



Hey Kids, This month we are discussing different career opportunities with your parents—see if you can write down what type of occupation each of the following Bible characters had?

- a. Cain _____
- b. Abel _____
- c. David _____
- d. Moses _____
- e. Joseph _____
- f. Deborah _____
- g. Jezebel _____
- h. Amos _____
- i. Peter _____
- j. Luke _____
- k. Zacchaeus _____
- l. Paul _____
- m. Dorcas _____

Answers:

- a. Gardener/Farmer; b. Shepherd; c. King; d. Leader; e. Prisoner & Gardner/Farmer; f. Prophetess & Judge; g. Wicked Queen; h. Shepherd; Prime Minister; i. Fisherman; j. Doctor; k. Chief Tax Collector; l. Tentmaker & Preacher; m. Community Services Worker.

Surviving a Job Loss?

By Gordon Botting, DrPH, CHES



Like five million plus Americans, you or someone you know may have found yourselves singing the pink slip blues. But it does not need to be all doom and gloom, because out of seemingly discouraging circumstances often a better opportunity will present itself. You may feel a variety of emotions, from being downright angry to being terrified and simply afraid for your financial future and job prospects. Before you panic and begin throwing ashes over yourself like the Patriarchs of old, take a step back and consider these two important questions—what are you going to do while you pursue a new job, and how do you plan to get that new job?

What Now?

1. Current Benefits

From the job you are leaving, you may have a variety of unemployment benefits, such as a lump sum payout or a severance package with a number of options, such as health insurance. Talk to your human resources department about your benefits and what you must do to activate them. Immedi-

ately acquire the documents you need to receive your government or state unemployment remuneration.

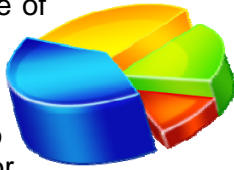
2. Develop A Budget

According to current statistics, it could take a minimum of nine months to acquire another job, so it certainly is fitting to get on a household budget, especially if you have not had one in the

"It is not sufficiently realized that work is a great, if not the greatest, factor in keeping us well." — Paul Dudley White

Stewardship is a total lifestyle. It involves our health, time, talents, environment, relationships, spirituality and finances.

past. Take a couple of days and find out just what it has been costing you and your family to live per week or month. With this information, begin to work out what areas (i.e., food bill, utilities, telephone, transportation, etc.) you can minimize to make your dollars stretch out. And with the assistance of every family member, identify which line items in your budget are essential and which are optional.



3. Plan Debt

If you received a severance pay package, you may be tempted to pay off any charge and credit cards you may have, but during this uncertain time pay only the minimum required. If you are in the habit of paying additional money towards the principal of your mortgage, pull back to the bare amount required by your loan company. Do not add new debt, such as a home equity line of credit or bank loans, to your situation to assist in your financial short fall. Above everything else, try to keep your head above the debt waterline. Remember, debt is a problem, never a solution.

4. Suspend Spending

Put the brakes on your spending habits by cultivating new mantras such as: "Make it Do," "Use it Up," "Wear it Out," and "Make it Last." In fact, have your children design these new family

slogans and place them in prominent places in your home. The bottom line is: "If it is not critical or crucial to your new economic lifestyle, forget it."¹

What Next?

With thousands of unemployed individuals looking for vocational openings in newspaper want ads or placing resumes on Internet career websites, consider some new career-seeking approaches. Listed below are four such strategies:

1. Volunteer

Donate your time to a local nonprofit charity. By involving yourself in the day-to-day operations and signing yourself up for all their events, you not only get to know many of the paid staff, but your work shows your enthusiasm and reliability. You just might end up being one of their new employees. Even if you don't end up with a job, one of the side benefits is that volunteering will continue to make you feel useful and productive.

2. Network

This may be the time to write down the name of every person you have come in contact with in the last ten to fifteen years who has had something to do with, or is in some way related to, your previous career. Call, write or e-mail them, letting them know



"God gave man work, not to burden him, but to bless him, and useful work, willingly, cheerfully, effectively done, has always been the finest expression of the human spirit." — Walter R. Courtenay

you are looking for a new opportunity. Ask them to forward your resume, along with the best way to contact you, to organizations they know of that are on the lookout for a person with your qualifications. Although networking can be a great job searching strategy, you do not want them to think of you as just another unemployed individual, desperate for work—better to contact them with a compelling new business concept that is either related to your profession or would enhance their industry.

3. Dream

Sometimes you are willing to stay with your current occupation because it provides you financial and job security. However, when you are let go, perhaps this is the time to cultivate your ultimate dream job. Maybe you have always wanted to write a best seller or start your own catering company, or something else—take advantage of this down time to open the door to your dream career. Past history has often demonstrated that just such a

situation has placed individuals on the bestselling book list or launched them into successful start-up businesses.

4. Move

If possible, reposition yourself to an area of low unemployment where you would not be competing with so many other job seekers. On its regional website, the United States Department of Labor provides unemployment rates each month. This may be a dramatic step for some individuals, but look at it as an opportunity to live in another part of the country. Rent out your current home while you discover a new world and opportunities beyond your current confines.²

Always remember, as you take the **What Now?** step with discipline and the **What Next?** step with boldness, to rely on our Lord, Who is with you always, even in loss of a job and in finding and beginning a new one.



References:

1. Some concepts from "How to Survive a Job Loss," *Debt-Proof Living Magazine*, April 2008, pages 1 & 13.
2. Some ideas from "Yes, You Can Find a Job in Tough Times," *Bottom Line Personal Magazine*, November 15, 2008, page 5-6.