

Articles and Sermons :: Think twice before going to Bible College/University!!!

Think twice before going to Bible College/University!!!, on: 2008/3/3 23:27

Why You Should Think Twice About Going to Bible College

By Josef Urban

Every year across the world, hundreds of thousands of students sign up to go to Bible College (when I say Bible College, I mean every official 'institution' that attempts to train others for the work of ministry). Some of them are eager to serve God and want to be trained and equipped to do so properly. Others are pressured into going by their parents. Still others go with dollar signs in their eyes and greed in their heart, seeking to build a prosperous future. Even others go with a motive based out of the pride of life, seeking to make a name for themselves or to be respected in the eyes of the world. There are many other less common reasons, I suppose, that others attend as well. However, it is only the first class of people, those who are eager to serve God and learn how, that I want to address.

There are many dear precious brethren in Christ who are burning with a passion to serve and glorify God by doing the work of ministry, but who, because of the great neglect and sad state of much of the modern Church, or because of a lack of experience, find themselves ill-equipped to serve God in the capacity they desire. For this class of people, Bible College becomes a strong option for consideration, since it purports to be the best way to learn to do God's work. However, for many, I believe it is a trap of the enemy, designed to make them stumble, and many times becomes more harmful than it is helpful.

Now let me say that there are some faithful brethren who are in these places, and even teach at various Bible Colleges, who teach the word of God in truth, and are serving the Lord by teaching at just such an institution. These brethren I do not wish to come against, or to speak against, as they are serving God in their capacity and being faithful with the knowledge God has given them, and they shall stand or fall in the sight of their own Master. If this is you, and you are such a person, and a true Christian indeed, then know that I am not coming against you in any way. In fact, I rejoice that you are in such a place in the midst of much that is false, in order to be a beacon of light and witness for truth in the midst of all the darkness of false profession and formal godliness without power that tends to pervade in these places. I rejoice that Christ our Master has placed you in the midst of the rotting flesh and carnality of these places to be the salt of the earth and lead those hungry souls who are under your instruction into the blessed knowledge of truth. I know that there must be much that you see around you that grieves you, and that you don't need a rebuke, but encouragement, to stand strong on the Word of God, and to never compromise the truth! I am not coming against you, oh no, but exhorting you to earnestly contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints, even in the midst of much temptation to compromise, and to be strong in your God in the midst of a crooked generation!

I am also aware that there are a few Bible institutions around the world (and most of them outside of America) that actually do teach and demonstrate the truth of God's blessed Word, which are operated by faithful men of God who are living by faith and not robbing God's people, but pouring their lives and souls out as an offering for others to live and thrive by. These few faithful institutions are dedicated to the noble work of training soul winners to go out into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, and praise God they are! Aware of the fact that there are a few such institutions, scattered here and there as the Lord's faithful remnant, raising up laborers for the harvest, and sending them forth as sheep in the midst of the wolves of the nations, let me state that it is not these that I am coming against.

What I am coming against is the large and unscriptural institutions that are given over to a large degree of error, and I am attempting to save somebody from making the bad decision to attend such an institution. There are a number of reasons why it is clear, from Scripture, that Bible College is generally a bad idea. While I am aware that there may be a few exceptions where God does call His true saints to attend such an institution, even so, it is necessary that even such a one would give serious consideration to the following points before attending, and refrain from doing so unless they have a completely clear conscience and the obvious leading of the Spirit.

Aware of these exceptions, let us now move into the heart of the matter, and state why, for the vast majority of God's people, attending Bible College is a bad idea:

I. It is based on the traditions of men rather than the Word of God

“For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men” (Mar. 7:8).

