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HOW

TO BE DEDICATED

DIVINE WORD PUBLICATIONS





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HOW TO BE DEDICATED

by Russell J. Fornwalt

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HOW TO BE DEDICATED

"What's a good career these days?" asked Bob Gordon who came to my office one morning for help in choosing his life's work. Bob was in his last year of high school, and he'd never given much thought to vocational planning.

"Any career can be good," I replied. "I mean it can be good for some one. Just what do you mean by good?"

"Well, I mean something that pays well at the start," Bob explained, "and where you can get a raise at least every six months."

Within five minutes I knew Bob's philosophy of work and of life—*get the most, give the least*. It is the philosophy of crass materialism, and it is rampant in the world today. Every year hundreds of young people come to my office for vocational guidance. They come with the idea that a career is for *getting* rather than for *giving*.

The philosophy of materialism or *getting* is contagious, and many boys and girls both in and out of the Church seem to have caught it. Many children are money-conditioned since birth.

When most people today talk about their jobs they talk about what they get or don't get. They get all the legal holidays. They get overtime. They get free life insurance, physical examinations and hospital care. They get coffee

breaks, rest periods, sick leaves, and paid vacations. They get a raise every three months, stock in the company or a bonus at Christmas.

We measure success all too often in dollars and cents rather than in terms of service. Seldom do we hear people talk about craftsmanship or the pride of accomplishment. Gone is the spirit of dedication. Missionary zeal has become a museum piece. "Five o'clock Friday" is all millions of jobholders look forward to because it means another pay check and two days off.

When we put too much emphasis on money and the material rewards of a vocation we are cheating both God and ourselves. We are failing to render "unto God the things which be God's." And, at the same time, we are depriving ourselves of a grand and glorious opportunity. For *giving*, vocationally or otherwise, is not only our sacred duty, it is a great privilege.

As Bob and I continued our conversation I told him the best career was the one to which he could *give* the most. For a few moments he looked at me a little puzzled.

"Give!" Bob finally exclaimed. "Are you kidding? People work to earn a living—to get money."

"That's very true," I agreed. "But I'd like to tell you something, Bob.

Work can be more than earning a living. It can *be* living."

"Nobody likes work," Bob blurted out. "People take jobs so they won't starve, and they do their *living* after work."

"Many people do not like their jobs," I remarked, "and often it's because they have jobs which afford plenty of opportunity for getting but not for giving."

Bob thought for a moment and then said, "You talk a lot about giving. Does that mean I should become a priest or a missionary?"

"Not at all, my friend," I replied. "You may have what it takes for building bridges, editing a newspaper, raising cattle or repairing automobiles. You see, Bob, God has given out all kinds of talents for He needs all kinds of workers. Of course, if you have the talent and temperament to *give* to the priesthood, missions or some other church vocation, then that's where you belong. But perhaps you're better able to give to medicine, law, teaching, engineering, cabinet making or selling."

"That all sounds very good," Bob commented. "But tell me one thing. What have I to *give*?"

"Plenty," I replied. "You surely have some interests. Everyone has. You have favorite subjects in school. You like certain sports, clubs, games and activi-

ties. You prefer some kinds of books, movies, magazines and TV programs. And I'm sure you have a few hobbies."

"But what's all that got to do with choosing a career?" Bob inquired.

"Our interests, likes and dislikes," I continued, "are like built-in sign posts. They tell us what we have to give, vocationally speaking."

"I'm beginning to catch on," Bob smiled.

"Well, then, let's try on a few just for size," I said. "Of all the toys you ever had, Bob, which one gave you the most kicks?"

"I'd say it was the chemistry set I got last Christmas," Bob answered. "I even do experiments that aren't in the book."

"Well, that's one sign post and a good one," I pointed out. "Now, tell me, what subjects in school interest you most?"

Bob thought for a moment and then said, "I've always liked math and science, and I got my best marks in them, too."

"And when you go to the library what magazines do you head for?" I continued.

"My favorites are those books on practical and everyday mechanics. I read them cover to cover every month," was Bob's quick answer.

"Well, let's begin adding things up

You like to play around with chemicals and think up new experiments. That shows some inventive ability, imagination and initiative. Your best marks are in science and math, and you go for the magazines on mechanics. Looks to me, Bob, like you have a lot to *give*, say to chemistry or chemical engineering."

"Thanks a lot," Bob said as he left my office that morning. "You've helped me a great deal."

"And unto one he gave five talents, to another two and to another one. . . ." Matthew 25.15

"... For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required. . . ." Luke 12.48

Choose the career to which you can *give* your talent, training and temperament.

