



About this Study

Lutherans have a special understanding of vocation. A vocation, or calling, is not simply a reference to your professional job or, perhaps a specific role in professional ministry. Instead, the word vocation encompasses all the roles in which God has placed us. God calls us to work as for Him and not for men (Col 3:23-34) in all areas of our lives. This includes the obvious- the jobs we hold as professionals and/or students- but also our roles as siblings, children, friends, community members, and so much more. All these vocations are lived out under our largest vocational umbrella, given to us in our baptisms- that of people called to follow Christ.

The theology of vocation is such a gift to all people, but especially to youth. By understanding their lives as a collection of God-given vocations under the larger umbrella of their call to follow Jesus, youth are invited to consider what living a faith-integrated life might look like. Rather than feeling like they are juggling their vocations as teammates, band members, students, children and more, this study seeks to invite them to consider the intersections of those vocations and how they can follow Jesus in each of their vocations. Understanding these vocations can help students be better prepared for whatever is coming next in their lives.

Session 1- Vocation: Child of God

This session really sets the tone for the whole series, and we'll return to several of these concepts over the course of this study. Any discussion of vocation must be firmly grounded in our baptismal identities as children of God. In this session you'll discuss what it means to follow Jesus- that we are called to faith and equipped to share the Gospel with others through words and actions. Our vocation as children of God is not a vocation that changes. Instead, this vocation serves as the roots that help us to weather the storms that come throughout our lives.

Session 2- Vocation: Family and Friend

This session will explore vocations that are familiar to all people- what it means to be a member of your family and what it means to be a friend. This session will include some discussion of the second table of the commandments as a framework for horizontal relationships as well as Biblical examples of caring for family and friends. We will explore what it means to pray for one another, to carry one another's burdens, and to point others to Jesus, all as we live out our primary vocation of following Jesus. These vocations can and do change over time but understanding that we are called to be faithful in these relationships should shape how we approach those changes.

Session 3- Vocation: Kingdom Worker

This session will explore texts about the Body of Christ. As people called to follow Jesus, we are all kingdom workers. In this session we will explore professional church work careers as well as what it

looks like for a lay person to do kingdom work. In having this discussion, we will further paint a picture of what it means to live out our calling to follow Jesus.

Session 4- Vocation: Community Servant

This session will explore several texts that encourage believers to view their roles in their communities as callings from God. Whether a youth is considering running for class office, joining a service-learning organization, playing on a sports team, or considering their next steps after high school, they will be challenged to consider how they can put forth their best effort to the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31). Each of these vocations are celebrated because they give youth opportunities to use the gifts God has given them to walk as an example to others (1 Tim 4:12) as they live out their calling to follow Jesus. By understand their role as community servants now, youth are challenged to consider how God might continue to work through the roles they fill in the future.

Ways to use this study

This study is intended to be used in a small group format. Every session will have an ice breaker to get youth talking, a main text with discussion questions, supporting texts, an optional activity, and suggestions for prayer. Each session is intended to take 50-60 minutes to complete.

Materials

Study content

Bibles

Whiteboard with marker or large piece of paper w/ marker (session 3)

Optional activities

Session 1- Encouragement Notecard

- Notecards
- Pens
- Envelopes
- Stamps (possible)

Session 2- Family and Friend Prayer Tree

- Cardstock (or paper)
- Assorted Art Supplies (crayons, colored pencils, markers, paint, etc)

Session 3- Vocation Interview

- Church members to interview

Session 4

- Various magazines and newspapers
- Cardstock
- Scissors
- glue

Session 1 - Vocation: Child of God

Leader Notes

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Opening

As you gather your group together, invite them to answer one of the following Ice Breaker questions.

- Growing up, what was your favorite Sunday School song?
- Who first told you about Jesus?

Explain: Each of us are called to different vocations. Vocation comes from the Latin word "vocatio" which means calling. We often think about our vocations as our professional jobs, but the word has much more meaning than that. Every person has numerous vocations- student, sibling, child, friend, and many more- but every Christian has a particular vocation that informs all the others- that of a child of God.

