



Just Love Guide to

CAREERS

JUST LOVE CAREERS RESOURCE

INTRODUCTION

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Justice isn't a box that we tick with a few gestures here and there. It is a lifestyle - a posture - a way of being. For that reason, and for so many other reasons, our jobs matter. Imagine the impact of a whole generation of the church committed to seeking justice in their careers.

In creating a resource profiling different career options we want to be really careful. We do not want to baptise the ambitious careerism of our culture or to turn our work into an idol that we pursue at the cost of our spiritual, physical, emotional or social health. For some of us, our jobs will only be a relatively small part of our work for justice. Many of us will sacrifice our 'careers' to raise a family, or to be full-time carers, or to be good neighbours in our communities. For some of us our health will limit our capacity to work, and for others, there will be times when we have to take whatever work we can find without the luxury of choice.

Our workplaces, our homes, our families, our churches, our communities are all arenas where we can join in with God's redemptive mission. Without this holistic understanding, we risk treating our careers in isolation or with greater importance, and forgetting that all of these are places where we can work creatively, faithfully and humbly for the kingdom.

SEEKING JUSTICE IN OUR CAREER

Once we're clear that our careers are not the only way we seek justice, we do not want to move too far in the opposite direction and say that our careers don't matter. We will spend an average of 80,000 hours at work over our lifetime. It is, therefore, likely that for many - perhaps most - of us it is in our careers that we have the greatest potential for seeking justice.

We often come across an unspoken assumption that the people who really care about justice will go and work in the charity sector, and people who really care about following Jesus will work for the church. We want to gently challenge that. Church and charity are great - we want our students to consider them as options - but we are not sure that they should be the default if you want to seek Jesus and justice.

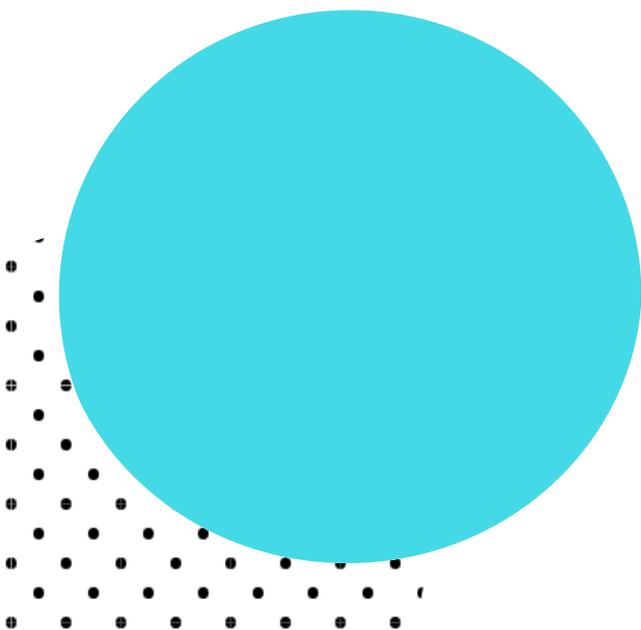
This resource is deliberately quite niche. Discipleship is much bigger than seeking justice and seeking justice is much bigger than your career. There is much more to be said about calling, vocation and living for Jesus at work than we have space or expertise to cover here. There are great books and resources out there (we list a few at the end). We're not going to replicate them, but we'd definitely recommend you take time to get familiar with some of the broader material so that you are approaching the topic with a well-rounded understanding of what living for Jesus at work looks like. This resource will work best as a supplement to, not a replacement of, those wider-ranging resources.

This resource is aimed specifically at Just Love students, who love Jesus and justice, who are considering what to do after they graduate, and who are up for a bit of challenge and stretch. There are two sections:

In **section 1**, we suggest some helpful questions to ask yourself when you are considering what to do after you graduate.

In **section 2**, we profile a range of different career options that Just Love students have taken before and explore the potential that they each have for seeking justice

This resource is designed to stretch you - and so if some parts feel challenging, don't worry - none of us will have all of our thinking about careers spot on, but we want to help our students to wrestle with difficult questions - because by wrestling with those big questions we trust that we can better glorify God and serve others in our work.



PART 1: SOME GOOD QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

These questions are not a checklist that you have to work through systematically to vet any potential career options. Some of these might be more helpful for different people than others. It's probably worth noticing which ones feel particularly challenging to you. Perhaps they are the most important ones for you to reflect on? We don't want to shy away from some helpful challenge - it's far better to be challenged on these things at this stage of your life than in forty years' time. We hope that spending time prayerfully and thoughtfully with some of these questions will be a means into some deeper reflection on where you can best glorify God and serve others. They are in no particular order.

How can I best use the gifts that God has given me?

What are you good at? What talents come naturally to you? What sort of job would enable you to best use those gifts?

Where am I called, and who with?

It's easy to frame calling in quite an individualistic way, but biblical calling is first of all to God, and secondarily it often comes to a family, community or place. In various ways, that will involve self-denial and self-giving rather than the secular mantra of self-fulfilment. Careers don't happen in the abstract, but in real places, with real people. As well as thinking about *what* you're being called to do, think hard about *where* you're called to do it and *who with*. For some of us, the *where* or the *who with* might actually precede the *what*, and that's okay. We need to be clear on what we value higher than our jobs and ensure that we live into those values.

Where can I have a positive and tangible impact?

Some jobs will enable you to have thousands of times greater impact for justice than others. A website like 80000hours.org can be helpful for exploring and comparing the impact of different careers.

What are my motives?

This is a big question, but really important to wrestle with. What hopes and fears might be impacting your decision making? Maybe, if you are honest with yourself, a desire for power, or prestige, or comfort is unhelpfully influencing your career decisions. Or maybe, a fear of having a job with a lot of responsibility or a high wage is having an equally unhelpful influence. It's good to name those deep motives and to allow God to speak into them.

Is this a career that I can sustain healthily?

Knowing your limits is really important. We have been created with the gift of limits - limits of time and space, health and energy, limits to our relational and emotional capacity. Think about what you will have to say 'no' to in order to do this career. Trying to transcend those limits is not sustainable and can do all sorts of damage to us and to others. We do not glorify God by trying to be God.

What skills will this job help me to develop?

Despite our culture's thirst for instant gratification, justice is a long game and it's good to have a long-term perspective. As well as considering what impact you can have for justice right now, it is good to be considering where you can learn the skills and get the experience that will enable you to have a far greater impact in 30 years' time.

How will this job enable me to be generous?

Perhaps the salary means that you could give half of your income away. Perhaps you will learn skills that you can serve others with. Perhaps the job will allow you to invest time and energy in your local community, or in your family, or in your church.

If I'm considering working in the private sector, what good and what damage does this company do to people, to local communities and to creation?