You may like to putter around in the kitchen, and that's good. You can use *your* creative ability in baking and cooking. As you know, people are creative in many ways. Some compose music. Others write novels, poetry, plays, short stories or TV scripts. Many *give* their creative ability to photography, costume design, sculpture, or commercial art.

Of course, not everyone is creative enough for the demands of many careers. But there are all kinds of aptitudes

and abilities. As you know, one fellow may like to fix broken alarm clocks, install plumbing, repair radio sets, build houses or tune-up automobiles. These jobs need people who can *give* both interest and mechanical aptitude.

You may have a flair for working with figures. It's known as clerical aptitude, and you can *give* it to such occupations as bookkeeping, accounting, statistical typing, and business machines operating.

Perhaps you're the "social service" type. That is, you enjoy helping people in one way or another. If that's the case, there are many careers to which you can *give* your talent. Recreation leadership, camp directing, nursing, marriage counseling, boy or girl scout work, family service, social caseworker, and settlement house work are just a few.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew 6.33

The kingdom of God, vocationally speaking, is the job or career to which you can fully *give* your talent, training and temperament. Whether your work is baking, banking, boot blacking, butchering or bookkeeping makes no difference. Serve the Lord to the best of your ability, and the material rewards

will be added unto you. In fact, for the Christians a job well done is its own reward.

Too often we allow ourselves to be sidetracked when it comes to choosing a career. Instead of making the choice on the basis of what we have to *give*, we succumb to external pressures.

Yes, fear of what the neighbors may think can be a terrific pressure. It can cause us to go overboard in buying clothing or a house or car. It can cause us to go bankrupt financially, morally and spiritually. It can cause us to enter vocations to which we have nothing at all to give.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God." That is, choose the career to which you can really give yourself. *"And all these things—such as increments, overtime, bonuses, profit sharing and paid vacations—shall be added unto you."* That's not a pressure; that's a promise.

But you'll find seeking the kingdom of God to be such a pleasure and privilege in itself that material rewards will pale into insignificance.

A few weeks before he passed away Cecil B. deMille, famous movie producer wrote me as follows "As I look back upon my life from my present age of 77, I find that the things in which I take the deepest and most lasting satis-

faction are the things that involved *giving* more than getting. Any young person who tries to be guided by that principle will find that it pays dividends of the only kind he *can take with him.*"

Every great religious leader and philosopher has said "giving never impoverishes the giver" or "the hand that giveth, gathers." When we work in that spirit of givingness our physical and material needs will be well taken care of.

Remember when the Russians sent up that first "Sputnik?" Remember how excited everyone in this country got?

"Boys and girls should study more *science*" was the cry of educators and government officials everywhere. Schools and colleges were flooded with posters and pamphlets on "Careers in Engineering." Perhaps you saw some of them. Maybe "counselors" even tried to sell you on the idea of becoming a scientist.

"Just sit down and relax," I would say to boy after boy as he came to my office all excited about a career in science. "Uncle Sam doesn't want us all to drop everything and become engineers or physicists any more than God wants us all to become ministers. Sure, our government needs plenty of scientists if we're to keep up with those Reds. But our country needs *good* scientists. Not everyone has an aptitude for mathemat-

ics. Not everyone has such personal qualities as accuracy, love of detail, and inventive genius which make for a *good* engineer. Not everyone should or can go to college. In other words, let's not be stampeded. We all want to be patriotic, I know, and we all want to serve God and country to the best of our ability. But we serve best when we are in our right place. And our right place is the job to which we can *give* the most. It's just as patriotic to be a really good shoemaker, chef, window washer or truck driver as it is to be an engineer working on atomic energy, jet planes or space ships."

It has been my experience that the professional promoters of occupations place entirely too much stress upon such factors as high pay, short hours, social prominence, beautiful offices, and early retirement. Of course, it is desirable for boys and girls to be fully acquainted with the world of work. But in the last analysis the \$64,000 question for every career chooser is "What have I to *give*?"

Career choices made under the pressure of social prestige, family tradition, propaganda, money or parents' desires are apt to be lifelong mistakes. Perhaps at this stage of life you may not be fully acquainted with yourself. You may not really know just what you have to

give in the line of vocational aptitudes, special skills, and personal qualities. If that is the case, I would suggest that you seek help from a guidance counselor in your school or college.

Not so long ago Stan Kenmore, about 18, came to see me. He wanted to know if I could help him get into the movies. He was dead serious and determined.

"Don't you know someone in Hollywood you could write a letter to?" Stan asked rather innocently.

"Well, I don't know anyone personally," I replied, "but we could take a chance. First, though, I'd like to know what you have to *give*. I mean, have you any special talent, training or technique?"

