

**Miracles that follow the plow :: Return to College?****Return to College? - posted by bluenote177, on: 2007/5/29 13:39**

Saints,

Lately I've been struggling about whether or not I should return to college in the fall. I just finished my sophomore year of college in a small liberal arts private school in North Carolina. At the beginning of the summer, my dad asked me why I was going to college. I could not give my dad an adequate answer. My dad said to me, "I don't want you going to college because you know I want you to be there" (my dad is not a believer and loves the fact that I'm at a liberal arts college).

He said he wanted me to do what I wanted to do with my life, even if it involves ministry. It seems that God has spoken to me about going to college saying, "Why are you in school allowing unbelievers to teach you?" It seemed to make sense to me. I don't say all this in a cocky, self-righteous attitude; rather, I really want to pursue God's will on this matter. At times I say to myself as my other believing friend does, "Well, we should stay in this particular school to reach the lost."

I agree to some degree with my friend, but I feel God is calling me elsewhere. I also must take into account that my mom said I must get a degree and I have to honor her. On the other hand I am somewhat confused, because I know to lead a victorious life in the Lord you don't need a liberal arts education or a degree. I'm not sure at this point if I should take a year off from school or go to a Bible college or a Christian school. Please pray for me and my situation. Thank you and God bless.

P.S.

I also want all of you to know that I understand throughout my whole life I will be around people who don't believe. Please don't think I want to get away to some heavenly paradise away from all unbelievers, I simply want to do God's will, whether it be in our out of school. Another thing to consider for me here is that in the Fall I am lined up to study abroad in London. I am on go for that right now and if I did go to London, I would be doing a theatre internship. I know there is tremendous freedom in Christ and am trusting He'll show me the way.

Re: Return to College?, on: 2007/5/29 15:31

Quote:

-----"Well, we should stay in this particular school to reach the lost."

"Come out of her my people, that ye receive not of her plagues." (REV 18:4)

Brother, I have a secular education in philosophy. And I was a bartender for over a decade - the LORD delivered me from it last year and my last shift at the nightclub was on New Year's Day, 2006.

My advice to you: you can't help others escape the quicksand if you jump into it with them. Continuing a liberal arts degree to "help the lost" will do as much harm to you as good to them - you seem to already have made up your mind about an arts degree. You will not get out unscathed - no more than I ought to keep bartending to reach the alcoholics... or enter a strip club to preach to naked dancers.

"And if you gaze for long into an abyss, the abyss gazes also into you." (Friedrich Nietzsche)

Jesus says "come out".

"Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God... No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (LUKE 9:60-62)

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Re: Return to College? - posted by Nile (), on: 2007/5/29 16:03

Brother, I have no advice for you - I'll leave that for the older brethren. But what I do have, that I will give to you, namely, my prayers.

Re: Return to College? - posted by iansmith (), on: 2007/5/29 16:32

Hello Bluenote,

My name is Ian, I graduated from the University of Washington with degrees in International Studies and History... After graduating from the UW I worked for a Fortune 50 company for 2 years before coming to a crossroads.

I had begun my walk with the Lord in college and didn't feel that what I was studying conflicted with what I was learning in school, but gave me a different vantage point on it. It's really easy to see the need for Christ around the world through the lenses of History and International Studies.

However after two years in the corporate world I felt myself being called towards Christian service. I applied for an internship with a missions organization and was rejected because of my outstanding student loans.

When I felt God was leading me towards his service I realized that during my years in college I had pretty much chained myself to Sodom and couldn't follow Him out.

The Lord has subsequently provided me a job with an awesome Christian ministry where I get to interact daily with missionary organizations while at the same time receiving a paycheck so that I can pay down my school loans. But it would have been much better if I had been able to go when I heard his call.

If you plan to stay in school, count the costs. It's not just the two years left to graduate, it's also the years of debt.

There are a lot of awesome Christian organizations looking for young people. You might want to check out YWAM or Operation Mobilization among others.

If you haven't received a call from God, get yourself somewhere where you can listen... In college there are a lot of competing voices for your attention. Get yourself alone with God and find out what His will is for your life.

Re:, on: 2007/5/29 18:41

iansmith, great advice!!!

Re: Return to College?, on: 2007/6/2 22:23

It feels odd writing this because Bluenote and I go to the same school and are close friends, so I don't exactly know how to talk about the issue on this forum (we've discussed the purpose of us being in college between ourselves many times), especially since he/you brought it up. I have been wrestling with the same stuff in the past semester or even year, and never have I been so divided and hesitant and desperate in my walk.

So, without wanting to divert attention from Noah's question and his situation, I would like to give a few details that make this particular decision (to leave my secular school or stay) harder for me. I really want to follow the Lord's will and not lean on my own understanding. And still I know that often His will is foolishness to us (like God calling Abraham to a foreign country and asking him to forsake land and kindred). So I've been brought to my knees in my utter insufficiency to find a way out of this matter. Hence, as much as I need and seek your advice, dear brothers and sisters, I know that I much more need your prayers.

(First, I started a thread last year on this very topic. So there's a good bit of history and some good advice I've received, for which I am very grateful. Here it is:

(https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id13804&forum35&12) The Truth about Secular Education. I don't remember all that was discussed at the time, yet it is a reference point of this very conversation.)

... I really don't know where I am going with this. Only the Lord can teach me His ways and I want to ask HIM and not trust in people... and still I don't know how to do both; maybe I don't have the faith to seek Him alone in secret, trusting that He will reveal His will in due time; or maybe I don't trust my brothers and sisters, who may have overcome similar struggles in the past... This lack of faith engenders much confusion and even hesitancy in me to bring up details... for I feel that

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I should somehow be qualified by God's grace and providence to be able to decide on this matter once and for all--for He has not left me, nor forsaken me--yet I am weak, trembling. Yet, I must say what I intended to say.