Research the company - look into who owns it, look at whether they pay fair taxes, look into the transparency of their supply chains, look at how they treat their workers, look into their environmental policies and waste management. Look beneath the company's own marketing. It will require a bit of effort and few companies will be perfect - but with such a big decision it is not ok to be ignorant. Would it be better to work to transform an imperfect company or to work for a company with better ethics?

Will this career help me to become more like Jesus?

If we're not growing into mature followers of Jesus, then that will limit what we are able to give to others. This is not to say that we should all work for the church - that isn't always the best place for our spiritual growth. Are there spiritual practices like sabbath, simplicity or fasting that might be hard in the workplace you're considering? Equally, could the rhythm of work be conducive to spiritual practices like celebration, intercession or giving? Try to find older Christians in careers you are considering and talk to them about their experience.

What am I passionate about?

God may give some of us a clear passion. Passion is important and it has a place, but we need to use our heads as well as our hearts, otherwise we risk mistaking vocation for the subjectivity of our own ego. Consider how you can best live into that passion. If, for example, God has given you a passion to fight homelessness, then maybe you should work for a charity on the frontlines. Or maybe you should start a business that employs homeless people. Or maybe you should go into politics in order to change the broken systems that make people homeless in the first place. Where could you have the greatest impact? Where could you best use the gifts God has given you?

If I didn't do this job, who would do it instead, and would they do it worse?

This can be a hard one to answer, but sometimes it might be helpful to consider. Are there lots of justice-seeking Christians already working for transformation in this sector? If there are, might I have a greater impact elsewhere?

If I'm considering working for a charity, is this charity effective?

Are they addressing issues of great importance to social justice? Are they engaging with the best practices in development? Are they addressing root causes, not just symptoms? Are they doing any harm? Are they empowering local communities and local leaders? Are they using evidence learning? If the job is not paid, consider whether you think that is ethical, and whether it is the best place for you to serve and to grow. If you will be relying on the financial support of friends and family, do you think this is the best thing for them to give to? And what might be the impact of you not paying tax?



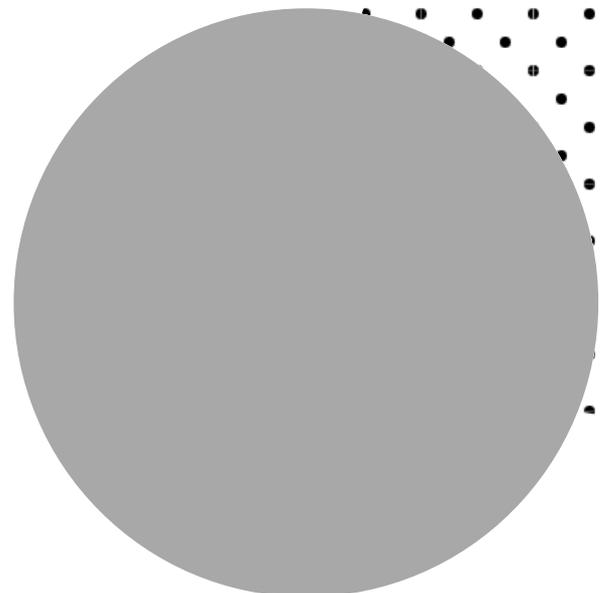
PART 2: CAREER PROFILES

As we were putting this resource together, we felt that the best way to profile career options was to speak to a bunch of our friends and alumni who have gone into a whole range of jobs and ask them to reflect on their experience.

This is by no means an exhaustive set of career options. There are some really notable gaps, which we hope to be able to add to over time. But we hope that the following section covers options that will be relevant for most of our students.

Careers Outline:

- Politics – *page 7*
- Teaching – *page 9*
- Business – *page 10*
- Charity – *page 12*
- Science and Technology – *page 14*
- Media – *page 16*
- Church – *page 17*
- Health and Social Care – *page 18*
- Academia – *page 20*



POLITICS

JENNY

What job are you doing?

I am Senior Parliamentary Assistant for a Labour MP.

Why have you chosen this career path?

Because I felt that politics was the way I could have the biggest impact on justice issues such as child poverty, homelessness and human trafficking. Working with charities can mean you can help the people suffering directly, but being involved in politics means you might have the opportunity to shape and steer policy which filters down, and tackles the root causes of those problems.

What's the greatest challenge you've encountered at work?

My greatest challenge is not always agreeing with my MP on everything, and him not pursuing all the causes I hoped to work on. Not every MP can focus on every justice issue, and I'm there to assist him with what he's passionate about, but it took me a while to adjust to that. I pursue my own personal interests through other means, such as campaigning through my local Labour Party.

Where have you seen God at work in your workplace?

I don't know if I've seen God's work in my workplace - I find it hard to distinguish that. But I've enjoyed forming connections with a lot of Christians who work for other MPs, and it's great to have that support network and share what we're passionate about.

What impact have you seen since you started?

I'm not sure if I've seen an impact since I started 14 months ago. Legislation has been so focused on Brexit that it's been really hard to focus on issues that are desperately affecting the lives of disadvantaged people in the UK. That's been quite a source of frustration; in a time when homelessness is more widespread and visible than ever before, more children are going hungry, and we still haven't honoured our pledge for how many refugees we'd welcome into the UK, we are instead spending more and more time on Brexit negotiations and internal leadership elections.

What impact do you hope to see in forty years' time?

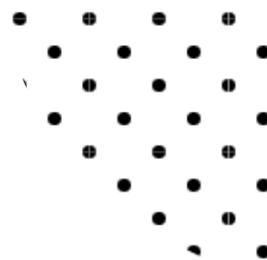
I would love to see the UK prospering, and the people who are disadvantaged in our society now being strengthened. It would be great to see more Christians taking roles in public life and leading with compassion.

What advice would you give to a student considering this career?

You may not get into Parliament straight away (especially if you, like me, don't go through a grad programme that gives you a place in an MP's office), but it's really worthwhile to pursue political roles in charities, organisations etc and that may lead you to a role more directly political. It's important to have a network of people who can support you in the political sphere, which is why the Just Love Politics Sphere Group is so great. Maintaining the faith that change isn't fast but you can have a long-term impact on causes you care about is also essential - not just for your personal well-being but also the effectiveness of your work. I would definitely recommend politics as a career as it is always exciting, fast-moving and relevant, and there are so many ways you can act based on your faith and pursuit of justice.



“Being involved with politics means you might have the opportunity to shape and steer policy which tackles the root causes of problems”



FRANKIE

What job are you doing?

I work as a Community Organiser at St. George-In-The-East church, and alongside that I co-ordinate the Buxton Leadership Programme at the Theology and Community (CTC). Both are in Shadwell (east London). Community Organising was set up by Citizens UK in the United Kingdom, having first started in the USA. The practice of Organising focuses on developing leaders, primarily through one-to-one relational meetings, where you build relationships and discover what issues matter to people in the local community and find practical ways to act on them in order to create real change.

Why have you chosen this career path?

