

Visions of Vocation: Common Grace for the Common Good

Steven Garber

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A vocation is much more than a job, writes Steven Garber in this book for all who want their work life to reflect their innermost beliefs and values. Garber, an educator, author, and the founder and principal of The Washington Institute for Faith, Vocation and Culture, writes that our vocation, and our most difficult task, involves answering the question: “Knowing what I know, what will I do?”

“Always and everywhere, this is our challenge as human beings,” he writes. “Can we know and love the world at the very same time? Knowing its glories and shames, can we still choose to love?”

Garber’s Christian faith leads him to see the world as a “covenantal cosmos,” one in which the most ordinary elements of life can be made holy and can serve to connect Heaven and Earth. His book is filled with the stories of those who have chosen to look at the imperfect, broken world with the eyes of the heart, those who serve a God who also “has tears.” They also know that sorrow is not the whole story; life is also full of wonder, meaning, and joy—much of which we find by means of our vocation.

“There are flowers to be grown, songs to be sung, bread to be baked, justice to be done, mercy to be shown, houses to be built, technologies to be developed, fields to farm and children to educate,” writes Garber. “All day, every day, there are both wounds and wonders at the very heart of life, if we have eyes to see.” When, with open eyes and hearts, we love the world through our work, we become “common grace for the common good.”

KRISTINE MORRIS (Spring 2014)

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