One thing that hit home with is what brother Corey wrote:

Quote:
-----My advice to you: you can't help others escape the quicksand if you jump into it with them. Continuing a liberal arts degree to "help the lost" will do as much harm to you as good to them - you seem to already have made up your mind about an arts degree. You will not get out unscathed - no more than I ought to keep bartending to reach the alcoholics... or enter a strip club to preach to naked dancers.

Brother, I cannot imagine myself as a bartender trying to reach the lost. It would undermine any authority I may have (how can I teach the person I'm selling drinks to why he should stop drinking?!) In this sense, I cannot stay at my school and hope to have an effective ministry, because I believe that truth is to be sought and found elsewhere and secular education has no other purpose but perhaps, as brother Art Katz said in one sermon, to disenchant you with itself--so you can see how vile and Satanic it really is for yourself and keep guard against it. I cannot stay, just as I cannot imagine how I would join--or become a member of--the Catholic church, for example, hoping to reach and save the lost or deceived in there. How could I tell them to leave the church if I myself am still there?! This makes sense, and if I have to tell the Lord right now, "I'm done with this. I quit," I can do it.

Yet, God has given me such a burden for the lost on my campus (I've been here for three years now). All the relationships I have, all the people that I have shared my faith with, all the young Christians that I feel I need to feed and help grow--I don't have the heart to leave these people! As a brother told me in a recent e-mail, which I believe was a prophetic word, "You are allowing the evil that is on this campus to continue to destroy human souls"--and he didn't even know about my decision to leave after the spring semester! So, in a way, I feel like I have invested so much in some brothers here that I cannot just leave them (if I left, who would stay?!); on another hand, how do I pass my classes, and survive all the persecution and opposition from the secular educational system, from the principalities and powers, and why would I put myself under such treatment and defy my professors for a degree that I don't esteem in the least?

So, if I stay, which is the more difficult, painful choice for me, I will stay for the body's sake and for the lost; if I leave, I will leave for myself I guess--and also for the lost, in the long run. I really want to go to a Bible college or seminary; I want to encourage and be encouraged. I do agree, brother Corey, that the darkness here has been so profound and so has the lack of fellowship, that I would give up everything so that I may live and walk unrestrained together with brothers in the Lord. What do light and darkness have to do together?

Then I know that if I have to be honest, I must tell my brothers and sisters at school: "Guys, there is nothing for you here! This is a bunch of lies they teach you that defile your souls." Hence, I don't want them to stay here, just as I don't want to be here myself, pursuing the wisdom and honor of this world. But if I leave, what would happen to this voice, to those people? Or maybe, if I leave, this would make my voice even stronger?

Maybe I am departing from the simplicity that is in Christ in trying to intellectualize this matter to an extreme; maybe I have forsaken my childlike devotion to my Lord so I can only get this answer and have some temporary "assurance" and "peace" with myself. Maybe I have to heed the call, "Come out of her my people, that ye receive not of her plagues," and taking the plough, I must never look back. I pray that the Lord makes it impossible for me to make any decision: that He will guide me and keep me in the right path, even when, in my blindness, I stray. I need, like a blind man, to be led by the hand.

In Christ,
Slavyan

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Re:, on: 2007/6/3 14:43

I praise the Lord for He gave me perfect clarity of vision: to know that I cannot possibly be a faithful witness and "help reach the lost" when I am compromising and in sin. For being at the school I am and pursuing--or being subscribed to--the things that secular education offers disqualifies me. Thanks for the encouragement, brother Corey! I cannot jump in the quicksand. I need to take the plow and not turn back.

The Lord gave me a couple of examples of things that I was involved in here at school and in general--which I consider worldly and sinful, albeit highly esteemed practices. By simply participating in this work, I am condoning it, which means that I cannot possibly have any authority to take a stance against it. The Lord is going to deal with so much shame in my life. I am so excited and thankful!

Re: Thanks, Ian. - posted by theopenlife, on: 2007/6/3 15:12

"If you haven't recieved a call from God, get yourself somewhere where you can listen."

This has been my position, not leaving school but leaving my business. I have done wedding photography for two years. Most of my clients were professing believers. They had no alcohol at the weddings, but the music demonstrated vain, worldly, and often outright wicked themes. I justified myself all the while, "ministering" nothing to them but a false condoning of their sins. "Do not share in the sins of others, but keep yourselves pure." 1 Timothy 5:22, I think.

"Ye shall even warn them that they trespass not against the LORD, and so wrath come upon you, and upon your brethren: this do, and ye shall not trespass... Deal courageously, and the Lord shall be with the good." 2 Chron. 19:10,11

Last night was my final wedding. I felt so, so dirty afterwards and repented before God. I desire never again to "sit in the seat of the scornful" without fleeing or clearly opposing it. I'm selling my camera this week with intention to take a "long walk" with God, probably from Seattle to Southern California. I want to hear Him.

I also began college in a pursuit of liberal arts. I see now that the unsaved do not need men learned in the mindset and methods of the world, but men who are liberal in the time they give to seeking God's grace in their prayers and studies of scripture. If I become content with "food and raiment" and Paul was, and "know nothing but Christ crucified" (and me with Him) I don't anticipate having time or need for a worldly career.

God bless, let us seek to live up to the name "church", the "Called OUT" ones.

Re:, on: 2007/6/3 16:59

Quote:
-----I justified myself all the while, "ministering" nothing to them but a false condoning of their sins. "Do not share in the sins of others, but keep yourselves pure." 1 Timothy 5:22, I think.

This is a great encouragement, brother, to know that the Lord is working in the hearts of many! Keep your way pure! May we be holy so we may see the Lord!

Quote:
----- see now that the unsaved do not need men learned in the mindset and methods of the world, but men who are liberal in the time they give to seeking God's grace in their prayers and studies of scripture.

