# Vocation IS Ministry

*Our abilities, whatever they may be, are God-given. Our work, no matter what we do,*

*matters to God. Our jobs, well done, show our love for others.*

**Episode Eleven: Transitioning Out-of-Work**

*Deprived of meaningful work, men and women lose their reason for existence; they go stark, raving mad.*

*Fyodor Dostoevsky*

***What We Already Know*** *(1) God gave work, work gives purpose, (2) God gave rulership through work, work gives meaning, (3) God gave creation as human responsibility, work fills life, (4) Sin inhibits the benefit of work, (5) Sin causes work to be hard, (6) Sin brings sorrow because of work, (7) Sin makes work ‘stink’ until being out of work is worse*

***What We Are About to Discover*** *“Gig-economy,” layoffs, “being let go,” firings, “transitioning,” retirement, “What do I do when my job – what gave me meaning – is gone?”*

***Biblical Providence Principles: “Didn’t See That Comin’”***

* *Disasters encourage people to repent (Luke 13:1-5).*
* *God is glorified in negative circumstances (John 9:1-3; 11:1-4).*
* *God disciplines His people (Psalm 103:10-11; Prov 3:10-11; Lam 3:22-25; Heb 12:4-8).*
* *Trials bring patience and maturity (James 1:2-4).*
* *Trials help to conform us to Jesus’ image (Romans 8:28-29).*
* *Trials produce perseverance and character in us (Romans 5:3-5).*
* *Trials help us to depend on Christ alone (2 Corinthians 12:7-9).*
* *Trials test the genuineness of our faith (1 Peter 1:6-7).*

*Pitirim Sorokin, founder of Harvard’s sociology department sought to explain how catastrophes of various kinds—wars, famines, pestilence—started other social forces. After exhaustive research, Sorokin’s conclusion was that religious revivals often begin in crisis. His 1942 book Man and Society in Calamity made this claim: “The principal steps in the progress of mankind toward a spiritual religion and a noble code of ethics have been taken primarily under the impact of great catastrophes.”*

***Biblical Principles of Death: “I Know That is Comin’”***

* *Proverbs 27:1 “Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring.”*
* *“Your life is a mist appears for a little time then vanishes” (4:15; Job 9:25; 14:1; Isa 40:6-8)*
* *Ecclesiastes 9 constructs a positive response to death; one that leads toward positive instruction*
* *As we age, we “look back,” evaluating our lives (2 Timothy 4:6-8)*

***Biblical Principles of Life: “Dealing with Whatever Comes”***

* *Colossians 3:23-24 (3:7; 1 Corinthians 10:31)*
* *Ecclesiastes 9:10 “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might”*
* *“Gleaning” give a hand up (Lev 19:9-10); “Helping” one in need (1 Jn 3:16-17; Jam 2:15-17)*
* *Teaching “providence,” “perseverance,” “discipline”*
* *Acts 13.36 “When David served God’s purposes in his generation, he died”*

***Questions to Consider***

*1. Who do we know is jobless? 2. What joy comes out of pain? 3. Why should we have a “theology of suffering?” 4. How should we teach The Church about “retirement,” “unemployment,” or “transitioning out of work” as we age? 5. Where do we help the unemployed?*