"Well, really nothing like that," Stan replied sort of hesitatingly. "But I think I can *give* Hollywood something that no one else can."

"What's that?" I asked eagerly.

"Well, my friends all say I look just like Elvis Presley. See, I'm even letting my hair get real long. How do you like these sideburns?"

"They're all right," I said approvingly. "But Hollywood already has one Elvis Presley."

"Oh, I'm sure they could use another," Stan said enthusiastically. "Could you send my photo along? I'm sure that

would help.”

“Stan, I don’t want to sound discouraging. I’m all for anyone with ambition. But I’m sure Hollywood doesn’t want another Elvis. Know what they’re really looking for?”

“No, what?” Stan asked with his face lighting up.

“*Give* those producers out there an original Stan Kenmore. Every movie maker is looking for an innovation—not just an imitation,” I replied.

“Then what should I do?” Stan wanted to know.

“Find out what you have to *give*. Perhaps you can *give* Hollywood a singing, acting or dancing style that’s never been seen or heard before. When you know what you have to *give*, then we’ll write to Mr. Producer,” I suggested.

“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over. . . .” Luke 6.38

If I were to put the Bible message to mankind in just one word, I would choose the word “give.” It is the password to happiness, health, harmony and heaven. In verse after verse we are told to *give* unstintingly and unselfishly. That not only means at Christmas time but all during the year.

Also, *giving* doesn’t only apply to material things such as money, clothing,

candy and toys. It goes way beyond the material. You may give just a smile or a kind word to someone, and you may be doing more for that person than if you gave him a million dollars.

To be successful in getting and progressing in a job it is necessary to give. Be liberal with your talent, training, and time.

Successful people in all lines of endeavor tell us to give. Recently I corresponded with some of them, and here's what they say we should give:

LOVE. "A person must have a love for whatever work he is doing. I am of the opinion this is the one thing to keep in mind. If we don't love what we are doing, it's not going to be easy to make a success of it." Jackie Robinson, former Brooklyn Dodger baseball player and now executive of a New York City restaurant chain.

ENTHUSIASM. "Give enthusiasm to your work, and that ought to be enough." Lowell Thomas, radio news commentator.

DEDICATION. "In my humble opinion, enthusiasm and dedication to purpose will overcome many other shortcomings." Jerry Lewis, motion picture actor.

INTEREST. "I believe that interest in one's work contributes most to an individual's satisfaction with his job,

and his likelihood of success." John F. Kennedy, United States Senator from Massachusetts.

SERVICE. "The person who gets the most out of life is often the one who does most to promote the happiness and well-being of his fellow men, and he can best do this if he is happy in his own work. There is no truly worthwhile career in which the opportunity to help others is not present, whether it be in science, the professions, business, the trades, government or agriculture." Ezra Taft Benson, Secretary of Agriculture.

SPIRIT of ADVENTURE. "Whatever course today's youth have chosen for themselves, it will not be a chore but an adventure, if they *give* to it a sense of the glory of striving—if their sights are set far above the merely secure and mediocre. In one's personal life, as in world affairs, appeasement can be the shortest road to defeat." David Sarnoff, Chairman of the Board, Radio Corporation of America.

Usually we speak of the priesthood, missions, and a number of other church vocations as "callings." We refer to them as "callings" because we feel that somehow or other God "calls" people to the service of the Church. But, in a way, God "calls" all of us. He calls us to that career to which we can *give* the

most. He beckons us enter the field to which we can *give* our love, interest, and talent.

"If a man love the labor of any trade, apart from any question of success or fame, the Gods have called him."

—Robert Louis Stevenson

A "calling" may be said to be that career to which we give the best in us in the service of others. It is the vocation to which we give ourselves—even our very lives, if need be. For some the work of policeman, fireman or soldier is a high and noble calling. Anyone of the three must be willing at all times to *give* his life in order that others might live.

The window washer atop the Empire State Building, the miner who works down in the coal pits, the night watchman in a bank, the nurse who risks contagion, the postman who delivers mail in all kinds of weather, and the woman bending over all day in the rice fields are ready, in a sense, to die for us. They are willing to serve in hazardous occupations in order that our lives might be more comfortable and enjoyable. Surely they are giving out with love. And,

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." John 15.13

It is rather unfortunate that some jobs, namely the professions, have great-

er social status than others. Attaching too much importance to "white collar" careers detracts from the dignity of such jobs as porter, charwoman, bus-boy and messenger. For in the eyes of God, I'm sure, there are no "prestige" positions.