After graduating, I did a summer internship with CTC and was placed at St. George's as part of the month-long programme. During that time I got to experience Community Organising and was compelled by the way in which this approach focuses on developing local leaders around issues that matter to them in their community, instead of the service-provision or charity model of community work that I had previously experienced. At the time I was seeking out a political work opportunity that would allow me to be part of tangible change in my local community, and Community Organising has done that for me.

What's the greatest challenge you've encountered at work?

For me, it has been patience. Community Organising is slow, patient work. God has called us to work with people on the margins of society and the sad reality is that so many of these people have had countless organisations and people do things 'for' them or have had things done 'to' them. This can leave people feeling disenfranchised, isolated from public life and sceptical about the possibility of change. I believe instead that the biblical call to social justice demands the church to be 'of' and 'with' the poor, which therefore means it can take longer to build trusting relationships, develop people's leadership and ask them to speak up for themselves - whether that's in their church or at the table with their local MP.

Where have you seen God at work in your workplace?

In Community Organising we talk a lot about self-interest, and part of my job as an Organiser is to discover other people's self-interest and help them act on it; whether that's to make their community safer or to stand up for themselves in the workplace. Christians can get uncomfortable with the language of self-interest but it's just about helping people discern their vocation. What makes them tick? And what gets them up in the morning? This is where I've seen God clearly at work in my job; when I'm developing a local leader and helping them work out what God is calling them to do in their community and they have the opportunity to act on this.



"I believe that the biblical call to social justice demands the church to be 'of' and 'with' the poor"



TEACHING

ANDREW

What job are you doing?

I am a secondary school maths teacher

Why have you chosen this career path?

Until educational outcomes improve for our country's most vulnerable children, we will not see an end to poverty, inequality and social exclusion. A good teacher can be the difference in ensuring children gain the qualifications that will serve them for a lifetime, as well as instilling good character, confidence and aspiration at a tumultuous stage of life.

What's the greatest challenge you've encountered at work?

Wonderful as they are, working with teenagers can be frustrating. Nothing tests patience more than instructing a student for the umpteenth time to stop talking. Nothing tests gentleness more than when attempting to explain that it really isn't acceptable to shout at me. Even my forgiveness is really tested when I'm greeting the same student who just yesterday ignored my painstakingly planned lesson. As a teacher I don't just model how to solve an equation, students look to me to see how I model character in response to difficulty.

Where have you seen God at work in your workplace?

It's all too easy to despair when some children seem to have it all stacked against them before they even set foot in your classroom; the children who come back from the holidays hungry from lack of school meals, those with uniforms unwashed and homework incomplete in a house with no space to call their own, or those who bounce between volatile home, social services and into your lesson. By holding on to hope for these children in spite of all this, Christian teachers can bear a powerful witness.

What impact have you seen since you started?

For some students the impact will be helping them make the fine margins between a pass and a fail at GCSE. For others it will be encouraging them to step out of their comfort zone and be the first in their family to apply to university. One of the most rewarding aspects of teaching is daily seeing this impact unfold.

What impact do you hope to see in forty years' time?

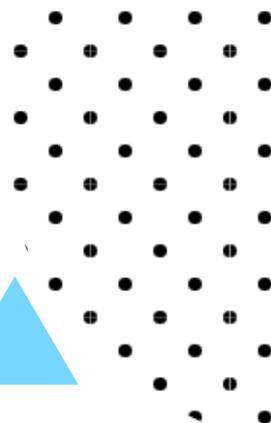
A student in the poorest quintile of the country is nine times more likely to go to a school judged as inadequate than a student in the richest quintile, and a wealthier child is twice as likely to go to an outstanding school. School improvement in areas of high deprivation must be high on the agenda of any vision for education.

What advice would you give to a student considering this career?

Get back in the classroom! Most schools will happily take visitors. Teaching isn't for everyone, so it's worth shadowing a teacher to get a feel for it. Teaching is exhausting, frustrating and often stressful, but is wholeheartedly rewarding and certainly never boring!



“Until educational outcomes improve for our country's most vulnerable children, we will not see an end to poverty, inequality and social exclusion”



BUSINESS

PETE

What job are you doing?

I work for Amazon on their Prime Now ultra-fast delivery project as a Project Manager.

Why have you chosen this careers path?

1. Influence. Right now, one of the best places to influence society is within Business. Change comes from the inside out, and we need Christians on the inside of business.
2. Training. There's a lot to learn from the secular world, so being able to use this time now to train and then transfer the skills acquired across into the charity sector at a later date.
3. Calling. I haven't really had too much say in it tbh, God's opened the doors and I haven't pushed back...!

What's the greatest challenges you've encountered at work?

1. Disconnect of fruits from labour. To be open, there are days when it's hard to see the impact of your work. A day spent in depths of big data, reports, excel etc. can make it tempting to switch across into a (seemingly) higher impact job. The root comes from a spirit of comparison, and you just have to remind yourself of the points mentioned above.
2. Comfortable lifestyle + busy work life. The dangerous combo that can result in a loss in urgency to evangelise, remove sin, keep growing with God, correct injustice, be counter-cultural.

Where have you seen God at work in your workplace?

Last Summer God dropped the idea to me to start a Christians network group at Amazon. My dream is to host speaking events and run an Alpha off the back of it. Slowly but surely the culture will shift, and I'll remain there as long as God wants me to see the shift happen.

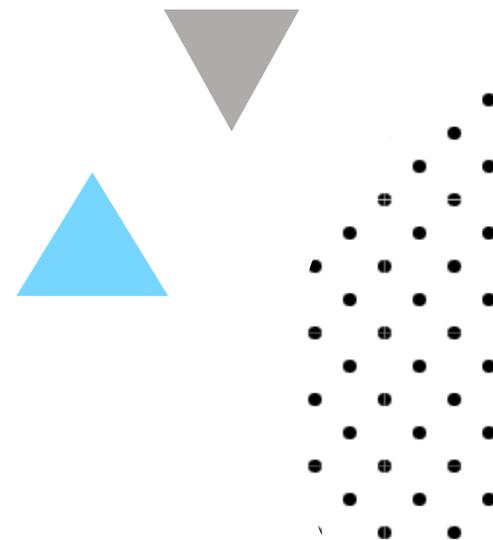
What impact do you hope to see in forty years' time?

Personally - In forty years' time I only want to be where God wants me to be. I may be wrong, but at the moment I believe that's a position where I can have great influence in the business sphere to challenge/enforce/inspire decisions that promote sustainability, social enterprise, ethicality in supply chains and the joy of being in relationship with Jesus. Either that or taking the skills learnt to start up my own social enterprise...

Corporately - I want to see Christians permeated and well represented across all sectors. At the moment the business sphere is severely underrepresented, and I hope that I can help to reset that balance.

What advice would you give to a student considering this career?