Search your way through the Gospels and see if you can find a single command of the Lord to any of His disciples to start a Bible College. See if you can find a single place where Jesus suggested that it would be beneficial to the spiritual growth of His later followers if they attended an institution of higher learning. Then, search the Acts of the Apostles and see if a single one of the early disciples even thought of such a thing. When you’ve finished that, read the epistles and see if Paul suggested it, or if Peter, James or John even conceived of such an idea. Take special note of the great “Pastoral Epistles”, 1 & 2 Timothy and that blessed epistle to Titus, and see if the Apostle Paul ever suggested or even hinted to these young disciples of his that it might be a good idea to join a Seminary or Bible College. Surely, if in any place in the holy writ of Scripture Bible College should be suggested, it would be in the epistles to these young ministers of the Gospel – but you won’t find it there. Then delve your way through the Revelation of St. John and see if those blessed saints who overcame the wicked one by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony and by loving not their lives unto death ever had a greater advantage of overcoming the evil one because they went to Bible School.

Who were the heroes and saints of old that wrought the mighty acts of God by their daring and unwavering faith? Were they not those who were despised and rejected, fools in the eyes of the world, and largely unlearned and ignorant men? Did their learning, or lack thereof, in any way influence the feats they did for God? Which Bible College did Enoch go to in order to learn how to walk with God? Which seminary did blessed Abraham attend in learn how to be strong in faith and to trust in God? In which religious university did Joseph learn to obtain the favor of God? What Bible College did Moses graduate from in order to learn how to hear from God and to perform mighty signs and wonders? In which seminary did Joshua learn to demolish the walls of Jericho with a shout? What more shall we say? In which Bible College did the great heroes of old learn to exercise the kind of faith that subdues kingdoms, administers justice, obtains promises, stops the mouths of lions, quenches the violence of fire, escapes the edge of the sword, makes strength to rise out of weakness, causes to wax valiant in fight, and puts whole armies of the enemy to flight?

Where did the early Apostles of the Lamb learn to heal the sick and cast out demons? Where did they learn how to build the Church of God? Where did they learn how to preach the Gospel with such power that multitudes were converted in a single sermon? Where did they learn to raise the dead, open the eyes of the blind, cause the deaf to hear, and pray down earthquakes in prison? Where did they learn these things? I will tell you where they did NOT learn them: in Bible College!

The fact is that Bible College is an idea that originated not in the Word of God, but in the mind of man, based on the traditions and customs of this world. Its institutional structure came straight out of Egypt (literally, as that is where the first institutional Christian Bible school was founded), and not from the Word of God. So what methodology does the Scripture employ to train up eager men and equip them to do the work of the ministry?

The patterns for this in Scripture are very clear and the Word of God is filled with almost countless examples. There are two major ways where a willing and called soul is to be trained for God’s work: (1) Personal mentorship and (2) by God Himself.

The first is a pattern of personal mentorship, wherein the experienced, Spirit-empowered, and godly minister of the Lord trained a willing soul who was called by God to do the same work. No doubt that Joshua was trained to be an able warrior and wise leader of the people and a great man of God by sitting under the mentorship of Moses. Elisha was a prophet of God who had a tremendous ministry as leader of the school of the prophets, being trained to do so, by sitting under the mentorship of Elijah. The Apostles of Christ sat under the mentorship of the Lord Himself. And after the Lord’s departure, they continued to appoint and train faithful men to continue to carry out the work of the ministry in their tradition. Along these lines, we see that Paul mentored Timothy who was then told to mentor, equip, and appoint others:

“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2).

The local church has a responsibility before God to be a thriving body of believers that is self-multiplying. As new converts are won to the Lord, they are to be taught to do everything Jesus commanded, and are to be nurtured into the gifts and callings of the Spirit that God has for them, and the ones who are called to preach and teach, are to be trained by the already established preachers to do the same thing, and when they are able, are to be appointed and sent or established in the blessing of God. As far as the New Testament is clear, this is the best method of training up souls to do the work

of ministry and is the pattern which the Apostles of Christ laid down for us to follow.

However, this leaves many of us with a major problem in light of the general and great apostasy of our modern times. Many of the Lord's people are hard-pressed to find a good place to fellowship, let alone find a godly leader who is well equipped to train them up in the ministry. Though many of the Lord's people hunger for fellowship with likeminded believers, and long to be trained and mentored by a man of God filled with faith and the Holy Ghost, it remains a great tragedy of our modern times that finding such a thing is equivalent to finding a needle in a haystack, and for many, next to impossible. So what then does such a one do?