"... I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

Psalms 84.10

I'm sure you've read about TV producers who rig quiz shows, butchers who give short weight, accountants who falsify income tax returns for profit, policemen who accept bribes, cashiers who cheat on change, contractors who charge high prices for inferior materials, and loan sharks guilty of usury. These fakers, fixers and phonies are few in number to be sure. And sooner or later their day of reckoning comes.

"This span of life was lent for lofty duties, not for selfishness; not to be whiled away in aimless dreams, but to improve ourselves and serve mankind."

—Sir Aubrey De Vere, Irish poet.

It is the sacred duty of every Christian boy or girl to become all he or she is capable of becoming. For some this may mean many years of study and sacrifice. It may mean the denial of pleasure. But failure to develop ourselves to the

fullest will certainly bring down God's wrath upon us.

"And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness ..." Matthew 25.30

One person's talent might be packing soap in boxes. Another's might be feeding paper into a printing press. Someone else's talent might be folding shirts in a laundry, making up beds in hotel rooms, or delivering telegrams. Seemingly such talents are small, but let us not regard them as unimportant or insignificant.

Let me tell you about a personal experience. Several years ago I was in Chicago on important business. I was to meet some "big" people, and I wanted to make a good impression. Do you know that it took at least ten people to help me make that good impression? The dry cleaner who pressed my suit, the laundryman who ironed my shirt, the salesman who sold me a tie, the hotel bellboy who brought things to my room, and the barber all helped to get me ready for the occasion.

But when I was just about a block from where I was going I noticed that my shoes were not shined. I quickly spotted a shoeshine boy on the street, and for five minutes he was the most important person in my life. He made my good impression complete, although

he will probably never know it.

The part some of us play in the world of work may indeed be small. It might be nothing more than tightening a nut and bolt on an automobile as it rolls past our station on the great assembly line. But without that particular nut and bolt that car might never run. And so it is with life. We are all on an assembly line. What we have to give might seem small, but it is important to the whole.

The laborer who cracks rock or lays brick is doing something greater than menial work. He's *giving* his talent to the building of a beautiful cathedral, skyscraper or apartment house. He's doing more than piling stone upon stone or brick upon brick. He's *giving* his talent so that people might worship God in a church edifice, so that boys and girls might attend school, so that the sick can be taken care of in hospitals, and so that children without parents and the aged can be taken care of in special homes. The man working atop a high scaffold risks his life in order that others may have life and have it more abundantly.

The printer does more than set type or run a press. Through his craft he *gives* to our education, recreation, and spiritual development. His talent is needed to produce Bibles, prayer books,

missals, catechisms, and other literature for our church. The printer makes the work of missions possible. He gives us our high school and college textbooks, newspapers, magazines and encyclopedias. Without the printer few of us would amount to very much. We would be living indeed in "The Dark Ages."

Consider the teacher. She does more than impart knowledge. She does more than show boys and girls how to add, spell, read or write. What she teaches, of course, is important. But she *gives* to the building of citizenship and character. She prepares today's children for tomorrow's positions of leadership in the church, business, education and government.

Somewhere in the United States today there's a teacher who has in her classroom a future President of the United States. Other teachers have future governors, scientists, missionaries, and ambassadors to other countries in their classrooms. How important it is, then, for the teacher to *give* her best to her profession.

How important it is for all of us to *give* out utmost to our vocation or calling. Upon the dishwasher in a restaurant may depend the health of an entire community. The life of a child is often in the hands of a baby sitter or nurse. The safety of apartment houses,

theatres, and other buildings depends upon the integrity of inspectors of materials.

Often I meet and counsel with people who feel like "little cogs" in their offices or factories. They feel unimportant because their jobs lack the glitter, glory and glamor of the Hollywood movie actor. They feel insignificant alongside the corporation executive, banker or lawyer who makes \$100,000 a year. They have a sense of frustration because their jobs do not offer the adventure and excitement of the deepsea diver, jet pilot, explorer or locomotive engineer.

But in the sight of God what we get from our work is not near so important as what we *give*. In the sight of God the dedicated and faithful scrubwoman is just as important as the high salaried executive or Broadway actress, and perhaps even more so.

"And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites. And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all." Luke 21.2 and 3

However small your vocational talent, *give* it all. Some people have certain mental or physical limitations. They may be able to do no more than a simple one-operation factory job. But

when they do it faithfully, they are like the widow who cast in *all* she had.

The world of work is like the works of a watch. As you know, a watch needs mainsprings and "big wheels." But every big wheel is made up of a series of little cogs. And, if just one cog is missing, the entire movement fails to work properly.