It was amazing how this last semester I would start reading an article or a book or something for my secular classes, and read for fifteen minutes to the point that I feel so poisoned that I couldn't continue. Then I would open the Scriptures "a little bit", only to awaken my spirit, and never would return to my homework again. The Lord made it impossible for me to relish in the sin and flippancy of others. It seems that my prayers for God to show me sin as He sees it is being answered little by little.

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Quote:

-----Last night was my final wedding.

I rejoice in hearing this because I know how big a step it is for you, brother! For you and for those wretched souls that the Lord is going to call through you!

Just to add that I noticed some arrogance in myself here in my writing: the feeling that I can congratulate myself on finally being done with this thing... how easy it is to forget who delivered me! It wasn't me, it wasn't me!

Re: - posted by theopenlife, on: 2007/6/3 22:40

Quote:

-----It wasn't me, it wasn't me!

Amen. There is such a thing as human responsibility, but as I see it, our responsibility is to obey in His strength and then shift all credit to Him.

Re: - posted by awakenwithin (), on: 2007/6/4 0:02

My family was very big on me going to college, so that I could get a good job. The first semester I wasn't saved. But the next semester I was saved, and my whole thinking changed. My whole reason of why I was taking classes. I saw no point to take class, that were not going to help me with what God was calling me in Ministry.

Four months after I was saved I thought I was going to be a Missionary. I was taking dance at the time, I thought I was going to teach children dance. Maybe praise and worship. Then I thought if I dance it should to honor Christ, they are asking me to dance in ways that don't honor Christ. I went to dance show, I was so sick. The evil and wicked dance. I knew that I couldn't take these classes anymore. If I want to learn dance then I would do with some where else. Truthfully I went to my classes, with one purpose to share Christ. I do remember going to some classes, that were about unborn babies. To think about there were lots of thing I didn't agree with. I just prayed. I struggled with, my family wanting me to go. So I kept going. I know part of time I enjoyed my classes, and part it was really hard.

I spent half the time praying for everyone in the classes, I had many times I shared with people. I saw fruit, from it. I only took classes I wanted to take. God made it clear that I wasn't to go to college to get a piece of paper, I took the classes I thought he wanted me to take. And shared Christ with those he put in my path. God used it for a season to speak truth to people. I was asked not to come back to some classes, because I used every chance I had to share Christ in my classes. I always went to the community college, . But really what matters, is preaching Christ. So why waste our time, with studying books that are not going to help winning souls to Christ, one person in my family finished college I asked her, what did you think of school, it took my life. The big thing if God is putting it on your heart, then get out. I was working with a college group. I love the people. I didn't want to leave I loved them. But wasn't he fed, God said go. Sometimes we have to leave the needs in God's hands

In his love
charlene

Re: Finishing Secular College - posted by UniqueWebRev (), on: 2007/6/4 4:41

I have 5 years of secular college.

I started out majoring in Classics.

I ended up majoring in sin.

What little faith I had was further compromised, by what was taught in the 70's.

I would hate to be in college now...I can barely stand to look at the world picture to keep up with things, much less have to deal with it in such intensity.

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As long as a Bible College is accredited, you'll be fine for whatever degree needs you'll have, and you'll have to fight the devil a little less.

Being young and in college of any kind is a challenge in itself to survive in our world.

Get out, GET OUT, GET OUT!

Blessings,

Forrest

Re: - posted by awakenwithin (), on: 2007/6/6 2:14

I agree, get out
In his love
charlene

Re: update - posted by bluenote177, on: 2007/6/12 13:44

I would just like to thank you all for your prayers. I am praying for you all as well. At this point I feel God is calling me away from the college I now attend. The Scripture that's on fire in my heart is, "Do not be unequally yoked together w/ unbelievers." Please continue to pray for me. Never stop trusting in His grace and amazing promises.

Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiiss (), on: 2007/6/12 14:43

Hello...

I am praying for your decision, brother. I am surprised, however, at the amount of certainty by which people choose to impact the decision in which you must make.

A "secular" college? A "Christian" college? I would argue that the "secular world" exists in the most "sanctified" of Bible colleges or Christian organizations. As believers, we must live and operate in this world. Jesus didn't come to take us out of the world -- but to take the world out of us. Remember that even the weakest of lights shine brightly in dark places. We don't have to hide this light beneath the bushel of "Christian" schools or church buildings. As the world becomes darker, our light will shine more intently.

Remember that a college education is typically self-attained. You will certainly learn some sort of skills -- whether it is engineering, computers, scientific method, critical thinking, etc... However, you should never agree with all that your professors present before you. As flawed human beings, they simply teach you what they believe to be truth. Your understanding of "truth" is dependent upon your own understanding, and much more importantly, the knowledge of God. As a believer, I have never allowed the knowledge of this world to supercede the knowledge of God.

A degree is a key by which you can earn a better paying job for your family. In this world that God (in His infinite wisdom) chose to leave us, there are many jobs that require a degree or a certain amount of formal education. In addition, some employers will not recognize a degree from an institution that is not academically accredited. Thus, you should be wise in understanding your rationale for obtaining a college degree. Are you earning the degree for the sake of status? Are you earning the degree in order to advance in knowledge? Are you earning the degree in the desire to obtain a better job? Are you earning a degree for the sake of padding a resume? All of these issues matter when deciding upon a college education.

I have earned two bachelor's degrees and a master's degree from "secular" universities. I am currently earning a PhD. I graduated with Honors for both of my bachelor's degrees, and with a perfect 4.0 for my master's degree. Ironically, these institutions were only as "secular" as I allowed them to be. Yes, there were individuals who are involved in openly sinful lifestyles. But this is expected in life. And yes, there are professors who impart "knowledge" that contradicts the Word of God. But again, this is expected in life. In fact, the line between Christian and non-Christian is even more easily defined at such places. It opens an opportunity to shine the Light to this lost world. If anything, these "secular" schools have strengthened my faith because they allowed for my light to shine even more intensely in this dark world.