Read

Scriptures are filled with stories of people being called to faith. As a group, read the story of Saul's call to faith in Acts 9:1-19

After reading the text, answer the following questions.

1. What was Saul doing prior to his conversion? (Saul was persecuting Christians, approving of their murders and jailing them)
2. When Saul was travelling to Damascus, what happened to him? (While he was traveling, a bright light flashed around him and Jesus spoke to him. He was struck blind and needed to be led the rest of the way to Damascus)
3. How did Ananias feel about God's instruction to visit Paul? (Ananias was nervous because he knew how Saul had been treating Christians)
4. What happened when Ananias visited Saul? (Ananias healed Saul, causing something like scales to fall from his eyes)
5. What was Saul's first act as a Christ follower? (Saul immediately went and was baptized)

Explain: Saul's conversion story was nothing short of a miracle! How could anyone not come to follow Jesus after being specifically called to faith by him? But the truth is, not everyone has a story about being called to faith like Paul's. Most of us were raised in the church or can point to a moment where we were introduced to the faith by friends, family, or some other influence. However, our faiths share an important detail with Saul's. Each of us have been called to faith.

Connect

God calls us to faith in Him. Luther writes about it this way in the explanation of the 3rd article of the Apostle's creed, "I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith." Our life as Christians begins with this calling out of the world and into relationship with Christ through the miracle of Baptism where we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Choose 2-3 of the following verses and discuss what they tell us about our vocation as called children of God

- John 15:16 (we were chosen and appointed to bear lasting fruit)
- 1 Thessalonians 5:24 (God calls us and is faithful)
- Romans 8:28 (God works for the good of those who love Him)
- 2 Thessalonians 2:14 (as called people we share in the glory of Jesus)
- 1 Peter 2:21 (As people called to faith, Christ suffered for us and gave us an example to follow)
- 2 Timothy 1:9 (we are saved and called to a holy life because of God's grace)
- 1 Peter 1:15-16 (we are called to be holy as Christ is holy)

In Baptism we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Just as the Spirit called us to faith, He continues to sanctify us. Sanctification is the process of being made holy, or more like God. We are led in this process through Scripture, Christian community, and the Spirit's prompting on our hearts and minds.

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12 to discover a picture of what being sanctified in our vocation as a Child of God can look like.

1. What are some things we are instructed to avoid? (sexual immorality, passionate lust, wronging or taking advantage of a brother)
2. What are some things Paul, formerly Saul, tells us we should do? (maintain self control, act in brotherly love, lead a quiet life, mind your own business, work with your hands, maintain independence, keep the respect of your community)

Jesus also offers instructions to us for living out our vocation as children of God. Read Matthew 28:18-20.

1. What instructions does Jesus give? (make disciples, baptize, teaching them to observe what He's commanded)
2. When live out our faith, what might cause us to forget our motivation for these things? What is the right motivation for sharing Jesus with others?
3. What promise does Jesus offer us even when we fail? (salvation, to be with us always)

Apply

As children of God we are called to some big things. Without the work of the Holy Spirit in us, none of this is possible. It is through the Holy Spirit living in us, as a result of Christ's saving work, that we can even imagine what it means to faithfully live out this calling.

- When you consider the instructions we read from Jesus and from Paul, what stands out to you?
- Which part(s) of this call do you find most difficult? Which comes most easily?

Our vocation as children of God is one aspect of our lives that will never change. There will be lots of times when our roles change with our church, our friends, and our work. Regardless of what the future brings, our vocational calling as child of God will not. In fact, Romans 8 tells us that nothing can separate us from the love of God.

- How might the unchanging nature of God's love impact how you see yourself? Your future?
- What are some ways that you can faithfully live out your vocation as a child of God this week?
- How can we pray for each other and encourage one another in living out this vocation?

Pray

Option 1- Extemporaneous Prayer

As a group, pray for one another as you look for ways to faithfully live out your callings as children of God. Thank God for the gift of the Spirit- for the call to faith and the sanctifying work going on inside each of you. Pray that you might be given opportunities to live out the Great Commission this week, making disciples of those you've been given to do life with.