That is, they are to be trained by God Himself, which is the second pattern we see in Scripture, and I must admit, the most common. Noah was a man well-instructed in his time, a preacher of righteousness, and a skilled craftsman, because he was taught by God. Abraham was called by God, and was strong in faith, giving glory to God, though no one was there to teach him, and all the nations around him were idolatrous. Moses received his commissioning in the wilderness, directly from God, and was taught by God personally every step of the way. We could go on and on. How about New Testament times? John the Baptist didn't graduate from the Bible Colleges of his day, he graduated in the wilderness in the school of the Spirit. The Apostle Paul was converted, commissioned, and trained by the Lord Himself, apart from human instrumentation, according to his words in Galatians 1. Time fails to mention all the examples of Scripture, as the Word of God is filled with the examples of men that were taught by no other man, but were taught by the Lord Himself.

Seeing that the Lord is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and is still able to speak to His people, and is just as alive now as then, He is still in the business of training the soldiers of His great army of saints. Walking with God is something that no unconverted man can do, but is the privilege of every child of God, and is the means of being mentored by the Lord Himself.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

By diligently reading and studying the Word of God, and obeying it, walking in it continually, the man of God, that is, he who belongs to Christ and desires to do the work of the ministry, can be thoroughly equipped to do every good work that the ministry calls for. Everything we need to know is in the Word, not in an institution. Do you want to be equipped for the work of ministry? Saturate yourself with the Word of God! Spend hours upon hours reading through, meditating upon, and applying the Holy Scriptures to your life. Meditate on the promises of God therein until they become written on your heart by the Spirit, and become as necessary a part of you as the air you breathe. The man of God can be "perfect", that is, complete and mature, and not only able, but thoroughly able, to do every good work of the ministry, by learning from the Word of God.

Learn from God by sitting in the school of the Spirit. This school is scarcely attended. No amount of money can purchase your admission, for its curriculum is priceless, yet it is totally free to attend. It is about as much desirable to the flesh as the wilderness was in John the Baptist's day. There are no great theologians, no Bachelor or M. Div. degrees, no slick orations, and nothing to appeal to the carnal mind. It is found in your nearest prayer closet. The classes are endless amounts of prayer, Bible-reading, studying, and fasting. The admission price is the embrace of the Cross. The Teacher has a habit of breaking His students through painful chastisement and the more He favors the student the more He whips him. The refining fire is applied and long-held emotional commodities are purged. In this school, pride is abased, selfish ambition shattered, and many good intentions are exposed as completely unprofitable. The student must utterly lose his identity and take upon himself the identity of His Teacher; he must forsake all his future dreams and plans in life and accept whatever the Teacher chooses for him to do. There is no official graduation on this earth, and no honor from men is received for attending. This school guarantees not earthly success, but earthly tribulations and persecutions. "But though the price is high, the reward is great, for this is the only means by which God's ministers can receive "power from on high", the one thing that Jesus said was essential to being an effective minister of the Gospel.

II. Bible colleges tend to swell the head and starve the heart

Much of Christianity, in our modern day, has turned into a religion of the head, rather than a power that works in the heart. "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Tim. 3:5). In many circles having a bigger head constitutes having a bigger position in the Kingdom of God. It is a sick and twisted notion that the more knowledge one has, the godlier they are, and it is upon this premise that almost every Bible College has its foundation built. These institutions are designed to pack the brain with knowledge, and often-unnecessary knowledge, while starving the

he hungry heart from experiencing the true reality of God. Training for ministry is received in a classroom where the brain is swelled and the heart is starved.

This is more akin to Greek philosophy than it is to true Christian Theology. What is theology? It is the study of the things of God. Why should we study the things of God? —Not so we can know all kinds of things about God (even Satan knows this), but that so we can know God personally, and better, and walk with Him. —“The people that do know their God shall all be strong, and do exploits” (Dan. 11:32). To be strong in Christ, and do exploits for His name’s sake, is our highest calling in the last days! This is not done by knowing all kinds of knowledge about God, but by knowing God Himself, personally, which is something these institutions generally fail to do.