My story, however, is not your own. I will pray for your ability to make a wise decision. I would pray that God give you th

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e wisdom to understand the choices and the impact that such choices will have on your life -- both immediately and in the future. I must admit that, at one time, I was sitting where you are now. I felt that I could flip burgers at McDonald's if I could just spend the rest of my time preaching on the streets. One day, I realized that it was within my heart to get married. Minimum wage at McDonald's can do little to provide adequately for a family. I decided to attend classes at a university while ministering at the same time (both on and off of campus). I recently married a very godly girl whom I met on campus while obtaining my first degree. We both continue to minister on campus.

Brother, I implore you to weigh carefully your decision. I know of an individual who preaches against the "evil" of secular college campuses. He dropped out of school when I was still a sophomore. I saw him yesterday sweeping floors at a local Arby's. He is involved in a ministry, but to a limited, unpaid capacity. He looked very tired. He works 60 hours a week in order to make a car payment and rent. He has a girlfriend, but is not planning on marriage in the near future. I suspect that he might actually regret his decision.

Regardless, I will pray that you are influenced primarily by the LORD in your decision. His is the wisdom and guidance that you need for such an important and lasting decision! Be encouraged that we are praying for you!

:-)

BTW, both my wife and I currently teach at a secular college. I am blessed to have the opportunity to openly share my faith and beliefs to students while teaching the knowledge that is required in the courses.

Re: - posted by awakenwithin (), on: 2007/6/12 14:54

thanks brothers for that input. well put
In his love
charlene
I to will pray

Re: - posted by repentcanada, on: 2007/6/12 18:02

great thread brothers and sister!

Re: - posted by elected (), on: 2007/6/12 22:24

Quote:
-----I would just like to thank you all for your prayers. I am praying for you all as well. At this point I feel God is calling me away from the college I now attend. The Scripture that's on fire in my heart is, "Do not be unequally yoked together w/ unbelievers." Please continue to pray for me. Never stop trusting in His grace and amazing promises.

Bluenote the best Counsellor is Jesus go to Him in prayer unburden your heart to Him and trust that he will guide you with his word and Spirit.

Going or not to a secular college i believe to be a personal decision. Keep in mind that Jesus lived among sinners to be a Light to them, the sick need the doctor, we are called to live in this world but not be a part of it. I dont know the will of the Lord for this specific situation that you find yourself in but dont forget that sometimes God wants our little light to shine where the darkness is thickest.

I see your situation more as an inward matter. Something that should be decided between you and God, the plan that God has for each one is not just general but specific so find it out. If you have a daily personal relationship with Him, He can speak to your heart through some particular scripture.

Many of us can give excellent advices but the best one comes from the Holy Spirit, remember He is a living Person and not just some kind of 'energy'.

Sometimes God puts a restraint in our hearts when we take a wrong decision or gives us a deep peace when we make the right choice.

Check your motives, the good is the enemy of the best, dont miss the target and His specific call. Whatever challenge w

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we may face from the ungodly society be it in secular colleges or at work or somewhere else, soon or later if we want to live in the Spirit we have to walk against the tide.

Re:, on: 2007/6/13 17:36

I was just reading somewhere about George Mueller and how he joined a missionary society in England to the Jewish diaspora on the isles early in his walk with Christ. What happened was that because of the rigidity--or lack of spirituality--of the rules of this organization Mueller wasn't able to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit. He couldn't both submit to people, and yet serve the Lord with a clean conscience.

So the question I am asking myself and you, brother Noah, is: Does being in college--in the very environment you and I find ourselves--and being bound by a certain, even unwritten, secular contract, make it impossible to walk in the Spirit and not sin? When your teachers ask you to "explicate the best seduction poem," for example, or perform a sensual skit with a girl on stage for your acting class?

For one thing we cannot have two masters. Yet I am also thinking of the Scripture which I cannot find now--about coming to Christ as a slave as opposed to being a free person at the time of your conversion... How do we serve an unbelieving master if we were slaves, for example? Because at school you are supposed to submit to the authority of your teachers. Nonetheless, the verse says that you are "Christ's freedman"--perhaps because "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Cor. 3:17).

So are we free to do God's will on a secular campus? If we are serious about it. Paul went to jail many times; I know for myself that I will fail my classes or get suspended if I am not "a light under a bushel" and speak and do what good secular people expect from me.

One sermon that I listened to recently was I believe called "Seek Not the Honor of Men" (or a similar title) by Art Katz. It makes me ask the Lord: Father, am I compromised?

Re: Update - posted by bluenote177, on: 2007/7/14 5:37

I just wanted to drop in and thank all of you for your prayers; they were not in vain. The Lord has done far more than you and I could have ever imagined. I must admit that when I first started seeking advice from other believers about my return to college I did it out of fear and anxiousness. I said to myself, "Well, in Proverbs it says that in the multitude of counselors there is safety, so..." In reality, I wanted to replace the advice believers gave me with the Lord's guidance; a big mistake. Even so, the Lord has been patient with me. I have learned this summer that living the victorious Christian life is not about receiving an answer from the Lord and thinking that will set you for life. No, it is a constant, never-ending, vibrant, faith-filled walk that continually brings us to the feet of Jesus. If the Lord has given you an answer recently, don't think that one nugget of wisdom will get you through tomorrow even. No, don't lean on the answer He has given you; lean on Him, hear His heartbeat, walk in the Spirit, lean not on your own understanding. The Lord has shown me as I sought His guidance about my return to college how important the Holy Spirit is in the life of a believer. If you don't believe that you have received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, or have not been baptized with the Holy Spirit, I urge you to put aside your preconceived notions about it and pray the Lord to give you wisdom and guidance. What is the kingdom of God after all; is it not righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit? With the Holy Spirit comes power to be a faithful witness, communion with God as you've never known, as well as a million other heavenly fruits. Don't get me wrong, I believe that when someone is born-again they receive the indwelling Holy Spirit. Then again, I believe the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the outpouring of the spirit are different things. For those of you who have been praying for the Lord's will in my life, let me tell you that right now, I do not think I will be returning to college in the Fall. I had an opportunity to study abroad in London, but I know that doing the Lord's will is far more glorious and precious than going to some amazing place. The Lord has been asking me to pray about whether or not I should take a year off and go through a year long ministry program with an amazing man of God here in my hometown. Words cannot express the blessings He has poured out on me this past month. I am so grateful and can't help but rejoice, even though I have stumbled at times this past few weeks. I have never known Jesus so intimately as I have this summer. God has opened up my eyes to grace, and now I know it truly is amazing. It is good for a heart to be established in grace; it frees you from legalism and all sorts of evil.

