writing for *National Geographic*, becoming a teacher, or being a marine biologist. As Nikki grew up and changed, her ideas of what she wanted to do in life changed as well. In college she thought about being a school counselor, a youth pastor and psychologist, a writer and editor, and a marriage and family counselor.

Nikki sometimes wonders to herself, *Why does God make it so clear to some people what they should do in life, but not to others? Why can’t I be like Hope, and just know what I’m supposed to do? Why does it have to be so hard?*

Hope and Nikki are still close friends, and they try to talk and encourage each other as much as they can. Hope has just a few more months before she graduates, and Nikki has a couple more years in college, during which she’ll be praying, and seeking God’s counsel to find

out what He is preparing her to do for Him.

Sunday

RESPONDING

- » Read Jeremiah 1:5.
- » What about you? You are too young to have to be concerned about this yet, but do you think you are like Hope, who has always had an idea of what she wanted to do for a career? Or are you more like Nikki, who isn't quite sure of what she wants to do? Why do you think it is clear to some people what they should do in life, but not as clear to others?

Monday

BIBLE ANSWERS ON SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND MINISTRIES

- » Read Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11; Ephesians 4:8.
- » God has given each person a job to do, and He will give each person the ability they need to do what He asks them to do. He promised to send the Holy Spirit to guide and help us, but we need to be willing to follow and do as we are asked.
- » How can you learn and begin to prepare for what God has planned for you to do to serve Him and help others?

Unscramble the words in the word-bank and fill in the missing words to complete the verse below.

sretsinim
deifirolg
tfig
sdrawets
deviecer
reverof

selcaro
ytiliba
seilppus

"As each one has _____ a _____, minister it to one another, as good _____ of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the _____ of God. If anyone _____, let him do it as with the _____ which God _____, that in all things God may be _____ through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion _____ and ever" (1 Peter 4:10, 11, NKJV).

Tuesday

REFLECTING

- » Read 1 Corinthians 6:20.
- » The world defines success by how much money you make, how big your house is, how nice your car is, and what type of job you have. God, however, doesn't care much about these things. When God looks down on this planet, what He notices is not shiny cars, big houses, and hundred-dollar bills. No, what catches God's eye on this planet are His children. He values us so much, and works day and night for our salvation.
- » God has called us, as Christians, to join in the most important work of all. We are commissioned to go and make disciples for Him. In the end, all of our material things will be gone and forgotten forever. The things that mattered so much to us—nice clothes, expensive cars, the perfect image—won't matter at all. What will matter are people—our family and friends, the people we love, our neighbors, and the people we work with. Don't you want to see all the people you care about in heaven? Our number-one career in life is to introduce people to Jesus. By bringing people to Christ, we will find true joy, significance, and purpose in our lives, and we will bring a smile to our Father's face.

Wednesday

BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Match the following texts from the New International Version (available at www.BibleGateway.com) with the phrases that correspond to them.

1. Ephesians 2:10
2. Jeremiah 1:5
3. Romans 12:6
4. Romans 12:1
5. 1 Corinthians 6:20
6. Mark 8:35
7. 1 Corinthians 10:31

- _____ "For we are God's handiwork."
- _____ "Do it all for the glory of God."
- _____ "You were bought at a price."
- _____ "Therefore I urge you . . ."
- _____ "We have different gifts."
- _____ "For whoever wants to save their life . . ."
- _____ "Before you were born I set you apart."

Thursday

CONNECTING

- » Read Romans 12:1.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Stop and think for a minute about all the amazing things God has done for you. He created you and molded you into a beautiful and unique person. He gave you life so you could feel the warmth of the sun, breathe in the fresh air, laugh until you cry, roll down grassy hills, and most of all, experience His love. He died on the cross for you and forgave all of your sin so you could stand unashamed in your Father's presence. He has adopted you as His child and made you an heir to His throne. He has promised you eternal life. And He has given you a great purpose on this earth that only you can fill.

- » God has given you more than you could have ever dared to ask for or even dream of. God wants the best for you, and He knows that you'll be the most fulfilled and the happiest if you let Him be Lord of your life. So why not join David in affirming God's role in your life. "You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence and the pleasures of living with you forever" (**Psalm 16:11, NLT**).

Friday

APPLYING

- » Read 1 Corinthians 10:31.
- » God wants you to discover the plan He has for you so you can serve in the place that fits you best. Take some time to discover your spiritual gifts.
- » Read **1 Corinthians 12:27-31** and take a few moments to reflect on the spiritual gifts that God has given you. Ask yourself about the talents, skills, and gifts that you naturally possess or activities that you enjoy participating in (i.e., singing, playing a musical instrument, fixing things, talking to people, writing, serving others, helping people get well, public speaking, working in the outdoors, etc.). Below, list how God has blessed you and how you can use your spiritual gifts to become a blessing to others for Jesus.