Option 2- Scripted Prayer

Father God, you are an amazing Creator who crafted each person here. Thank you for the way your Spirit has called each of us to faith and continues to shape and mold us into your image. Through your Son Jesus, you saved us and allowed us to be adopted into your family through the waters of Baptism, calling us to be your children. Help us to walk in your ways, to live lives worthy of this calling, and to rest assured of your grace and forgiveness when we fall short. Remind us that we will always be your children. Be with us as we go from this place, leading, guiding, and protecting us. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Optional Extension Activity

Each of us is here because somebody else faithfully lived out their vocation as a child of God. Whether the person who told you about Jesus was a parent, grandparent, friend, or teacher, that person knew the importance of sharing Christ with you. Today we will write notes to them, encouraging them in their vocation and thanking them for responding to the Spirit's prompting to share Christ with you.

Leader note: Encourage students to deliver their notes. Some students may be reluctant because of relational concerns or the person who shared Jesus with them may have passed- should this be the case, guide them to write out a prayer thanking God for the way that person lived out their vocation and pointed them to Jesus in place of a note.

Session 2 Vocation: Family and Friend

Leader Notes

This session will explore vocations that are familiar to all people- what it means to be a member of your family and what it means to be a friend. This session will include some discussion of the second table of the commandments as a framework for horizontal relationships as well as Biblical examples of caring for family and friends. We will explore what it means to pray for one another, to carry one another's burdens, and to point others to Jesus, all as we live out our primary vocation of following Jesus. These vocations can and do change over time but understanding that we are called to be faithful in these relationships should shape how we approach those changes.

Opening

As you gather your group together, invite them to answer one of the following Ice Breaker questions.

- What roles do people in your family play? Who is the cook? Who fixes things? Who do you go to for advice? What is your role in your family?
- Give a 45 second elevator speech (a sales pitch about the length of an elevator ride) about how great one of your friends is.

Explain: Last time we talked about our calling to be children of God. While that calling informs all that we do, it is not our only vocation. Each of us is called to a number of vocations, including those we fulfill as family members and friends. Today we'll explore how we are called to be in relationship with those closest to us.

Read

The Scriptures are filled with pictures of family- some are masterclasses in faithfully living out your vocation as a family member and others are stories of what not to do. Today we'll read a couple selections from the book of Ruth which offer several excellent pictures of fulfilling the vocation of family member.

Read Ruth 1:1-18

- How was Ruth related to Naomi? (she was her daughter-in-law)
- What happened to Ruth, Orpah, and Naomi? (Their husbands all died)
- What instructions did Naomi give to Ruth and Orpah? (she told them to return to their families to allow them the chance to remarry and have lives and families of their own)
- How did Ruth respond? (Ruth refused to leave her)

Explain: This story begins with a great tragedy. The death of all three men in this family meant that there were few options available to these women. They had few opportunities to provide for themselves, so, as was the custom, Naomi released her daughters-in law to return to their families so that they might have the opportunity to start over. Rather than leave her mother-in-law, Ruth commits to a hard life with Naomi, promising to care for her and stay with her.

Once the pair arrives in Bethlehem, Ruth looks for ways to provide for Naomi and herself. She learns that Naomi has a relative, named Boaz, and gets permission to glean behind his harvesters. Boaz does more than just allow Ruth to pick up the leftovers from his field.

Read Ruth 2:4-16.

- What instructions did Boaz give Ruth? (to stay in his field with the women who work for him and to drink from the water jars the men filled)
- Why does Boaz tell Ruth he is offering this kindness? (He has heard what she's done for Naomi)
- What additional instruction did Boaz offer his workers? (to let her gather amongst the sheaves and to leave some stalks for her)

Explain: Boaz goes above and beyond the guidance that the law offers for carrying for orphans and widows. He knows that Ruth is his family and he opts to faithfully live out his vocation as her family, allowing her the opportunity to gather more than enough grain to feed Naomi and herself. In the rest of the story, Boaz continues to live out his call to his family. He seeks out the kinsmen redeemer, a legal term for a person obligated to redeem a relative who was experiencing serious difficulty. When the kinsmen redeemer declines to fulfill his responsibility, Boaz steps up, marrying Ruth and committing to care for her and Naomi.