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I thank God for all of you. Let's not grow weary in doing good. The Lord has some amazing things in store!

Re: - posted by seanjol (), on: 2007/7/14 10:03

Recently I was listening to a message by Ken Ham (not a Creation message) and he said something that I would probably agree with. He said, "I would rather that my children go to a secular university than for them to go to a compromising "Christian" college. Growing up in the South (bible belt so called), I have seen the curse of being a Christian in name only. College is a very difficult decision and I would say to be wary of the secular liberal arts schools and definitely run from the schools who call themselves Christians but do not teach the pure word of God.

I heard another message a few years ago where the guy said he would rather spend the money to buy his child a business and teach him how to run it for himself than for his child to go to a college to waste 150k on a psychology degree. I think so many times that we are conditioned in the way of the world and college is part of that conditioning.

Just my 2 cents and you definitely have my prayers.

Sean

Re: - posted by awakenwithin (), on: 2007/7/15 23:23

I must stay being where God wants is far far better. Dear brother I joyed to hear such things. thank you for sharing. What a praise and wonderful thing to hear what our Lord is doing in your life. Our God is Good. How we should praise him even more. I have and will pray again for you. for wisdom if you should go with this man. May you hear the voice of God. May he keep growing you in mighty ways. again thank you for sharing.

Lord God our King please humble and brake my brother more and more, father may you give him a hunger to seek your face away from everyone alone with you. May these time be rich and whole of joy. Father stire passion and vision and your wisdom into his heart.amen

charlene

Re: - posted by jordanamo, on: 2007/7/16 1:24

I see your struggle concerning returning to College. I am currently wondering what I am going to "do" as I turn 18 in a few months (and have "graduated" already with a GED). My family, particularly my mother, really want me to go to a College (she's even said she'll pay for it), but God comes first above family. College seems pretty much off the table for many reasons, most of which have been discussed here in previous posts.

Luke 16:15, And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

What a statement! Education, money, etc., are all things the world esteems to a high degree. Art Katz said he'd neither wish his son to go to the far dark areas of Africa than go to a College. The professors indoctrinate you with their wisdom, and worldliness is esteemed. People say we should be a light there. We're supposed to be in the world, not of it! But they fail to recognize that 95% of people that go into College are very young in their walk and should definitely not, in my view, be going into such environments... I know many people that have gone to college straight from high school, where the world just sucked them straight up, who I remembered from bible studies at church etc., but now are partying constantly and God has little room in their lives now.

Jesus said,

Matthew 6:25 "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? 28 And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, 29 yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? 31 Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and his right

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teousness, and all these things will be added to you.

34 "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. (ESV)

So personally, I do not think I am going to go to a college unless the Lord were to really lay it upon my heart. I admit I am not sure of my future. What is it that I will be doing? How will I support my future family/wife (as she likely will stay at home and take care of the kids)-- these are all questions you are probably thinking too, and questions I have no answer for. I have no idea about my future save for it being with God. I like the idea of life together (i.e. true community, living with other brothers and sisters,) but only will I really consider that if the Lord places it upon my heart.

Ultimately, I know that if I walk with God, He will guide me, protect me, clothe me, and feed me. And that I need not be anxious about things like getting a college education. A moderately low paying job may seem to some to be an inadequate income to feed yourself and your family, but I think not. Most of the things we buy are unnecessary, or could be bought more cheaply, or we can live without easily, etc.

But who am I to speak, since I haven't even had a job (yet) nor have been married/had a family to feed! So, many of you will have more wisdom than I in this and more.

Jordan

Re:, on: 2007/8/21 11:38

I believe there are two ways to go about secular education, and both are ways of death. You must either crucify the old man and put on the new man in Christ Jesus once and for all, counting all things loss, and abdicating the ownership of your life, including things that the world considers good, but the Lord hates. Or you must put to death the new man created in Christ Jesus and put on the old man once and for all, and live as you please, tossed to and fro by the waves. Both ways are sincere. There is no middle ground, unless you are a hypocrite and try to incorporate both the old and the new in one. The Word is clear: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). Only in a life of complete surrender (to God) is there transformation of our minds and freedom in the Spirit. But I believe it will cost us all things. If we are "conformed to this world," we can never be "transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom 12:2). The question is: whom do we want to put to death? Do we want to die so we can live or do we want to live so we can die?

Peace be with you,
Slavyan

Re: - posted by ccchhrrriiiss (), on: 2007/8/21 11:53

Hi NotMe...

No offense, but I feel that this is quite a ridiculous take on the matter. You are educated on a "secular" basis EVERY DAY. Who taught you how to use the internet? Who taught you to read and write? Who taught you basic math? Who taught you how to interact with businesses, restaurants, banks, etc..? Who taught you to obey the laws of North Carolina? Who taught you how to drive (and who ultimately provided the information about how to drive)? Who taught you how to fix your plumbing? Who taught you how to work?

If such an "education" is so "evil," then why do you practice it everyday?