We need Christians in Business. Start and end every day with God. Get your speech in order - it's the biggest tool to influence in the box (James 3). Go to bed at the same time and get up at the same time, even weekends. Be an influencer, not influenced. Be kind to everyone, including cleaners, and in every email. Head straight to www.80000hours.org and www.effectivealtruism.org. Leave thank you notes to colleagues. Invite them over for dinner. Seek first his kingdom, not recognition, approval or money. If you're finding it difficult to work with someone, get to know them better. Don't compromise empathy or emotion for professionalism. Give to your pension and tithe with your first paycheque.



“Change comes from the inside out, and we need Christians on the inside of business”

CHARLOTTE

What job are you doing?

I started a business called Know The Origin straight out of university, we are an online platform bringing together 75+ sustainable brands with next level ethics. We also have our own brand KTO, we work with incredible Fairtrade and organic producers around India to create the highest ethical standard of clothing.

Why have you chosen this careers path?

I was studying Fashion Buying and Merchandising at London College of Fashion in 2013 when the Rana Plaza factory collapsed. The factory made clothing for many of the high street retailers like Zara, Primark, Mango etc. In this collapse over 1100 people were killed and over 2000 injured. I realised I knew exactly how to create clothing, from design to shop floor, but knew so little about the people making them. I wasn't going to be apart of the fashion industry as we know it, but instead wanted to transform it into an industry that supports the people whose shoulders it's built on.

What's the greatest challenge you've encountered at work?

Currently 61% of brands don't know who made their clothes and 93% don't know where their fabrics come from. I think the main challenge was always finding producers who wanted to be transparent. Lots of people, from advisors to factories, have tried to persuade me to not pursue transparency. But the reasons have never been good enough to not push for transparency. It's been such a joy to create a supply chain full of people who are equally passionate about transparency, and then being able to encourage other brands to do the same. I believe that once you have this type of supply chain, and good relationships at every stage, it is definitely easier to maintain and develop the ethics of a brand.

Where have you seen God at work in your workplace?

Throughout this entire journey, and especially through the ups and downs it has been incredible to see God at work. I think once you can even slightly grasp the idea of having God walking with you in something, it makes relying on him and pressing on during difficult times a core part of your business.

What impact have you seen since you started?

Our pop ups have been a time of equipping for many people to develop knowledge and networks to support change in their own businesses. We have seen the producers we work with flourish, jobs created in a safe, clean and dignified way. We have seen customers behaviours change towards making a difference and begin delving into the world of sustainable switches.

What impact do you hope to see in forty years' time?

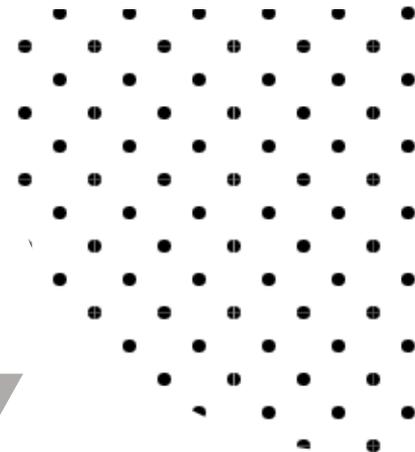
I want to see the culture in the fashion industry shift to one of justice. I want to see ethical fashion become accessible, affordable and life-bringing to the millions of people around the world that make our clothes. I want to see an end to child labour, human trafficking in our fabrics and environmental abuses at every stage of production. We are currently raising investment, so that we can see Know The Origin scale up to bring about biblical values through business that can restore people's lives and profit that can be used to support change in legislation affecting those that are more vulnerable.

What advice would you give to a student considering this career?

If you are considering starting a business I would say, get a lot of wise people around you. You don't need to know everything, but you need to be able to draw upon others. You need to have perseverance and an ability to adapt to change quickly! Starting a business can be one of the most challenging and rewarding things, especially if you are able to see justice created within your model.



“I want to see ethical fashion become accessible, affordable and life-bringing to the millions of people around the world who make our clothes”



CHARITY

CHUMA

What job are you doing?

I work as a Youth & Emerging Generation Representative for Tearfund. This basically means that I look after Tearfund's engagement with Students & Young Adults in England & Wales.

Why have you chosen this careers path?

I've always been a big believer that everyone, everywhere is born with so much potential and they deserve a fair chance to fulfil it. My time in university made me passionate about mobilising Christians to pursue social justice. I realised that the local church is one of the biggest networks globally and so mobilising the church to pursue the biblical call for social justice can have a great impact on poverty and inequality. This career path allows me to combine my passion for an equal, just world with my passion to mobilise the church to pursue social justice.

What's the greatest challenge you've encountered at work?

Going from a flexible university timetable to a 9-5 week has required some adjustment. But the greatest challenge I've encountered is stepping out of my comfort zone to try new things a couple of times. Paradoxically, this has also been one of the greatest blessings as I've developed professionally and personally.

Where have you seen God at work in your workplace?

Prayer is central to what Tearfund do. Tearfund staff gather to pray once a week and we've seen countless answers to prayer this year.

What impact have you seen since you started?

I've had the chance to talk to hundreds of students and young adults about how the gospel leads to a whole life response to poverty. Seeing people's eyes open and hearing them say that "they've never seen things this way before" is one of my favourite things.

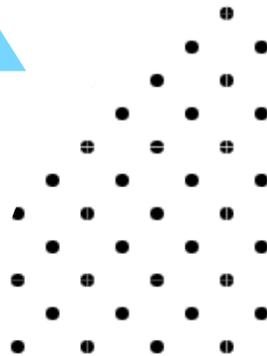
What impact do you hope to see in forty years' time?

I hope to see the end of extreme poverty and the end of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in forty years' time. I hope to see a church that is fully mobilised in pursuing justice, where justice isn't perceived as a segment or an add-on of the gospel but seen as the gospel itself. This church will be instrumental in fighting societal issues.

What advice would you give to a student considering this career?

Follow your passions - if you believe God has placed a passion in you for something then follow that even if you can't see the opportunity straight away, God won't let you down.

Start now - Don't wait till you finish university to start making a difference. Join a society, volunteer for a charity, fundraise, campaign... Starting at university will help you develop skills for your career. My course (Human Geography) taught me a lot about social change, international development and it helped me develop a lot of professional skills. However, I developed a lot of the skills that I use in my job through extracurricular stuff - I helped out at a youth group and got involved with societies like Chasing Zero and Just Love this taught me about team dynamics, event planning, social media and even writing content.



"This career path allows me to combine my passion for an equal, just world with my passion to mobilise the church to pursue social justice."

STEFFIE

What job are you doing?

I work in community development and advocacy for a Malawian NGO that equips local churches to break mindsets of dependency and work with their community to achieve holistic change, especially for the most vulnerable. I've been working on integrating activities into the process that draw out sensitive issues, such as gender-based violence, and enable communities to advocate to local government to create change.

