



WSBM522 “Live Your Calling: Meaning in Life & Work”

Dr Richard (Rick) J. Goossen

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Oct 4, 11, 18, Nov 1, 8, 15 & 22

Wednesdays, 7 – 8:30 PM

Fall 2023

Rm. _____

2 credit hours

I - Course Description

What are your gifts? What is your passion? To what are you called? How does work fit into your meaning in life? Have you stopped the busyness of your life to deeply examine in solitude and prayer the very meaning of your existence?

This course will be helpful for people in their 20's, at the start of their career and in the middle of their education, as this lays a foundation for future plans. The course will be useful for people in mid-career looking at doing a reset, and wondering whether they are in the right job. Lastly, the course will guide those around the retirement stage who want to reboot their life with a clear focus to allow them to finish well.

What does it mean to be called? How is calling misunderstood? And how do we go about discerning our calling? These are the questions we will cover in this course. This course is open to everyone who is involved in the workplace - men and women, businesspeople, teachers, trades people, retail workers and any other place where you might work.

A clear understanding of these issues – and, in particular, calling – is the very core of the being of each Christian. If you have not addressed these issues in a comprehensive manner, this course is for you.

II - Course Resources

First, there is a book written by R. Paul Stevens and I titled, *Entrepreneurial Leadership [:] Finding Your Calling, Making A Difference*. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2013). It will be useful to have the above book as I will be referencing it throughout the course. The book is available via Amazon for about \$22. If you don't wish to buy the book, no problem. Second, there are a series of blog posts referred to in Section VII below. They are available online and at no cost.



III - Course Outline

Date	Topic	Reading (EL)*	Reading (BP)**	Assignment
Oct 4 th	The Search for Meaning		#11, 12 & 23	None
Oct 11 th	Meaning in Life & Work	pp. 43-60	#1, 17, 18 & 19	Part 1
Oct 18 th	Finding Your Calling	pp. 109-126	#7, #8, #9, #10	Part 2
Oct 25 th	<i>No Class – Directed Study</i>			
Nov 1 st	Vocational Pyramid	pp. 118-126	#20	Part 3
Nov 8 th	The Principles & Practice of Calling	pp. 127-162	#2	Part 4
Nov 15 th	<i>[Optional Site Visit to ELO Forum***]</i>			Part 5
Nov 22 nd	What's Your Point?	pp. 163-180	#1, #11	Part 6
	Course Summary		#16	

Notes:

**“EL” refers to Entrepreneurial Leadership: Finding Your Calling, Making A Difference and

***“BP” refers to Blog Posts at www.ELONetwork.org:

***For those students who are interested specifically in a calling to business, they will be encouraged to attend the [ELO \(Entrepreneurial Leaders Organization\) Forum](#) on Wed, Nov 15th which is for marketplace and entrepreneurial leaders. ELO was founded by Dr. Goossen in 2005 and focuses on equipping Christians to live their calling more effectively in the marketplace.

IV - Course Objectives

To help individuals make sense of their life and work within the context of a biblical framework and to discover how their life experiences contribute to their unique and special purpose with three emphases.

1. Biblical truths must be asserted in the context of our mainstream culture's opposing focus on meaning tied to material possessions and secular pursuit of happiness.
2. Christians need a clearer way to understand calling and how it applies practically to their lives.



3. The course will connect meaning to the work environment. The workplace is where most people—including many Christians—find their identity and meaning.

These three emphases make the course biblical, practical and relevant and will be delivered in an easy-to-understand manner.

Practical Outcome: Personalized Calling Action Plan

One key outcome is that each participant will develop their own “Personal Calling Action Plan” with clear, action steps to discern and apply their calling in life and work.

V - Student Projects & Grading

The value of the course will come when students engage in careful self-reflection. This course will be a “success” to the extent that participants apply the knowledge to their own lives.

Attendance (10%)

Attendance at each of the classes and, ideally, some level of participation, as possible.

Weekly Assignments (60%)

Students will complete a self-reflection after each class in which content was discussed and prior to the following class.

Each report should be 250-750 words.

Due: Upload to the class site on a weekly basis.

Final Synthesis (20%)

Students will reflect on all assignments to date and complete their Personalized Calling Action Plan which blends all content together with a focus on their individual calling.

The document should be 500 – 1,500 words.

Due: Upload to the class site within two weeks of the last day of class.

NOTE: For information on all academic policies please see WSBM Policies Manual online.

VI - Instructor Bio - Dr. Richard (Rick) J. Goossen

My CV/background is available here: [LinkedIn Profile](#) and [ELO Website Profile](#). With respect to church involvement here is a bit of information. I have been a member at Willingdon since 1993 and over the years have been involved with WSBM, the Welcome Centre, ushering & co-leading home groups. I am on the board of the Mennonite Brethren Seminary. I have previously been on the boards of the Canadian Conference of MB Churches, Columbia Bible College and the Mennonite Housing Society.



VII – Additional Resources

Blog Posts (at www.ELONetwork.org):

1. “Bill Pollard: Former CEO, Service Master: Living Your Calling”, May 11, 2015
2. “Bobby Gruenewald’s Lessons Learned from the Launch of the YouVersion Bible App”, January 22, 2016
3. “Calling: Past, Present & Future?”, August 30, 2015
4. “Calling: Play To Your Strengths”, June 6, 2015
5. “Calling: Ready, Willing, But Not Able?”, June 15, 2015
6. “Calling: The Old and the New”, August 16, 2015
7. “Calling: We Are Not In Control”, July 6, 2015
8. “Charles Spurgeon: Four Steps To Finding Your Calling,” July 13, 2015
9. “Christian Entrepreneurs & Confusion Over Calling”, December 27, 2013
10. “Fifty Reasons Why You Are Called”, September 13, 2015
11. “Jordan B. Peterson’s 12 Rules for Life: The Quest for Meaning,” Feb 18, 2019
12. “Jordan B. Peterson’s 12 Rules for Life: Why Every Christian Should Read This Book,” January 11, 2019
13. “Lord Stephen K. Green on Leading & Calling in the Marketplace,” March 9, 2016
14. “Mark Burnett, TV Producer: Living Your Calling,” April 26, 2015
15. “Mart Green, Hobby Lobby Stores: Living Your Calling”, May 2, 2015
16. “Not Called, But Gifted?”, August 25, 2015
17. “Peter Irvine: Business As Mission”, July 17, 2014
18. “Philip Ng, CEO, Far East Organization: A Billionaire Family’s Christian Enterprise (Part I)”, October 1, 2017
19. “Richard Magnusson: Called to the Furniture Business!”, June 28, 2014
20. “The Call of Christian Marketplace Leaders & The Old Bakery Tearoom”, August 27, 2018.
21. “Thank God for Closed Doors”, August 4, 2015
22. “The Call of Christian Entrepreneurs from Oxford”, August 29, 2018.
23. “The Call of William Milne 195 Years Later: From Aberdeenshire to Malacca”, September 7, 2017
24. “What is Your Blind Spot?”, September 23, 2015
25. “You Are Called: Being On Purpose in Life & Work”, April 8, 2015
26. “Your Calling: The World’s Need?”, July 20, 2015