

FINDING YOUR BEST JOB

By Robert J. Tamasy

Evaluating almost any situation, things could be even worse – including the work we do. But that does not mean we should settle for less than what we believe is best for us, if we have a choice. Recently I came across a chart that illustrated characteristics of the ideal job for anyone, regardless of their profession. It showed four criteria that, if met, could make any kind of work perfect for someone.

These criteria include: 1) you love the work; 2) you excel at doing the work; 3) the world needs the work; and 4) you get compensated for doing the work. If you can find a position that meets all four of these, you will have a job that not only gives you a profession, but also a mission, a sense of calling, and something you can pursue with great passion.

Recently I had my annual checkup with my cardiothoracic surgeon, who performed open-heart surgery on me more than eight years ago. I thought about how his career fits this description. He clearly enjoys what he does, he is one of the most skilled at the types of surgeries he performs, there is obviously a need for it – and he is paid well for his work.

But you do not have to be a highly compensated professional to fit the criteria. Throughout much of own my career, I have been blessed to have jobs that seemed nearly perfect for me. Years ago I discovered a Bible passage that aptly describes what I do: *“My heart is overflowing with a good theme; I recite my composition concerning the King; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer”* (Psalm 45:1).

Not everyone is called to write, of course. But we all have innate, unique gifts and skills that properly and fully utilized could make work a source of joy, not drudgery. Here is a biblical perspective:

Loving your work. If we believe God designed us with purpose, we can trust He equipped us to perform special work – and to enjoy the opportunity to do it. The challenge is to discover what that work is, and then to pursue it wholeheartedly. *“I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well”* (Psalm 139:14).

Excelling at your work. It may not happen immediately, but if we seek to perform our work with quality, with a commitment to excellence, in time it will be noticed – and rewarded. *“Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will serve before kings; he will not serve before obscure men”* (Proverbs 22:29).

Doing work that is needed. Tedious, repetitive work might not seem fulfilling, but if our work has purpose and meaning, it can become its own reward. Like the stonemason on a construction crew centuries ago. He said he rejoiced because, *“I am not building a wall. I am building a cathedral!”* *“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).

Being paid for your work. There may be times when it might be necessary to volunteer or work only part-time at those things we enjoy most, but if we can succeed in merging our work and passion, we will find ourselves being compensated for what we love to do. *“For Scripture says, ‘Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain’ and ‘The worker deserves his wages’”* (1 Timothy 5:18).

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Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. Based on the description of the ideal job – loving it, excelling at it, doing what is needed, and being paid for it – would you say you are currently in your “best job”? Explain your answer.

2. If you find yourself doing work that does not meet your ultimate desires, what steps do you think you could take for moving toward that ideal job?

3. What difference does it make whether you truly love your work or not, as long as you are being paid enough to meet your needs – and perhaps, your wants?

4. Do you believe, as the Bible states, we all are uniquely made by God and therefore should expect to be equipped to do special work that gives us joy, fulfillment, motivation and adequate compensation? Why or why not?

NOTE: If you have a Bible and would like to read more about this subject, consider the following passages:

Deuteronomy 15:10; Ecclesiastes 9:10; Ephesians 6:5-7; Colossians 3:17,22-24; 1 Thessalonians 4:11, 2 Timothy 3:17