Why have you chosen this careers path?

I chose to work for Eagles because their approach is the most dignifying and effective way I've ever come across to see communities moving out of poverty. Too many NGOs 'donate solutions' in a way that inhibits long-term development almost as much as handouts. To quote my amazing boss: 'I know $2+2=4$. It's very easy for me to tell a community that - for example, to train them how to increase food security using conservation agriculture. But what happens when they then come across $7+3$? If I've failed to equip them to find their own answers to different problems, then I've failed.' When I see communities and churches, who were among the poorest in the world, now thriving and pointing to God and themselves for their transformation, I cannot describe the joy!

What's the greatest challenge you've encountered at work?

You know God has a sense of humour when He sends someone who likes control and organisation as much as I do to work in one of the most disorganised, unpredictable sectors in one of the most laid-back, communication-complicated countries! It's been a STEEP learning curve and I still get frustrated a lot! But God has really used it to point out a lot of my own weaknesses and self-reliance, forcing me to value different ways of doing things and to depend on Him, not on ticking off to-do lists!

Where have you seen God at work in your workplace?

When I meet local pastors that Eagles works with, I feel like I have stepped into the book of Acts! People in terrible poverty make unbelievable sacrifices to help others - one pastor said to me that he wished every church member really understood what the bible said about social justice, because then he was sure there would be no poverty left in the world.

What impact have you seen since you started?

I've spent the last month doing a cost-effectiveness analysis of Eagles' approach compared to a more traditional NGO one. We found out that even communities who are amongst the poorest in the world were able to achieve equal impact using just their own resources as a project that gave drought-resistant seeds, livestock, treadle pumps etc, at less than 5% of the cost for Eagles. And it is so much more sustainable as everything is community-owned!

What impact do you hope to see in forty years' time?

I would LOVE to see that every NGO has switched from doing direct interventions that communities may or may not want (and are certainly not cost effective) to facilitating problem-solving processes: it is more cost effective and sustainable to equip communities with the skills to mobilise their own resources to solve problems than to intervene directly. NGOs need to stop investing in things and start investing in people; not training communities in more skills but challenging how people see themselves and their world.

What advice would you give to a student considering this career?

First, really look at whether the NGO you want to work for is effective. Are they treating communities with dignity by equipping them to solve their own problems, or are they 'donating solutions' by just delivering specific activities? Because if activities are not combined with mindset change, then they rarely have any lasting impact. Even more importantly, are they causing harm? Are they increasing dependency? Are they overriding traditional structures and knowledge by assuming their own are better?

Secondly, too many people just go straight into an NGO in London without ever learning from the real experts who are doing the work with communities. Working for a local NGO has its own risks and you have to constantly question your presence and role - are you actually adding anything? Are you doing a job that someone local could do just as well? Are you building up someone to take it over when you leave? If you remember you are there to learn, not to give solutions, there is no more humbling, exciting or better way to really learn how to see communities moving out of poverty than by learning from those that see it every day.



“When I see communities and churches, who were among the poorest in the world, now thriving and pointing to God and themselves for their transformation, I cannot describe the joy!”



SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

ANNA

What job are you doing?

I am the Product Designer at an Electrical Engineering, R&D company. I am responsible for the mechanical and aesthetic design.

Why have you chosen this careers path?

When I first chose engineering it wasn't with social justice in mind, it was because I liked maths, physics and art. During my time at Uni though, I came to appreciate the unique influence engineers and designers can hold over how society thinks about and consumes products, energy etc. The idea that I could hold the influence to ensure that products are ethical and sustainable and improve lives rather than hinder them encouraged me that I had made the right choice.

What's the greatest challenge you've encountered at work?

The greatest challenge for me was having to limit my expectations. Although I'm the designer and engineer in a number of products, the final say is up to the client or the boss, and so although I can argue against adding single use plastic elements to products and the like, it doesn't mean that they'll not be put in. There's also a lot of waste associated with product development, electrical, plastic and metal and it can be frustrating knowing that you are contributing to what is already a major problem. An unexpected challenge was coming up against sexism.

Where have you seen God at work in your workplace?

I have seen God at work in the people in my workplace rather than in our outputs. I have seen them become more aware of their waste and more aware of the company's waste with new measures being implemented to reduce the waste of electrical stock. I have seen them engage in conversations about God, slavery and sexism among other issues. And I have seen them be consistently welcoming and kind. It being Northern Ireland, my workplace is not short of vocal Christians ready to talk openly about faith and justice.

What impact have you seen since you started?

The impact I've seen is hard to pin down. We develop products for outside clients and so I rarely see what happens to the products I design. In fact, I've only seen one project through to completion and handover so far (product development takes a very long time). Again, the impact I have seen has been more in changes in my colleague's behaviour – being more careful about recycling, using reusable containers and packaging, changes in attitudes towards their clothing etc. On a company level, again it has been changes to the way we handle stock and a greater willingness to develop alternatives to disposable parts.

What impact do you hope to see in forty years time?

It would be great to see attitudes in the industry change so that sustainable design, design for a circular economy and ethical practices become the norm rather than a novelty. I would love to see the UK operating a circular economy with everything we design and manufacture is made with intention of repair, reuse or recycling.

What advice would you give to a student considering this career?

Don't be disheartened if you start a job where it doesn't seem like you're directly pursuing God's justice. Not everyone comes out of uni and works for a medical company or developing renewables etc. Remember that God will use you where you are if you let him, in big things and small, through the relationships you form and the conversations you have as well as the work that you do. Also, no job is a life sentence, there's always the option to move.



“I came to appreciate the unique influence engineers and designers can hold over how society thinks about and consumes products and energy”

DARREN

What job are you doing?

I'm in my second year on the graduate scheme at the UK Atomic Energy Authority. We're a national lab (a government-owned research centre) tasked with developing fusion energy as a future power source. Specifically, I work on robotic systems for doing maintenance in places that are too radioactive, or otherwise hazardous, for humans to go.

Why have you chosen this career path?

As far as engineering in general goes - I'd barely say I chose it at all, except by stumbling through where my skills and interests led me. Past that, I think engineering is a field that has a lot of potential to impact the world, for good or ill (after all, climate change is kind of an engineering invention...) So, I was anxious to find work that I could believe in as genuinely making a positive difference. Fusion turned out to be a great fit for that - it's very much a long-term project, and success is not guaranteed. But the promise of a low-carbon power source, with millennia of fuel and a fraction of the by-products of fission, definitely strikes me as something worth attempting.

What's the greatest challenge you've encountered at work?

Keeping my perspective. When I meet up with other Just Lovers whose calling has led them to more classically "front-line" justice work, I realise that mainly knowing other engineers - university-educated, typically middle-class and relatively well-paid - reinforces my blind spots and weakens my sense of urgency. I struggle without the reinforcing community of a regular Just Love group. The engineering sector, like most, has a pretty business-as-usual attitude to issues like the carbon impact of regular flights for meetings and research conferences. When I question this at work the response is sympathetic, but I meet with a feeling that there's nothing to be done about the broken systems of an entire industry.