Peter and John were ignorant, unlearned fisherman from Galilee. Yet the mighty theologians of their day and the great, learned Jews were astonished at them: —“Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13). These two Apostles had something that the great theologians didn’t —power from on high and boldness in the Holy Ghost, and a living relationship with the risen and glorified Christ. None of the schools of Jerusalem’s theology could teach these things, and none of the institutions of our day can teach these things! Only by knowing God personally, by His grace can we be equipped to be able ministers of the New Covenant, as were Peter and John.

Many men graduate from Bible Colleges with thorough training in homiletics (the art of speaking), hermeneutics (the art of interpreting Scripture), and many more —“arts”—, but know next to nothing about carrying the Cross, walking in the Spirit, praying in the Holy Ghost, and preaching in the unction of God. Though they can deliver the soundest and most politically correct speeches, they can’t deliver a demon-possessed person from bondage to Satan. Though they know all the geographic and historical backgrounds of every book in the Bible, they are blind to knowing the deep things of the Spirit. Though they are free from the stupidity of unlearned ignorance and zeal without knowledge, they know nothing of being free from sin and of being eaten up with zeal for God’s house. Though they know how to correct heretics and cults with the Word of God, they don’t know how to wage warfare in the spirit and tear down the Devil’s strongholds by faith. Though they have the keys of the world’s storehouses of knowledge, they don’t have the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Though they have authority in the eyes of the world, they have no authority in the Kingdom of God. —“Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?” (Acts 19:15)

How many hungry hearts go to these institutions, seeking to be filled with the fullness of God, only to be utterly disappointed, and drop out with their hearts even more hungry than when they came? —“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it” (Amos 8:11-12). And not only do they drop out in utter disappointment, but also many thousands of dollars in debt because these greedy money-grubbing institutions have robbed them blind, a fact which brings us to our next point.

III. They are given over to the error of Balaam

—“They have rushed for profit into Balaam’s error” (Jud. 1:11).

The average tuition for a regular Bible College institution is thousands upon thousands of dollars. These institutions take this money to build large, extravagant facilities often worth millions upon millions of dollars, and the overseeing staff often lines their pockets with the profit. The teaching staffs are hired, and often work for money, not for the love of eternal souls. All this money is charged to the students who desire to learn the Word of God. If the student doesn’t pay, he doesn’t get taught. To put it short, these institutions are peddling the Word of God for profit!

When Elisha, by the power of God, caused Naaman the leper to be cleansed, Naaman tried to offer him money in return. What did Elisha say? —“As the LORD liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none”. And he urged him to take it; but he refused” (2 Ki. 5:16). Elisha wouldn’t even receive money for the things of God after they were given, let alone to charge money before they are given, such as these institutions tend to do! I fear that Elisha may stand up at the Judgment and pronounce woes upon many of these modern day institutions that charge bundles of money for the things of God! This is evidenced by the fact that when one of Elisha’s servants, Gehazi, went out and chased after Naaman, and received money from him, Elisha pronounced the judgment of God upon him, and the Lord smote that servant and his seed for all generations with the leprosy of Naaman. If he was struck with leprosy for all generations for this one foolish act of charging money for God’s gift of grace, what do you suppose God’s thoughts are concerning all the people who charge

for His Word today, not just once, but repeatedly? Just because it is acceptable in the eyes of the world does not mean it is acceptable in the eyes of God.

How about Daniel, that great beloved prophet of the Most High? When Belteshazzar, the king of Babylon, needed the handwriting on the wall interpreted, he offered Daniel a scarlet robe, a golden chain, and a third of the kingdom to interpret the writing for him, but Daniel refused. He said, "Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation" (Dan. 5:17). While the true prophets worked for God, and offered His Word freely to all, without money and without price, it was the mark of the false prophets, witches, sorcerers, and fortune-tellers, to charge for their 'prophecies'.

