

# Vocation: It's Bigger than Your Job

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One of the hardest questions for many people to sort out is how *work*, *interests* (such as volunteer work or relief efforts), simple *kindness*, *walking with God* and *ministry* all fit together. Here is one way to picture it:



**Called to God:** First and foremost, God calls us to Himself. As Os Guinness writes, “everything we are, everything we do, everything we have” is God’s. All of life is based on God’s authoritative call on our lives. He wants all of us, all the time.

**Called to Contribute (Vocation):** Inside this call to God, God asks us to join Him in His work of restoring and rebuilding our world. We are called to contribute – through love and service to others – in every aspect of life. *This contribution includes work* (“contribution” is the bigger umbrella that work fits into) but also other areas: being a good neighbor, volunteering and other types of formal and informal contributions.

**Called to Work:** Everybody “works” – it is part of our identity and part of God’s larger call to contribute – and for many people (at least many people here in the US), this contribution takes place in the workplace. The Bible teaches that it is not just *how* we relate to people at work that makes a difference. *The work itself* also provides a way for us to do good (for example, the farmer who grows food, the doctor who helps people get healthy or the engineer who helps design safer vehicles). Work is not the only way we contribute, but it can be a significant place for us to do our part to change the world and make it a better place.

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**DISCUSS:** How is this sense of calling different from the way you have thought about calling before? What are the advantages of seeing some aspects of calling “inside” of others? How might this way of understanding calling make your work more difficult?

Another way to think about these layers of calling is “Who, What and Where.” The big box focuses on the *Who* of calling. The middle box is about *what* God calls us to do, and the smallest box tells us *where* that work takes place. For a baseball player, you could call this *the team you play for*, your *role* on the team and *the stadium* you happen to be playing in on a particular night. The most important thing is that you are a ball player, signed to great team. *Where* you exercise those skills is the least important part of the equation. Do you agree or disagree with this analogy?