What impact have you seen since you started?

I see small signs of shifting attitudes, such as an increasing number of younger engineers and scientists making environmentally-motivated changes to their diets. And with a couple of other members of the grad scheme I'm in the process of setting up an "environment forum" to raise awareness and look at how the organisation can more actively engage with issues like our carbon footprint. But it's still early days, and hard to see yet what the impact might be.

What impact do you hope to see in forty years' time?

I have no idea how we get there, but I want to see an engineering sector that treats ethical questions like social, environmental and supply-chain impacts as a natural part of the process - and I want to see us using our creativity to fix the flaws in our industry rather than accepting them as inevitable.

What advice would you give to a student considering this career?

If science or engineering is your skillset, and you want to do radical justice with your career, then the sector really needs you. So, hurry up and help me figure out how we can turn things upside-down...



“If science or engineering is your skillset, and you want to do radical justice with your career, then the sector really needs you. So, hurry up and help me figure out how we can turn things upside-down...”

MEDIA

GEORGE

What job are you doing?

I'm a Communications Officer for Peabody - a social housing association with over 50,000 homes in London.

Why have you chosen this careers path?

I wanted to work to stop involuntary homelessness. As a student I founded a charity support group called Embrace Cambridge, and with the local Just Love group we delivered thousands of items of thermal clothing and toiletries to the city's shelters. It was an incredible, God driven, exhausting and life changing time and I knew that for a career I wanted to keep working on the crisis. When the opportunity came to work in housing in London I jumped at the chance. I've learned so much more about the nuances and challenges of the housing sector and the homelessness crisis, and in comms I've worked as part of housing alliances to put pressure on the government for reform. A large part of my role is filmmaking, and I'm lucky enough to jump from department to department and work from the frontline to the boardroom across the business.

What's the greatest challenge you've encountered at work?

I've worked with residents with serious mental health issues and complex needs, and that can be quite challenging. I've had death threats and worked in streets and neighbourhoods with a history of violence, though for the most part I've been very safe. It can be challenging for other reasons too - the housing situation in this country is dire, and no political party has anywhere near close to an effective response to it. That's quite frustrating.

Where have you seen God at work in your workplace?

A number of my colleagues are Christians, and it's been amazing to see God's love and spirit pouring out from them and working in the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in London. Especially in terms of crisis response, the church is playing an important part in helping rough sleepers and supporting communities.

What impact have you seen since you started?

On a national level it's difficult to say - we were all very excited by the social housing Green paper, and by Theresa May's housing commitments. Things are a bit unclear now. On a local level though I've seen massive impact - thousands of new, genuinely affordable houses being built across the UK and countless lives changed from support services, and benefits advice to help people of all ages access credit available but not disclosed to them. At Peabody alone there are a thousand beds for rough sleepers every night, and regeneration programmes tackling anti-social behaviour and youth violence, as well as isolation in older people. It's an exciting time! In my own role I've been part of older persons groups and able to promote crucial advice and support services, and campaign for change in policy.

What impact do you hope to see in forty years' time?

3 million extra affordable or social rent homes and the human right to shelter enshrined by law, as well as a legal redefinition of affordable to mean 70% market value or lower. That'd be the dream - an end to social rent and benefit stigma, major reforms to universal credit and also tighter regulation on private landlords, but also housing associations and councils to make sure they are providing a safe service to their tenants. There's a lot of talk about making sure houses first go to market for UK based individuals for a period of time, to avoid wealthy investors from abroad buying blocks and charging high market rents - that's a particular issue in London. The Shelter and Crisis reports are a great place to start if you want to read more into the challenges and possible solutions around the housing crisis.

What advice would you give to a student considering this career?

Buckle up! Enjoy it as much as you can. Every day is different so keep your best foot forward and try and remember why you do what you do, especially when it's not very glamorous. It's a great sector to work in, though it can be very frustrating - it can be difficult to be a small cog in a very large machine.



“I wanted to work to stop involuntary homelessness. When the opportunity came to work in housing in London I jumped at the chance”

CHURCH

RACHEL

What job are you doing?

Ministry experience volunteer in two parishes in the East of County Durham – with a focus on increasing the mission of the churches. I do lots of work in schools, with families, as well as leading and preaching in traditional Sunday morning services, and more creative styles in evenings/at Messy Church

Why have you chosen this career path?

I didn't make a conscious 'career choice' to go into the church. I found myself here because I felt called to be in a place that was different to my own background, to learn what life was like and to be 'incarnational' in the way I tried to make a difference. The local church offered me that opportunity to a greater extent than any charity or other type of work, and the past two years has confirmed and broadened my understanding of the unique privileged position that the local church is in to enable transformation. I have come to see the gift that the parish system is in deprived communities, and understand the local church as a lens through which the identity and story of a place can be seen, and a locus for bringing people together and making an impact. I have become convinced that the local church has the potential to be the greatest single source of hope and regeneration in any one place, because of its authenticity in, of and for the community, its welcome and good news to all, its distinctive grace-fuelled service within the family and to those struggling in the community. One of the greatest strengths of the church in seeking justice is the acknowledgement that not everything is going to get better now, but that in the struggle there is a loving family who will struggle along with you.

What impact have you seen since you started?

Although there are many tangible things – like starting clubs in schools and coaching new volunteers in Messy Church – the majority of the impact is difficult to define or pinpoint. God has been growing faith in and outside of the church through what I have offered, but never just through me: always through multiple people and means in any one case. Steady, faithful, prayerful relationships have been way more significant than personal gifts or church programmes.

Where have you seen God at work in your workplace?

God has been at work in deepening the faith and communal life of existing church members and bringing new people to faith. Activities and initiatives are important to be doing, but the key thing for mission is that the church culture is loving, outward focussed and prayerful.

What's the greatest challenge you've encountered at work?

I think the greatest challenge has been in seeing the negativity in people's pasts holding them, and by extension, the church, back. In some cases that is the past failures of the church to effectively disciple people and empower the congregation to really own their faith and be confident in leading initiatives themselves. Other issues can have life-long legacies which hinder people's confidence and openness to trying new things.

What impact do you hope to see in forty years' time?

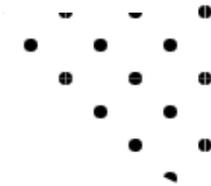
I would love to see the local church step more fully into being the locus for individual and communal transformation. Within the CofE specifically, I want to see a revival of the parish system, requiring a broader understanding of leadership and more flexible approach to worship styles, so the church can remain in every community, however tough. Already in many places the CofE is virtually the last institution left, and we must fight to enable a worshipping community to be present within the hardest places.