A formal "secular" college education is simply a means to earn a diploma. This helps find a better paying job so that a person can provide for his/her family. Such a diploma doesn't mean that a person has forsaken the faith or the convictions that they hold dear. I am completing my doctoral degree, and my "secular" education has served to strengthen my faith -- not weaken it.

I can tell that you are a very sincere and godly person. Be extremely careful (and prayerful) about warning someone about something as important as their life. We will all be held accountable for bad advice.

:-)

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Re:, on: 2007/8/21 12:43

Quote:
-----I can tell that you are a very sincere and godly person. Be extremely careful (and prayerful) about warning someone about something as important as their life. We will all be held accountable for bad advice

I agree, brother. Accountable for the good and for the bad.

As for education, I think you have taken my words out of context. Is learning how to read or how to write evil? Or how to use the internet? Of course not. In this sense, education has its proper place. These are things that both the new and the old man can do (read, work, eat, etc.). The questions here is: how far can we go without going against the counsel of our conscience? If am I asked to familiarize myself with the law of the state I live in or to learn the process by how say a woody plant grows, it may be fine. But when I am asked to say that Christ is not the Son of God and my Lord, or act/talk/think/write as if He isn't, just to get by, then things get quite different. More so, if the new man cannot live out his life without putting it under a bushel, taking into consideration first the opinions and purposes of men, for his own good or benefit, then how can he walk in "the newness of life" at all? Why did Christians through the ages--even today--suffer that much persecution for refusing to conform to the ways of this world? I think this was the line of thought in which I was going.

Quote:
-----A formal "secular" college education is simply a means to earn a diploma. This helps find a better paying job so that a person can provide for his/her family. *Such a diploma doesn't mean that a person has forsaken the faith or the convictions that they hold dear.*

I see nothing wrong with a Christian getting a diploma or working to provide for his/her family. But, still, I need to make a distinction. Consider Pilate from the passage in Luke 23:

20 Pilate, therefore, wishing to release Jesus, again called out to them. 21 But they shouted, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!"
22 Then he said to them the third time, "Why, what evil has He done? I have found no reason for death in Him. I will therefore chastise Him and let Him go."
23 But they were insistent, demanding with loud voices that He be crucified. And the voices of these men and of the chief priests prevailed. 24 So Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they requested. 25 And he released to them the one they requested, who for rebellion and murder had been thrown into prison; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

Matthew's Gospel, chapter 27, reads in verse 24:

When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it."

Here was a man who knew what was right and didn't do it. He knew the truth and didn't obey it. How many times in our walk have we had to keep quiet or say what we don't think so we don't lose our status? How many times have we had to act like "mere men" to fit in a place which opposes our God so we don't suffer persecution? I know I've done this thousands of times. Given in to pressure from parents, friends, teachers, etc., under the banner of "seeking safety in the counsel of many." Of course, this doesn't mean that we should try on purpose to offend people and say things that we know they will reject, so we can be "faithful witnesses." Only the Spirit of God can bear witness to the truth.

I have been wrestling much with the issue of keeping my faith in the educational context lately. The struggle's shaken the very depths of who I am. Alternating periods of "I can't do this any more, Lord, it's killing me" and "I am going to give it a try this time and do what they want me to do, their way, for the sake of my family, finances, my education." But I haven't been able to accommodate those two modes or persons at all. Usually everything end with many tears, repentance, and starting the very same fight, unarmed and unprepared, again and again.

Sincerely,
Slavyan

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Re: - posted by tjservant (), on: 2007/8/21 14:18

Quote:
-----But when I am asked to say that Christ is not the Son of God and my Lord, or act/talk/think/write as if He isn't, just to get by, then things get quite different.

Quote:
-----How many times have we had to act like "mere men" to fit in a place which opposes our God so we don't suffer persecution?

I attend a liberal arts Christian university. I was called here. It is my mission field. It is a dark place. I have been asked to stay after class by most of my teachers to be questioned about my responses to certain topics. I have confronted erroneous teachings whether they are made by students or teachers. I have chosen to not attend certain classes/events, and I walked out of others. I'm sure this has affected my relationships and grades, but denying the Truth and/or going against my conscience is not an option.

I am not here to earn a degree (although that may happen), I'm here for Him. I take this very seriously. I must be careful to be salt and light. I'm not a good example if I compromise.

I may not be what you would consider popular, but many students and a few teachers have sought me out in order to get my opinion or thoughts on particular subjects. One teacher even changed their curriculum mid semester after we had a very lengthy discussion.

I am promised persecution. I knew it would happen when I counted the cost of coming to Christ. I have put my hand to the plow and will not look back. I'm a long way from perfect, but I am striving.

God will deal with the consequences of a life fully yielded to him.

I keep this in my Bible and read it often.

(https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id10549&forum35) Fellowship of the Unashamed

Re: - posted by Santana (), on: 2007/8/21 15:14

I wonder how a brilliant man like Ravi Zacharias would respond to this thread?

Re:, on: 2007/8/21 15:23

Dear TJ,

As if I am reading about myself in your story. Maybe I have not been as bold as you have. But I have spoken up many times and walked out of meetings and classrooms on other occasions. As much as I have walked out of churches and rebuked brothers in the faith about their disorderly walk. On occasions the Lord has given me boldness to speak before hundreds of people; in others, I have been afraid to speak before one person. Many times I've met amazing opposition, especially from Christians; many times people have been quite humbled and willing to listen to me. In my weakness though, the Lord has been glorified. This I know by the witness of His Word, Providence, Holy Spirit, my conscience also bearing witness. Other times, in the zeal of my flesh, I have done much damage to His cause as well, for which I have suffered the consequences.

For me, too, brother, the only reason for living, and thus for being at my liberal arts college, (although at times I fail) is to glorify the Lord Jesus and to bring people to Him. Nothing else. I cannot care less about getting a degree or honor from men (for which my parents are about ready to disown me); this world is fading away with everything in it.