If it were not for the loyal elevator operators and janitors, the "big wheels" in our business and industry could not function. If it were not for devoted street cleaners, waste collectors and chimneysweeps, our nation's health would constantly be in danger.

Every piece in a stained glass window has something to *give* to the beauty of the whole. How vital are the pieces which may be only a fraction of an inch square! Take out just one and the magnificence of the window is gone.

Your job and my job are like the small pieces in a stained glass window. We, too, *give* to the beauty of the whole—the whole of life. In one way or another we *give* to the health, safety, education, comfort, happiness or spiritual growth of the world.

I like to think of what Henry Brooks Adams said on teaching in his book, "The Education of Henry Adams." He wrote. "A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops." But, in a sense, doesn't that really go

for all of us? Can any of us afford to treat our job too casually? Can we afford to give less than our best?

Today the laborer on a road gang may be patching up holes in the highway. He's earning the bread for his family and himself. But he's doing a lot more. He's preventing accidents on that highway and saving lives. He's *giving* safety and pleasure to millions for years to come. Let your imagination wander a little, and you'll see how important everyone is whether he's president, porter or peddler.

Perhaps your job is typing address labels for a religious publication. At times the work may seem tedious or monotonous. But yours is an opportunity for *giving*. You are *giving* comfort, courage and confidence to thousands of families. The literature you send out today may lead a man to God tomorrow. What greater gift could you give to the world?

And, then, I'm often asked, "Does giving really pay off?" or "Are we just kidding ourselves?" My answer to the people who ask such questions is "Why not try *giving* sometime?" For, in the last analysis, a person can only experience the results of giving by giving.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for, thou shalt find it after many days."

Ecclesiastes 11.1

Several years ago I wrote an article called "How To Enjoy Your Job." I sent it to one of those pocket-size self-help magazines. The editor returned my manuscript with a polite "Thank You—Come Again." I tried about a dozen other magazines, and each time my masterpiece came back. I was getting a bit discouraged.

One day while waiting for a train in the Hoboken, New Jersey, station, I browsed through some magazines at the newsstand. One in particular seemed to jump right out at me. It was a periodical for independent salesmen, and it looked just like the ticket. I jotted down the editor's name and address.

When I got home I wrote to the editor and offered him the manuscript for free. I was anxious to see the thing in print. And I thought if I couldn't sell it, I'd give it away.

Several days later the editor sent me one of the nicest letters I've ever received. He said he'd use the article on a gratis basis. And, he asked if I'd be willing to do a piece every month for a new department called "Vocational Clinic" for which, of course, I'd be paid.

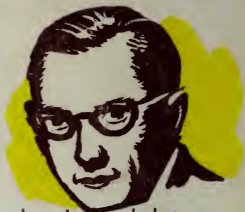
"Would I be willing?" I said to myself. I never answered a letter so quickly in my life. I'm still writing for that magazine, and as a result of the contact other doors have opened.

The message of the Bible is "give," In fact, *giving* is the essence of all books on how to be healthy, happy, and successful. Give interest and enthusiasm to your job. Put love into what you are doing. Be loyal to your employer. Boost your company's product or service. Be helpful to new employes. Offer constructive suggestions to your foreman or supervisor. There are dozens of ways to *give* on any job.

"His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." Matthew 25.21.



Russell J. Fornwalt



Mr. Russell J. Fornwalt is a graduate of Lafayette College and the Pennsylvania State University. He was vocational guidance director and instructor in occupations at Wilson

High School in Easton Pennsylvania and later he conducted a "Vocational Clinic" for Salesman's Opportunity Magazine, to which he still frequently contributes articles.

He has written for such professional journals as Mental Hygiene, Counseling Psychology, School & Society, and many others. Between March 1955 and February 1956 he edited Juvenile Delinquency Digest, a monthly newsletter. He is also the author of a series of guidance pamphlets for teenagers.

At present he is a vocational counselor for Big Brothers, Inc. in New York City.

HOW TO BE DEDICATED

The Bible's message to mankind is "give." In "How To Be Dedicated," Russell J. Fornwalt, applies the Bible's message on **giving** to the choice of one's career. He shows that the true basis for vocational success and happiness is **giving** rather than getting. Any occupation can be a "calling" when a person discovers, develops and dedicates his talent, time and temperament to the glory of God.

Your career can be your greatest outlet for giving. Through it you can express not only your talent but your love. Even though your talent be small it is needed somewhere in the great world of work. How important in the eyes of our Lord were the poor widow's two mites!

Let your main concern in choosing your life's work be giving rather than getting. Let it be service rather than salary, the welfare of others rather than wages.

When you work in the spirit of giving and loving your career becomes **living** rather than merely earning a living.

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