What advice would you give to a student considering this career?

Approach any church and role with an open mind and start where people are. Whatever you want to achieve, if you are not connected with the congregation it will be like speaking a different language. People often say you should have some experience of the 'real world' before going into the church, but the past two years has provided me with the fullest exposure to many stages of life, with its richness and its struggles, that I could imagine. Who else is there speaking into births and deaths, marking significant anniversaries and remembrances, celebrating new jobs and supporting the families who can't put food on the table?



“I have become convinced that the local church has the potential to be the greatest single source of hope and regeneration in any one place”



HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

LIBBY

What job are you doing?

I'm a junior doctor. I graduated from Manchester Uni in the summer and I've been working as a Foundation Year 1 (FY1) for two months now.

Why have you chosen this career path?

I felt called to medicine by God when I was in my last year of secondary school, with no real tangible reason why, just a 'step out and see' kind of invitation. I've had plenty of Peter-esque panic-and-almost-drown-y moments over the six years of medical school, but I have also come to see how God wants to use me in my job to serve others, pursue justice, and bring Him glory. I believe we are extraordinarily fortunate to have the NHS as a public healthcare system - I love being able to see patients from all backgrounds and walks of life all being given the same high-quality care.

It is such a privilege to be able to treat every patient as an individual, made in the image of God, with inherent dignity and worth. Some patients expect to be treated as inferior, because of their economic status, lifestyle, or even their diagnosis. I love that I get to prove them wrong and honour every patient with the best care I can provide.

I also get to challenge my colleagues on the (thankfully relatively rare) occasions they have this kind of attitude; I get to stand up and advocate for those that might not be able to do so for themselves. Sometimes it's intimidating, especially when a senior is involved, and sometimes it might not result in a tangible change in the patient's treatment or outcome, but I trust that Jesus is using my meagre efforts to start to change hearts and minds.

Another massive area of social justice in medicine is the reality of healthcare inequalities. In Greater Manchester, for example: the average life expectancy in Timperley in 2017 was 73.7 years, whereas in Rochdale it is 58.1 years. And in two adjacent areas of Salford, one area is in the least deprived decile, and the other is in the most (by index of multiple deprivation, 2019).

As healthcare professionals, if we are called or choose to work and serve in deprived areas, we get the opportunity to work to reduce this gap, and I am listening to God to see where he might want to use me.

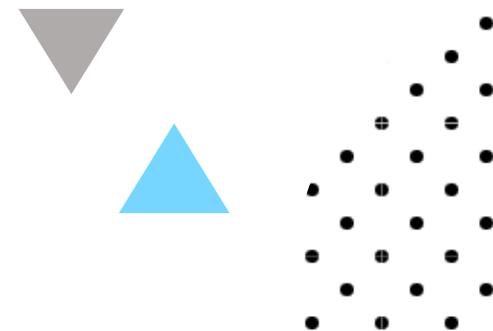
What's the greatest challenge you've encountered at work?

I have noticed a lack of positive feedback and encouragement in the hospital workplace and have often been aware of interdisciplinary tensions. I have decided to see this as an opportunity to lift others up, and hopefully engender a culture of kindness, of loving our neighbours and colleagues.

The hardest thing so far has been trying to continue to do all this whilst under time and resource pressure. On my 12+ hour on-call shifts, it is easy to lose sight of the bigger picture and purpose, and take the easy or quick option. It can feel counter cultural to spend longer than the bare minimum talking to a patient, and actually listening to them - even though this is what we're taught to do at medical school. I'm learning to balance my efforts to treat and care for patients like Jesus would with job prioritisation, time management, and being a safe and efficient doctor. It's really difficult sometimes! But I continuously remind myself that I am not alone.

What impact do you hope to see in forty years' time?

I hope to see a steady reduction in healthcare inequality in the UK, improved access to healthcare for people who have no fixed address and who are seeking asylum, and a workplace which is slowly but surely being characterised by grace.



“Some patients expect to be treated as inferior, because of their economic status, lifestyle, or even their diagnosis. I love that I get to prove them wrong and honour every patient with the best care I can provide”

SUSIE

What job are you doing?

I am a children's social worker in the Initial Response Service (referral and assessment team) for a large borough in the West Midlands.

Why have you chosen this careers path?

I chose social work initially with a plan to work with refugees and asylum seekers; I wanted to use my education and experience to make life better for people. On qualifying, I started working for a local authority Children's Services to gain some broader experience. In the assessment team, we respond to any screened referrals, be that from police, schools, GPs etc and we are often the first 'face' of social work that families see. For me the role involves pursuing justice in a few different ways; justice for children whose voice is not being heard and justice for parents who need support or lack the resources or knowledge to meet their children's needs.

What's the greatest challenge you've encountered at work?

A general challenge is a lack of resources; particularly at early intervention level, for new parents, or for perpetrators of domestic abuse (we make large demands of the victim in these incidents but there are rarely resources available to educate the perpetrator). My own personal challenge is around the ethical questions that the job poses and balancing risk, keeping children safe and intervening as is necessary and proportionate. Another challenge for me is that some families dislike you before you step foot in their house, due to past experiences. And it can be difficult to leave worries about children at families at work.

Where have you seen God at work in your workplace?

After only around 4 months of working here, I was reluctantly planning on quitting due a very difficult situation within my team. Having prayed about this, within a month this situation completely turned around and the atmosphere was transformed within my team. I believe the Holy Spirit helps me build good relationships with families, meaning they are more likely to be honest, contact professionals with concerns and accept support. And every other week I meet with some other Christians who work in the town council to pray; their passion for the local people and area inspires me.

What impact have you seen since you started?

The impact I've seen has been more on me than anything else; I feel morally, ethically and spiritually challenged most of time! But I do believe that because I pray for the families I work with, there must be an impact even if I can't see it. I have to rely on God for peace and joy when I don't really feel like it and I believe that has an impact on my colleagues as well, since they comment on it.

What impact do you hope to see in forty years' time?

In the future, I hope to see the church take on a greater role in communities to support families and reduce the need for social workers. Some charities such as Safe Families for Children and Home for Good are already equipping churches to support in this way and I hope to see their involvement become the norm in churches.

What advice would you give to a student considering this career?

If you are aware that painful stories and difficult circumstances can really rock you or are likely to stay with you long after you leave the office, this may not be the best career for you. Often it feels like you are hearing of one sadness after another and your response will have a big impact on those families. But it's also an incredible job getting to hear about people's lives and offering some hope that things could be different. I'd recommend chatting to any social workers you know (as I found it difficult to get a clear idea of what the job really was until I started).



“My role is about seeking justice for children whose voice is not being heard and justice for parents who need support”



ACADEMIA

NEIL

What job are you doing?

I am a PhD candidate at the Grantham Institute at Imperial College London. My research focuses on using models of the energy system and the economy to explore pathways to a decarbonised future, and the role of different energy technologies within such a low-carbon transition.