In addition to being called to our families, we are also called to our friendships. Consider the friendship between David and Saul's son Jonathan. Jealous of David's popularity with the people, Saul sought to kill David. Despite being the logical heir to the throne, Jonathan faithfully lives out his vocation as friend to David by helping him to escape.

Read 1 Samuel 20:18-42.

- What secret code did Jonathan create to communicate with David about his safety? (Jonathan would shoot three arrows and send a boy to find them. If Jonathan told the boy that the arrows were on this side of him, it would be safe for David. If he told the boy that the arrows were beyond him, David was in danger and should flee)
- How did Saul react when Jonathan said he had given David permission to visit his family? (Saul was enraged, yelled at Jonathan about how David's existence would put an end to his kingdom before it even started and threw a spear in his rage)
- When it was time to use the code, what message did Jonathan pass on to David? (Jonathan told David he needed to run)

Explain: Jonathan showed loyalty and care to David. He protected David even though doing the right things would have consequences for him and his family. Jonathan knew that Samuel, at God's direction, had anointed David to be the next king and Jonathan sought to encourage, protect, and serve his friend. Each of us hold the vocations of family member and friend. While these vocations sometimes come with challenges and disagreements, we are called to walk in those vocations faithfully.

Connect

God gives us guidelines for how to fulfill these vocations in the second table of the commandments- Commandments 4-10. Consider the following commandments:

4th Commandment- Honor your father and your mother.

5th Commandment- You shall not murder.

6th Commandment- You shall not commit adultery.

7th Commandment- You shall not steal.

8th Commandment- You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

9th Commandment- You shall not covet your neighbor's house.

10th Commandment- You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

- When you think about your vocation as a family member- whether that is as a child, sibling, cousin, or other relationship, which commandment feels the easiest to follow? Which is the most difficult? Why?
- When you think about you vocation as a friend, which commandment feels the easiest to follow? Which is the most difficult? Why?
- Why do you think it was important that God give the people rules for how to treat each other?

These commandments are a gift to us. They give us the boundaries for how we are to treat those around us. While we all fall short of living these out perfectly, and Jesus offers us mercy for those shortcomings, these commandments give us a picture of what faithfully living our out our relational vocations should look like. In these relationships we should repent of the times we hurt each other and break these commandments and hear forgiveness from God that can help us to repair those relationships.

Apply

As children of God we are called to be in relationships with others. Each of us is called to our families and to the friends around us. Ruth and Boaz give an excellent example of fulfilling the vocation of family members while Jonathan and David paint a beautiful picture of the vocation of friend. In these roles, we should be prepared for them to change over time.

- When you think about Ruth's story, what are 1 or 2 things you learn about being called to a family? What might those things look like in your family?
- When you think about David and Jonathan's friendship, what are 1 or 2 things that you learn about being called to friendships? What might those things look like in your friendships?

In both Ruth and David's stories, we see their vocations change. Ruth's relationship with her mother-in-law undergoes some big changes as she goes from daughter-in-law to provider. The geography of David and Jonathan's relationship changes for the sake of safety. Throughout our lives, our vocations as family members and friends change.

- What are some ways that you can imagine these vocations will change for you in the future?

- What do you expect will stay the same?
- How can you prepare now for those vocation changes?
- What are some steps you could take towards faithfully living out your vocation as a family member this week? What about as a friend?

Pray

Option 1- Extemporaneous Prayer

As a group, pray for one another as you look for ways to faithfully live out your callings as friends and family. Thank God for the gift of the Spirit- for the call to faith and the sanctifying work going on inside each of you and pray that you might be given opportunities to faithfully fulfill your vocations as children of God, members of families, and friends this week.

