

# Apply two basic truths to finding a career

**O**f the many guidance questions that people have on their minds, three seem to come up the most. One has to do with family decisions, one has to do with work and one has to do with geography. These three are near the top of all important questions we think about.

Only my relationship with God has more far-reaching impact upon my life than my answers to these questions 1) Who will I live my life with and how many of us will make up our family? 2) What job should I train for and try to get? 3) Where will I settle down? So that I can say and feel, "Here it is that I am home."

We who are Christians care intensely about each of these questions, and right now I want to focus some thoughts on the work and training-for-work question. How does a Christian make choices about work, education and career?

"Six Days thou shalt labor..." Think of it, in the Fourth Commandment, work takes up six of the seven days of the Bible's description of my life! I depend on two basic principles to help me make sense of the work that takes up so much of my life and my time. One has to do with *call* and the second has to do with *chronology*.

First the call! If I am a believer in Jesus Christ, I am called to live my life to the glory of God: this means all of my life, wherever I am, and all of my waking hours.

Just being a Christian means that the great commandment and the great commission make up my most basic calling: to love my neighbor and to affirm the good news of Christ to my neighbor. When that first principle is clear to me, I am set free



## From Your Pastor

Earl F. Palmer

to take on just about any honest career and work I want to do.

My discipleship goal is to obey the great commandment and the great commission while I do my work wherever it takes me. Therefore, we should always urge people young and old to find out what they are good at and what they enjoy doing and then cheer them on to "go for it," which makes education and training so important in keeping the doors open to what I want to do with my six days. The goal is to discover my own unique skills and vocational vision, so that I can do most what I do best in what is called my career.

There was a time when some Christians became confused about "call" and saw it as the work just for pastors and missionaries. But we are correcting that mistake as we read the Bible more carefully and now realize that every Christian is a commissioned Christian.

The second principle is the *chronological* nature of work and career. First chronology describes a simple truth we all know and that is that the way toward more responsibility in

any work or career is faithfulness in initial and intermediate responsibilities that come my way. Jesus put it clearly in the parable of the talents, "Well done good and faithful servant; you have been faithful in a few things I will give you more responsibility now." (Luke 19)

This principle means that I must pay my dues by hard work at "learning" in order to have the greatest freedom later on in "doing. Every athlete knows this basic principle that there are no shortcuts. We must work hard to strengthen and sharpen our natural skills. That is the essence of the chronological principle. It takes time to learn any skill that will open the doorway to careers and we must invest the time that it takes.

The second half of the principle describes the dynamic, changing nature of our work as our careers journey through time along with our lives and they change just as our lives change. Some of the most successful and fulfilled people I know have had several different identifiable careers throughout their life journey. This is why it is never too late to re-enter school, to take on new work challenges, to make major mid-career changes.

Some people actually spend too much time waiting for special divine guidance from God about their career choices when we already have all the call we need in the great commandment and the great commission. What we now need to do is get going on the *chronological* side and put pieces of the grand puzzle together at school, at work, at home and at church. Find out what you are good at, then do it to the glory of God.

Some people actually spend too much time waiting for special divine guidance from God about their career choices when we already have all the call we need in the great commandment and the great commission. What we now need to do is get going on the *chronological* side and put pieces of the grand puzzle together at school, at work, at home and at church. Find out what you are good at, then do it to the glory of God.

Some people actually spend too much time waiting for special divine guidance from God about their career choices when we already have all the call we need in the great commandment and the great commission. What we now need to do is get going on the *chronological* side and put pieces of the grand puzzle together at school, at work, at home and at church. Find out what you are good at, then do it to the glory of God.