

Six Tried and True Books for Vocational Discernment

The books listed here have been selected from among the vast number of resources on vocational discernment that are available in print. The criteria for selecting these include their inclusion of hands on, practical exercises that an individual or group can engage in, their focus on the spiritual and emotional elements of vocational discernment, and the Christian theological understanding of vocation.

Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the voice of vocation / Parker J. Palmer 1999

This gentle little volume began as a collection of essays and talks and is a reflection on Dr. Palmer's own vocational and emotional journey. He is particularly helpful when talking about the importance of honestly and frankly coming to terms with our own limitations and using that insight to guide us to more successful and fulfilling endeavors. <http://letyourlifespeak.com/>

Vocation: Discerning our Callings in Life / Douglas J. Schuurman 2004

Schuurman draws on the Lutheran and Calvinist traditions in constructing his doctrine of vocation. In doing so, he provides biblical, theological, and ethical analysis in exploring current responses to the classic view of vocation and offers a revised statement and application of this doctrine for contemporary North American Christians. This book would be an excellent starting point for any youth or young adult leader who wants to understand the biblical and theological foundations of vocational discernment. <http://www.eerdmans.com/Products/0137/vocation.aspx>

Making Life Decisions: Journey in Discernment / Geoff Pound 2009

In this volume Pound presents a 40 day guide for personal discernment. Each day includes an "approach", a scriptural passage, a time of silence for reflection and for recording your thoughts, the selection of a souvenir or artifact, a prayer and a commission. This is a fine resource for those who are looking for a structured resource to use when encouraging others in their discernment or for one's own use.

http://www.amazon.com/Making-Life-Decisions-Journey-Discernment/dp/0979033454/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1452802216

(also in downloadable format on his webpage <http://makinglifedecisions.blogspot.com>)

How to Find Your Mission in Life / Richard Nelson Bolles 2005

In this intimate treasury of wit and wisdom, Richard Bolles, author of the job-hunting bible: *What Color Is Your Parachute?*, explores the spiritual aspects of finding one's place in the work world. For anyone who has ever wondered how to make the most of their unique natural gifts, or how to find a vocation that is both socially responsible and personally fulfilling, this enlightening and empowering little volume provides immeasurable guidance

<http://www.christianbook.com/how-find-your-mission-in-life/richard-bolles/9781580087056/pd/087056#CURR>

Exploring the Life and Calling / Gary Black, Jr. 2014

This volume is one in a series published by Augsburg Fortress press that address how students who are entering or contemplating entering seminary should prepare themselves for the academic rigor, intellectual challenges, spiritual demands, and embodied claims that they will face in seminary. Its focus is specifically on the nature of the call to Christian ministry and is unapologetic in its proclamation that the principal focus of a seminary education should be the development of a thorough understanding and the application of Christian theology.

<http://store.augsburgfortress.org/store/productgroup/790/Exploring-the-Life-and-Calling?c=244880>

Calling and Clarity: discovering what God wants for your life / Doug Koskela 2015

As a professor of theology at an undergraduate institution, Doug Koskela has had extensive personal experience with counseling young people when they come to him with questions about career choices, vocation and calling. In this volume poses questions and provides answers to common questions about calling and discernment and distinguishes between the various kinds of calling and their relationships to our gifts, passions and vocation.

<http://www.eerdmans.com/Products/7159/calling-and-clarity.aspx>

To view an interview with the author that describes the content of this book, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8wwr8eayDnM>