Option 2- Scripted Prayer

Almighty God, you created us and called each of us to faith in you. You gave us the gifts of families and friends and called us to be in relationships that glorify and point to you. Help us to faithfully walk in that calling by loving those around us as we love ourselves. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Optional Extension Activity

Part of fulfilling our vocation to our friends and families is praying for them. In 1 Timothy 2:1 we are urged to pray for all people, offering “supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings.” To help us remember to pray for our family and friends, we are going to make prayer trees. Using the supplies provided, create a tree with branches for different parts of your family or groups of your friends. Make each of the leaves a different person, writing their names as you go. While you work, pray briefly for each person. When you've finished, take your art home and hang it somewhere that will remind you to live out these vocations through prayer every day.

Leader note: Consider putting on some quiet background music during this activity to help students focus on their trees and prayers. For some groups this will be a long, contemplative experience and for others it will be a quick moment. If you have significant art supplies or a particularly artistic group, this activity could also be done in 3-D mediums like clay.

Session 3 Vocation: Kingdom Worker

Leader Note

This session will explore texts about the Body of Christ. As people called to follow Jesus, we are all kingdom workers. In this session we will explore professional church work careers as well as what it looks like for a lay person to do kingdom work. In having this discussion, we will further paint a picture of what it means to live out our calling to follow Jesus.

Opening

As you gather your group together, invite them to answer one of the following Ice Breaker questions.

1. How many churchwork jobs can you name?
2. What do you think a pastor does all day? What about a Director of Christian Education (DCE)? Deaconess?
3. Would you ever consider churchwork? Why or why not?

Explain: Over the last two sessions we've been talking about our vocations. Vocations are the various roles that we've been called to fill. In session one we talked about what it means to be a child of God. In session two we considered our vocations in our families and to our friends. Today we'll talk about the vocation we all hold as Kingdom Workers. When we talk about the whole Christian Church, we often use the word Kingdom. All of us, not just pastors and other professional church workers, hold the vocation of Kingdom Workers.

We see this clearly laid out for us in 1 Peter 2:9 which says, "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." Today we'll talk about how each of us is called to be Kingdom workers.

Read:

God gifts each of us with talents, interests and abilities that can be used to build up His Kingdom. Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 and Romans 12:6-8 to explore some of the gifts He gives. Leader Note: As you list spiritual gifts in this section, writing each gift on a white board or large piece of paper may help the conversation.

1. In the 1 Corinthians passage, Paul emphasizes that there is variety in the Kingdom-varieties of gifts, service, and activities but that they all come from the same God. What are some of the gifts that Paul lists? (wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophesy, distinguishing between spirits, speaking in tongues, interpreting tongues)
2. What are some of the gifts added in the Romans text? (prophesy, service, teaching, exhortation, contributions, leadership, mercy)
3. What does 1 Corinthians 12:7 say about who receives these spiritual gifts? (to each-we are all given these gifts to use for the common good.)

Spiritual Gifts are not just given to church workers. These gifts are poured out on all believers that we might work in the Spirit for the common good. We are all called to serve the Kingdom with these gifts wherever we go. Consider the shepherds who visited Jesus at his birth. These workers, having seen the heavens lit with angels proclaiming the birth of the long-awaited Messiah and getting to visit him in the flesh do not immediately abandon their posts to dedicate their lives in a monastic fashion.

Luke 2:20 says, “And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.” Those shepherds went back to tending their sheep, doing it in a way that praised God and shared what they had experienced. They did Kingdom work in their fields and pastures, pointing each other to God through their praise and worship.

However, God does also call some to fulltime work in the church. Read Ephesians 4:11-16.

1. What are some of the roles Paul specifically lists? (apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherd, teachers)
2. What is the work these people are called to? (equipping the saints for the work of ministry, building up the body, speaking truth in love)

There are a lot of different churchwork roles including Pastors, Directors of Christian Education, Teachers, Directors of Parish Music, Family Life Ministers, Deaconesses, and many others. Each of these roles seeks to build up the body of Christ by equipping every member of the Kingdom with the knowledge, tools, and encouragement to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:20) in all the places they go throughout their lives. While the exact roles and responsibilities that each kind of church worker has varies from congregation to congregation, that God calls people to each of these roles for His work is clear.