I am also only a couple of courses away from graduation... I am taking one of them for the third time now (my major is English); and as things look now, I don't think I'll pass it. Under much pressure from parents--and about everyone around me--I decided to return this fall and give it a try. However, I am again trying to stand in two boats at the same time: confe

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...sing and denying Christ. A lot of times I have denied Him and then pacified my conscience, and uttered something about freedom in the Spirit and being under grace, etc., to excuse my disobedience, until I ended up in sin and depression, then returning to Him, and counting the cost of following Him again. Vicious cycle. I even willingly failed a couple of classes last spring because I couldn't do the work... or rather say what I think in the assignment without debunking the assignment itself.

I believe a time came when I had to decide which thing was more important: my education and prosperity, or the will of God (regardless of whether His will was that I left or stayed in school). I decided to leave, came back, decided to leave again, and came back again. Had no peace, and still have no peace when I think of ways I can make it through... for all of them seem to include a second kind of death, acquiescence to the wisdom of the world, and willful ignorance to the witness of the Spirit.

Some brothers say I am taking things to the extreme; looking too deep into things; spiritualizing everything. But I know that if I let go of this truth and that revelation, just to fit in, I am no better than dead and compromised, and I will never find peace. For I believe only a person who has nothing to lose can be free in the hope that Christ has given us.

Art Katz talked about a church that has an especial zeal for the glory of God. I pray that we may be such, whatever it takes! May we be not too afraid to enter into the answering of that prayer!

In Him,
Slavyan

Re:, on: 2007/8/21 15:45

Thanks for that testimony Tjservant.

Re: - posted by tjservant (), on: 2007/8/21 15:54

Quote:

-----For I believe only a person who has nothing to lose can be free in the hope that Christ has given us.

Amen. Consider it all loss to gain Christ the Lord. You are fighting the good fight. I will be praying for you as you return to school.

Grace and Peace

Re:, on: 2007/8/23 13:02

What did it mean for Paul to lose *all things* to gain Christ? All the persecutions he suffered, preaching the Gospel of the Lord Jesus to every creature, Paul was a chosen vessel, separated unto the Gospel. Right now I am in the process of being separated... unto the Gospel, I believe. I made the decision to quit those classes I am supposed to take and thus leave school. My heart is breaking though: for I am leaving all those souls here--so many people I know, most of whom don't know the Lord--and although it will be easier for me when I am not unequally yoked and/or required to deny my Lord in classes in order to move on, what is going to happen to them? Just in the past couple of days, I had the chance to run into two guys that were seeking the Lord's will for their lives--it was His will that led me to them--one of them wants to start meeting with me so I can "help him with his spiritual journey." So I ask, What does it mean to lose all things? To be unable to love and disciple those I've been entrusted? I've never been in a such place before. I kinda like returning to Egypt, to all the "friends" at school; I love pleasing people so much! The idea of letting someone down, or just leaving everything here "for the Gospel's sake"--leaving this quest for human wisdom and status--and having no clear direction but a vague premonition of an imminent time of testing in the wilderness--it makes a compromised and well-meant stay in my college more appealing. Perhaps this is what I must part with: even my best soulish intentions... I see an Egypt where I am and a Canaan I've been called to. May the Lord show me the incomparable greatness of the latter.

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Re: - posted by cchhhrrriiss (), on: 2007/8/23 16:04

Quote:
-----The questions here is: how far can we go without going against the counsel of our conscience? If am I asked to familiarize myself with the law of the state I live in or to learn the process by how say a woody plant grows, it may be fine. But when I am asked to say that Christ is not the Son of God and my Lord, or act/talk/think/write as if He isn't, just to get by, then things get quite different. More so, if the new man cannot live out his life without putting it under a bushel, taking into consideration first the opinions and purposes of men, for his own good or benefit, then how can he walk in "the newness of life" at all? Why did Christians through the ages--even today--suffer that much persecution for refusing to conform to the ways of this world? I think this was the line of thought in which I was going.

Â...

How many times in our walk have we had to keep quiet or say what we don't think so we don't lose our status? How many times have we had to act like "mere men" to fit in a place which opposes our God so we don't suffer persecution? I know I've done this thousands of times. Given in to pressure from parents, friends, teachers, etc., under the banner of "seeking safety in the counsel of many." Of course, this doesn't mean that we should try on purpose to offend people and say things that we know they will reject, so we can be "faithful witnesses." Only the Spirit of God can bear witness to the truth.

I have been wrestling much with the issue of keeping my faith in the educational context lately. The struggle's shaken the very depths of who I am. Alternating periods of "I can't do this any more, Lord, it's killing me" and "I am going to give it a try this time and do what they want me to do, their way, for the sake of my family, finances, my education." But I haven't been able to accommodate those two modes or persons at all. Usually everything end with many tears, repentance, and starting the very same fight, unarmed and unprepared, again and again.

Brother Slavyn...

I have attended school at "secular" universities. I earned both of my Baccalaureate degrees and my Master's Degree at secular universities. I am currently pursuing my PhD at another secular university. My wife and I met at a wonderful Christian organization (Chi Alpha Christian Fellowship) at our undergraduate University. She earned both her Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree at the same secular university. In all of these years of study, we have NEVER been asked to "deny" the Lord, to say that "Christ is not the Son of God," to "act/talk/think/write" as if He isn't, etc. ... In fact, such a requirement is AGAINST THE LAW in the United States.

