

DOING WHAT YOU LOVE

Find work you enjoy and “feel His pleasure”

Andrée Seu

“My dear Wormwood, It seems to me that you take a great many pages to tell a very simple story. The long and the short of it is that you have let the man slip through your fingers.... A repentance and renewal of what the other side calls ‘grace’ on the scale which you describe is a defeat of the first order. It amounts to a second conversion — and probably on a deeper level than the first.” (The Screwtape Letters).



How has the demon-in-training blown it? What enticement of the Enemy (God) has he allowed to penetrate his painstakingly woven cocoon of worldliness, doubt, and deception? Was it a beatific vision? Was it a peek into Dante’s lower rings? None of the above: He let his patient ... read a book.

Do not weary yourself to guess at the contents of this book; we are not told, nor does it matter. We know only that one afternoon the man put aside the “right” books and picked up one he really wanted to read — and enjoyed it. It was the first thing he had done for a long time that was free of the ulterior motive of impressing somebody.

In 1944, C.S. Lewis warned a graduating class of King’s College in London of this hell-driven, life-dominating quest to impress others so as to be found in “the inner ring,” and “the terror of being left outside” (*The Weight of Glory*). My late husband told me the same thing: “Don’t worry about what people think of you; they don’t even think of you.”

How does fear of man become campaigning weather for dragging souls to hell? The answer will sound almost heretical: It keeps the person from experiencing something God created in order that he might seek after Him — pleasure.

The peculiar pleasure I mean is the one that 1924 Olympic medalist Eric Liddell noted in *Chariots of Fire*: “[God] also made me fast. And when I run I feel His pleasure.” It is the pleasure the Reformation rediscovered in Romans 12, the happy convergence of what we’re good at and what builds God’s kingdom. No longer must I be a baker or a smith just because daddy and granddaddy were bakers and smiths. No longer are some professions holier than others. All helpful work is sacred if done unto God (1 Thessalonians 4:11).

It may be that you are called to go to college. It may be that you’re not. Here is the testimony of someone who started college:

“After six months, I couldn’t see the value in it. I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life and no idea how college was going to help me figure it out. And here I was spending all of the money my parents had saved their entire life. So I decided to drop out and trust that it would all work out OK.... It was one of the best decisions I ever made. The minute I dropped out I could stop taking the required classes that didn’t interest me, and begin dropping in on the ones that looked interesting.”

Steve Jobs went on to take a calligraphy class, just because he was attracted to it. Ten years later, when he and his friend Woz were designing the first Macintosh computer in his garage, it all came back to him. They put it all into the Mac. Windows later copied the Mac, which is why you and I now have the wonderful typography we enjoy as we labor at the keyboard.

Seeking your pleasure may lead you into trouble. But denying your pleasure will surely do so. Over time you will manage not to hear its calling anymore. You will be a banker or a lawyer with a vague discontent — but every time you pass a car repair shop, you’ll want to roll up your sleeves and get your hands dirty.

This essay is confessional and purgatorial. And if I can persuade just one reader to stop a minute and remember, through the screaming banshees, what it is he loves, he might not be in such an all-fired hurry to register for English 101. There is something to be said after all for following your bliss. Something biblical.