Connect

It can be easy to think that one kind of Kingdom worker is more important than another. Perhaps you think that being a church worker is more important in the Kingdom than an accountant. Or maybe that a doctor is more important than an insurance adjuster. While it can be easy to think this way, read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 to discover what the Bible says about the importance of different jobs.

- What stands out to you in this passage?
- In this passage, Paul celebrates the diversity in the roles and gifts we’ve all been given. What do you think the world would be like if everyone was a pastor? A doctor? A car salesman?
- Reread 1 Corinthians 12:21-26. What does this passage say about the importance of every part of the body? Knowing that when Paul talks about the body he is talking about the Kingdom, what does that say about the various roles we’re called to? (Paul explains that every part has its own purpose and reason; each of the roles we are called to have purpose and all are important.)

No specific job in the kingdom is greater or less than the others. We are all called to different professions, but in those professions, we're called to be Kingdom Workers. To be a Kingdom Worker is to glorify God in all that you do and working to point others to Christ.

Apply

1. How can you live out your vocation as a Kingdom worker at school? On the field? At your job?
2. Do you have any examples of people who live out their vocations as Kingdom Workers in their professional lives? What does that look like?
3. Have you ever considered being a church worker? Why or why not?
4. Think about the people who serve our congregation each week. Some of them may be on staff, but many are not. Do you think that serving in our congregation is part of doing Kingdom work? Why or why not?
5. Think about the ways that God has gifted you. What are some ways that you could use those gifts to do Kingdom work now and in the future?
6. What is one way that you will live out your Kingdom Worker vocation this week?

Pray

Option 1- Extemporaneous Prayer

As a group, pray for one another as you look for ways to faithfully live out your callings as Kingdom workers. Thank God for the gift of the Spirit- for the call to faith and the sanctifying work going on inside each of you and pray that you might be given opportunities to faithfully fulfill your vocations as children of God, members of families, friends, and Kingdom workers this week.

Option 2- Scripted Prayer

Jesus, through your sacrifice for us and your resurrection you created a way for each of us to call your Kingdom our true home. Thank you for calling us to faith in you and giving us the role of Kingdom workers. Help us to glorify you in all the places we go, pointing others to your grace and mercy with our words and actions. Be with us as we walk in the knowledge that you call us to work for you. In Your name we pray, Amen.

Optional Extension Activity- Vocation Interview

Understanding how our vocation as Kingdom workers plays out in our day to day lives can be tough sometimes. In order to help teens process what this might look like, consider inviting a professional church worker as well as a non-ministry professional from your congregation to talk about how their faith informs their work. A church worker could talk about their training (both times spent in school and the range of content they learned), what a day of ministry looks like, and how they work to fulfill the Great Commission in their work. A non-ministry professional could talk about how their faith informs the way they approach their job, what it means to be a Christian in their workplace, and how they work to fulfill the Great Commission. If the presenters are comfortable with it, have students prepare 1-2 questions ahead of time.

Session 4- Vocation: Community Servant

Leader Note

This session will explore several texts that encourage believers to view their roles in their communities as callings from God. Whether a youth is considering running for class office, joining a service-learning organization, playing on a sports team, or considering their next steps after high school, they will be challenged to consider how they can put forth their best effort to the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31). Each of these vocations are celebrated because they give youth opportunities to use the gifts God has given them to walk as an example to others (1 Tim 4:12) as they live out their calling to follow Jesus. By understand their role as community servants now, youth are challenged to consider how God might continue to work through the roles they fill in the future.

Opening

As you gather your group together, invite them to answer the following questions.

1. What are some clubs or teams you participate in? Why did you choose them?
2. What are some jobs you dream about?

For the last three weeks we have been talking about the various vocations that each of us holds. We've learned that we are called to be children of God, called to our family, called to our friends, and called to be Kingdom workers. Today we'll explore what it means that we are called to be community servants.

Read

God is a worker and created us in His image, making us workers too. Read Genesis 2:4-25 to discover more about how we were created.