Yes, there are certain degrees and classes that harbor heavy anti-religious principles. Such classes like Biology, Philosophy, Sociology, Psychology, etc. offer unbiblical perspectives on many issues. They are taught by professors. For instance, Biology students are taught about the theory of evolution. It is taught in a manner as to convey the theory as fact. Yet none of these students can legally be asked to compromise their religious beliefs. While they may be asked about the theories taught in class, this is no different from a person being asked to describe certain laws that we might not agree with (such as the legality of easy divorce, liquor, tobacco, capital punishment, etc.). When asked about the "legal limit" on my driving exam, I didn't fill in the blank with "All drunkards will burn in Hell." I simply answered the question from what I read in the Driver's Handbook. By answering questions about the subject on a test, an individual is not "condoning" a belief, but describing what is being taught about the issue. Most universities also allow the student to CHOOSE which science classes that they take, as well as the professors of each subject. Even if you must take a Biology class, you can still choose a professor who will be more open to the faith. In fact, there were several anti-evolution and Christian Biology professors at the undergraduate university that I attended.

You would be surprised to learn about the atmosphere at a University. Rather than a cesspool of hatred for Christianity, it is actually a cesspool of "ambiguous, free thought." Individuals are rarely mocked for their faith. Instead of looking like a godless communist state, it is far more reminiscent of the Athens where Paul preached. Yes, we (as believers) realize that this can be a much more dangerous place--since Christianity can become dismissed as "just another meaningless religion." However, we often fail to remember that we serve the only true, living God. His Word will not return void. Are we so "weak" in our faith that we fear the teachings of a man or woman called "Professor?" If so, then there is a far greater problem than the question of "secular" education.

The problem, I think, is that some people equate a secular education with "compromising" with the world. Yet no matter how "spiritual" and "separated" we might think that we are, we all are forced to have such interaction.

As believers, Christ did not come to take us OUT of this world. Instead, we remain grounded in Him while interacting amongst the rest of the world. We don't live like the rest of the world in a matter of "sinful conduct." However, we still have to pay our taxes, work, provide for our families, and perform other "secular" tasks. But these aren't really "secular" in nature, are they? When God has instructed us to provide for our house (I Timothy 5:8), "give unto Caesar" (Matthew 22:21), then we can safely assume that we should do our best in this endeavor. One tool to help us accomplish this is to educate ourselves in a trade or to earn a degree. The degree doesn't necessarily equate to knowledge. Th

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There are a great many ignorant and unintelligent individuals who have earned degrees (whether by cheating or simply "getting by"). Yet statistics have proven that an individual with a college degree will most likely earn a much larger salary and benefits—things that he can use for his family and the work of the Lord.

I have never feared "losing" my faith. I know the certainty of the One in whom I trust. I know who I am in the Lord. I know the exact moment, place and time in which I surrendered my life to the Lord (as a young teen). I went from agnostic to firm believer in a matter of moments. Since then, I have never questioned the validity of the Word of God or my faith. I have taken more science classes than I know what to do with—and none of these weakened my faith. Never was I asked to compromise my love or belief in Christ. In fact, I have actually had the opportunity to speak with professors about my belief in, and love for, the Lord. Even as a college freshman, I was able to speak with an extremely liberal, unbelieving professor about the Lord. I even purchased a copy of the Keith Green biography, *"No Compromise."* God provided me a great deal of favor in this professor's eyes. He constantly commented about how "intelligent" I was. As a result, he introduced me to Congressmen, Senators, and Governors. During these meetings, I never once compromised my faith.

Sadly, there is a misconception about believers in the academic world. Many academics and scholars tend to look at believers as if they were unintelligent, unmotivated, unreasonable radicals with doctrinal tunnel vision. And you know what? There are many people within the church who willfully fit that description. They almost pride themselves on their "lack of education." They even feel that they are reminiscent of the disciples. Yet they forget that each of the early disciples had a trade in which they were learned BEFORE (and on some occasions, AFTER) they were called. Peter, James and John were fishermen. Matthew was a tax collector (probably pretty good at math). Luke was a physician. Paul was a Pharisee and a tentmaker. Even Jesus was reputed to be a carpenter. While Paul counted all things as loss (Philippians 3)—he didn't bury his "talents" (Matthew 25). Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, Paul, James and Jude used their knowledge of reading and writing (a very rare commodity in that day) to write the Word of God. Paul even used his knowledge of the Roman legal system to take the Gospel unto Caesar.

Let me reiterate: If a professor at any college (religious or secular) attempts to change your faith—DON'T. No one can force you to learn (ask any pastor). No one can force you to compromise. And no one can destroy your faith. If you fear losing your faith because of a professor—then speak with the Professor. If you still feel uncomfortable, speak with the Department Chair, Dean or School Administration. You would be surprised by how fast they will rush to your aid! As a freshman, I was asked to write an argument paper in support of gay marriage. I spoke with the professor about my desire to change topic, and she let me change the topic AGAINST gay marriage from a position of faith. I earned an "A" on the paper and in the class. Even after exhausting all avenues (which you probably would NEVER have to do), you can still drop that particular class. If you are a weaker believer, then you can change your major. Regardless, no one has the authority to call into question the value of a secular education. While it may not be your "cup of tea" or personal conviction, please don't spit on it in the name of the Lord.

There is a strong mentality for some to attend a Christian University. If that is their desire, then go for it. While I have a moderate conviction against the modern "career minister" (individuals who educate themselves solely in an effort to become salary ministers), I have nothing against Bible Schools or Christian liberal arts schools. They are expensive. They sometimes receive a little less financial aid than state or public colleges and universities. However, I have a feeling that you'll find just as much godlessness on a "Christian" campus as on a "secular" campus. What makes matters worse is that the hypocrisy or sinfulness often seems far more evident on the "Christian" campus.

I apologize for the lengthiness of this post. I began writing it a couple of days ago, but didn't want to post it in haste. I simply want to make others aware of the common misconceptions about "secular" colleges and universities. It is indeed possible for believers to attend and even thrive in such an educational environment. While I do not pride myself on my education (and consider it dung in comparison with my relationship with Christ), I am glad that the Lord provided me the opportunity to further my education in the "secular" environment. I believe that the Light of Christ shined ever so brightly in a friendly but dark place.

:-)