Why have you chosen this careers path?

The climate crisis is one of the greatest challenges facing humanity in the 21st century, and is a fundamental justice issue, with those least responsible for the destruction of our planet most vulnerable to the impacts of a warming planet. I've been deeply moved by the injustice of climate change since I was a teenager and was really keen after my undergraduate degree to be more involved in the climate movement through my career. My background was in physics, so initially I considered becoming a climate scientist. I felt, however, that the main battle in the fight against climate change was no longer scientific but was related to politics and economics. I felt that I could best use my time and talents advocating for ambitious climate policy in the UK. So, I decided to make the switch over from physics to environmental policy, studying for an MPhil in Environmental Policy. I am using this PhD to develop an expertise in energy systems and climate policy which will hopefully stand me in good stead to be a voice in the UK climate policy movement in the future.

What's the greatest challenge you've encountered at work?

I think the greatest challenge I have encountered is the tension between the worlds of policy and activism. My PhD is very much situated within the context of UK climate policy, with all its flaws and limitations. It aims to meet policymakers within their pre-existing paradigms and seek to present compelling evidence that will help them in the design of effective climate policy. That's really exciting in loads of ways and has huge potential for impact. But it is a PhD which is firmly within the world of policy. This creates a tension within me – because I am an activist before I'm a policymaker. Where I want to be most is outside the system, telling stories of another possible world and calling the world onwards towards this new way of being. While I'm excited about being part of redeeming UK climate policy, operating within the system can make me feel really compromised at times, and that tension can be hard to navigate.

Where have you seen God at work in your workplace?

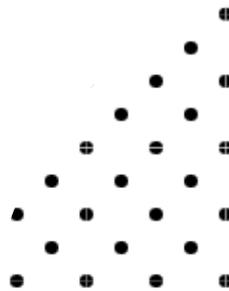
In an office where everyone is working on climate change, we actually talk very little about justice. And we talk even less about hope or despair. There often seems to be an emotional disconnect between our work and the awfulness of the climate crisis. In many ways this is an essential coping mechanism. But I've loved having conversations about justice and hope with colleagues, helping people discover, or articulate again, their own emotional connection to the climate crisis, and share my own source of hope in what can often be a despair-filled topic of conversation.

What impact have you seen since you started?

During the year that I've been here, I've been privileged to support the Committee on Climate Change in their advice to the Government about setting a net zero emissions target for the UK, which has been formally accepted. While 2050 is (in my opinion) incommensurate with the scale of the climate crisis, it's a really important step forward and it's been wonderful to be part of that report.

What advice would you give to a student considering this career?

Find spaces where you can grieve injustice and allow yourself to be hurt by the brokenness of the world. If your 9-5 is engaged in tackling injustice, it is inevitable (and I would say necessary) that you insulate yourselves emotionally to a certain extent. You can't let yourself be wounded by the awfulness of the world every hour of every day. But if you lose that pain, and you lose that grief, then you've lost something of God and something of the wonder of true hope that comes from God. So, find spaces where you can grieve and hurt – knowing that it's from those spaces that your truest hope and surest motivation will come from.



“I felt that the main battle in the fight against climate change was no longer scientific but political and economic. I felt that I could best use my time and talents advocating for ambitious climate policy in the UK”

CONCLUSION: VOCATION AND TRANSFORMATION

Biblically speaking, it's important to keep two things in mind when we talk about calling and career:

1. God is using our work, career and workplace to transform us
2. God is transforming the world through a transformed us

The first flows into the second: in the workplace, we'll have incredible opportunities to grow, but there'll also be hard knocks and times of disappointment. There'll be periods when we're really using our gifts and talents, and periods where we are really frustrated by our colleagues, our boss or our own performance. A God-centred vision of career refuses to get dragged this way or that by how things happen to be going, whether the great stuff or the challenging stuff. All of it is used by God as part of our deep character transformation - we grow in the spiritual fruit of humility when we choose to submit to those in authority over us at work, and in the fruit of other-centred love when we choose gentleness and service for a colleague who has let us down or offended us. We grow in the fruit of self-control when we are promoted to a new position but choose to use our power to raise up others, not serve our own ends. We grow in the fruit of joy when we are liberated from an obsessive bondage to results and realise that even our greatest wins and breakthroughs in the workplace haven't gained us any more identity or status with God than we had before.

We can easily see work as a thing we do, but first of all it is a thing that God is doing to us. It is a profoundly shaping and formational environment, if we allow it to be.

The deep character transformation that can come by engaging with God in our career leads into the second point: God is transforming the world through a transformed us. Jesus says: *"to those who have been faithful with little, much will be given"* (Luke 16:10). There is something about making space for God's deep work of transformation in our lives that in turn enables us to have the impact we desire to have in the world. If we are called to hold positions of power and influence in the world of business, law or church, so that we can enact something of the vision for change that we sense God has given us, the biblical pattern is to begin with faithfulness in the small things.

We see this nowhere more clearly than in the story of Moses, a man whose journey of personal inner transformation was intimately bound up with the difference he ended up making for God in the world: the public and the private were inseparable, two sides of the same coin. We need to have our eyes on both if we are to be successful in our careers!

Crucially, the direction of travel is outwards and other-centred. We are not about a 'self-help' Christianity where we put a spiritual gloss on greed and self-fulfilment. Nor are we about a 'therapeutic' Christianity in which the only thing going on in our career is 'personal spiritual development' - that would be to fundamentally miss the point. Ultimately, each of us is called, blessed and transformed by God not just for our own sake, but for the sake of the world and for his glory.



Further Reading and Resources



This resource takes quite a focussed approach to work – we've been looking fairly exclusively through the lens of seeking justice. Obviously, this is only part of a much wider picture. We'd really recommend taking the time to explore the themes of work, calling and vocation in far more breadth than we have done here.

Some good places to start are:

- Timothy Keller, *Every Good Endeavour: Connecting Your Work to God's Plan for the World* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2014)

and

- Mark Greene, *Thank God It's Monday* (Edinburgh: Muddy Pearl, 2019)

Our friends at LICC and Fusion have produced a fantastic resource called *Routed* – a group study which gives students a vision for life after uni. You can find the course details here: <https://www.licc.org.uk/ourresources/routed/>

For thinking critically about the effectiveness and impact of different careers paths, 80000hours.org has been referenced a few times and is well worth looking at.

We'd also recommend reading:

- William Macaskill, *Doing Good Better: Effective Altruism and a Radical New Way to Make a Difference* (London: Guardian Books, 2015)

You may not agree with all of it, but it introduces a lot of important questions which at the very least are worth grappling with when it comes to career decisions.

Make sure that you don't explore this alone – talk to friends and family, do some of this further reading in community, speak to mentors, pastors, or your Just Love coordinator, and above all, make sure that you involve God in the process from first to last.