1. Who did the work of creation? (God)
2. From what did God form man? (the dust of the earth and the breath of God)
3. What work did God do in this passage? (forming/creating, breathing, planting, growing, putting the man in place, commanding/instructing)
4. What work did God give the man to do? (to work the garden and keep it, to name the animals)

Genesis 1:27 tells us that we are created in the image of God. As God worked, we are also called to work. Every role you play, whether big or small, has a purpose and is a vocation that you are called to fulfill. God did not only work, however. Read Genesis 2:1-3 to discover what else God did.

1. On days 1-6 God did the work of creating, but on day 7, what did he do? (He rested)
2. How did God mark the seventh day? (He made it holy)

By instituting this day of rest, God makes it clear that we are to rest. Created in His image, we are called to work as God works and to rest as God rests.

Connect

Throughout Scripture we see God affirm both work and rest. As students, many of your vocations may be things like team member, club president, student, class treasurer, band

member, actor, or any number of other things. God has gifted you with the skills and desires to fill each of those roles and He calls you to them. They are your vocations. You are called to work at all of them and you are called to rest from them, just as God rested from His creating work. Read through the following Scriptures and discuss whether it speaks to rest or work and what it teaches us about how to live out our various vocations.

- Exodus 20:9-10 (rest; everybody should have Sabbath rest)
- 2 Kings 22:3-7 (work; In this passage, King Josiah exempts the workmen from accounting because they are well-known to deal honestly. This teaches us that we should work with integrity in our vocations.
- Romans 12:6-8 (work; we should use the gifts God gives us.)
- Philippians 2:3-4 (work; we should work in humility for the sake of others)
- 1 Peter 4:10 (work; we should use the gifts God give us)
- Hebrews 4:9-11 (rest; we are called to maintain the habit of resting)
- Colossians 3:23-34 (work; we should work as though we were working for God)
- Mark 12:31 (work and rest; In both our work and our rest we should love our neighbors)

No matter your specific vocation, these verses teach us how we should approach every role to which we've been called. We are community servants, meeting the needs of our communities, whether those are our schools, teams, clubs, congregations, or other organizations to the best of our ability, with humility and integrity that points others to see the Spirit at work in us.

Apply

Think about your own life. Consider the vocations you have and the ways you find rest.

Discuss the following questions:

1. What are some of your vocations? Think about the roles you play at school, in your extracurriculars, in your congregation, in your friend groups, and anywhere else you spend time.
2. Do you have some roles that are easier to think of as vocations than others? Why is that?
3. Do you find it easy to rest? Why or why not?
4. How does it feel to think about rest as a vital part of your vocation?
5. How might understanding your various roles as vocations (or callings) help you to withstand difficult seasons?
6. As you walk through life, the specific vocations in which you serve your community will change but your call to be a community servant will not because it is wrapped up in the work of the Holy Spirit in us as children of God. When you think about the future, what are some ways that you can imagine serving your community?
7. Think about your patterns of work and rest. Where would you like to improve? What steps could you take this week to further honor God in your vocations?

Pray

Option 1- Extemporaneous Prayer

As a group, pray for one another as you look for ways to faithfully live out all of your callings. Thank God for the gift of the Spirit who calls you to be a child of God, for His calling

to you family and friends, for the call to be a Kingdom worker, and the call to be a community servant. Ask Him to help you see the communities you serve with His eyes, seeking to work at everything just as you would work for Him. Ask Him to lead you to rest and for guidance for your week.

Option 2- Scripted Prayer

Father God, You created us to do good works and called us to places and relationships where we could walk in those works. Help us to do just that by serving the communities you've called us to. Forgive us when we fail to see what you would have us see and fail to do what you would have us do. Help us to find rest and sabbath with You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Optional Extension Activity- Vocation Collage

Because we all have different gifts, abilities, and interests, we all have a wide range of vocations. The diversity of the Kingdom is beautiful! Celebrate that diversity and range by inviting your students to create a collage of their various vocations. Provide a variety of print material- newspapers, magazines, brochures, etc.- and invite them to create a visual representation of the roles that they are called to by ripping/cutting out the pictures and gluing them to cardstock. Alternatively, if your technology allows, this can be done electronically as well, using images from the internet. Once students have finished, invite them to present their collages to the group.