

## **Capturing the Fullness of God's Vision for Work**

Why is work so frustrating at times? Why do some people love their work and others hate it? In this workshop, we will seek to recapture a biblical approach to work that addresses our universal search for calling, purpose, identity, and legacy.

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### **Story 1**

#### **Adam and Eve : *Purpose***

“Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.... The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.” Genesis 1:26 & 2:15

***Calling, service, worship (Melâ'kâh and Avodah), and stewardship***

### **Story 2**

#### **Daniel : *Distinctiveness***

“Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank. Therefore, he asked the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself.” Daniel 1:8

***The decisions God makes and what we have to decide***

***The marginal cost rule and the big decisions that take decades to make***

**Story 3**  
**Esther : Power**

“For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”” Esther 4:14

*You have more power than you think and called to use it more radically than you can imagine*

**Story 4**  
**Joseph : Faithfulness**

“The LORD was with Joseph, and he became a successful man, and he was in the house of his Egyptian master. His master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD caused all that he did to succeed in his hands.” Genesis 39:2+3

*The secret of success*

*God is always with us*

**Story 5**  
**Philemon : Hope**

“Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask.”  
Philemon vs 21

*The call to be different; the ability to be ‘better’*

**Story 6**  
***The ships of Tarshish: fulfillment***

“For the coastlands shall hope for me,  
the ships of Tarshish first,  
to bring your children from afar,  
their silver and gold with them,  
for the name of the LORD your God,  
and for the Holy One of Israel,  
because he has made you beautiful.” Isaiah 60:9

***The echo of our work in eternity***

**Story 7**  
**‘The story I am in’**

Service, Sabbath, Community, Discipleship, Confidence

**Further reading**

***Core general works***

Every Good Endeavour by Tim Keller

The Gospel at Work by Traeger and Gilbert

Garden City: Work, Rest, and the Art of Being Human by John Mark Comer

Also the introduction to Ageing Matters by R Paul Stevens – in fact any book by R Paul Stevens is a good way into the theology of work

***Worth reading for those wanting to dig deeper***

The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work by Darrell Cosden

Playing God by Andy Crouch

The Fabric of Faithfulness by Steven Garber

Visions of Vocation: Common Grace for the Common Good by [Steven Garber](#)

To Change the World by James Davison Hunter

Against the flow - the inspiration of Daniel in an age of relativism by John C. Lennox

Kingdom Calling by Amy Sherman

The Other Six Days: Vocation, Work, and Ministry in Biblical Perspective by R Paul Stevens

Work in the Spirit - Miroslav Volf

Creation Regained by Albert M Wolters

The Mission of God’s People by Chris Wright

**Also worth noting:**

The Theology of Work Project ([www.theologyofwork.org](http://www.theologyofwork.org)) and

Lausanne Movement have a dedicated strand to workplace ministry and set out a strong theology of work in their Cape Town Declaration <https://lausanne.org/networks/issues/workplace-ministry>