Again, in Acts 8, when Simon the Sorcerer offered Peter money for the power of the Holy Spirit, Peter outright rebuked him sharply. Peter would not receive money in exchange for the things of God, and Simon's heart was not right because he thought God's glorious gift could be purchased with the "Mammon of unrighteousness". What's the difference between trying to buy the power of the Holy Spirit, as Simon did, and trying to buy the knowledge of the Holy Spirit, which many people do today from Bible Colleges? The old Reformers had a name for charging money for the things of God; they called it "Simony", after Simon the Sorcerer. They would denounce the harlot Catholic Church for charging for the things of God. I wouldn't doubt if they were alive on earth today they would denounce much of what goes on in Protestantism for charging for God's Word.

Charging for the things of God is in direct contrast to the principles of Scripture. Solomon said, "Buy the truth, and sell it not" (Pro. 23:23). Jesus said, "Freely ye have received, freely give" (Mat. 10:8). Paul said, "Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit" (2 Co. 2:17 NIV) and, "I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel" (Acts 20:33).

Peter, exhorting the elders and teachers of God's people, saying, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking heed to the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind" (1 Pe. 5:2). He clearly says that they must teach willingly, because they want to out of desire to serve God and love for Him and His people, and not for money, that is, not as just a job or hired position of employment. Now this is not to say it is wrong to live from the Gospel, for the laborer is worthy of his wages, and the priesthood is to partake of the sacrifices from the altar to get their meat, but this is to say that if anyone is serving as a teacher and is doing it as a job, in order to make money, and not out of love for souls, then they are disqualified. And this is sadly the case with multitudes of Bible School Professors.

What right does any man have to sell that which belongs to another? The truth is God's, and He gives it to His people freely! In fact, Christ already purchased it all for us in full! How dare any man to take the precious truths that Christ shed His precious blood to purchase for His people to partake of freely by grace alone, and to turn around and charge money for these truths! This is equivalent to Balaam saying, "Give me money and I'll prophesy to you!" These institutions say: "Give us many thousands of dollars and we will teach you God's Word". It's the same thing. Dare you fall in Balaam's error, and support his damnable habit of peddling the Word of God for profit?

IV. Bible Colleges can't teach anybody the most important essentials for ministry

When God teaches, He not only instructs, but He also imparts. That is, when God teaches His people things that will add to their knowledge and increase the light they have received by the Word, as long as they are following Him with all their heart and seeking His face, He also imparts to them the power and ability to live up to the increased light, that they may walk in the light as He is in the light and please Him. Since the Kingdom of God is not in word only, but also in power, the most important thing is that we have the power of that Kingdom working within us. Just knowing the Bible itself, and advanced theologies, philosophies, theories, interpretations, etc. is not enough to constitute able equipping for God's service.

The Kingdom is not in empty words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power. Therefore, just words, such as students receive by sitting under instructors in Bible College for hours every day, are empty if they don't have the power of the Spirit causing them to be received and imparted to the soul. Bible College can teach a person that Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit", but it can't actually enable somebody to be poor in spirit. It can teach, "Blessed are those that mourn", "blessed are the meek", "blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness", and more, but often the very programs that are run in these places according to the educational system and ways of this world tend to produce the very opposite of these attributes of godliness, at least in some degree. At the very least, they completely lack any ability whatsoever to impart these characteristics of Christ's Person to the soul. However, some

body ignorant of knowledge to a large degree might not know exactly what it says in these particular verses of Scripture, or at least not know the meaning of these words, yet may have experienced the power of them working within their heart. Such a one may not be able to explain the Beatitudes, but they have experienced firsthand the Spirit of God revealing to them their own unworthiness, producing brokenness and mourning for sin, enabling true meekness of spirit, and implanting a mighty hunger for God's righteousness in their heart. Classrooms cannot teach these things, only the blessed Spirit of God can.

The greatest commands of God's Word, and the tests by which every Christian and minister stands or falls, are commands to love God with all our hearts and to love our neighbors as ourselves. The attributes of love are fruits of the Spirit; they cannot be learned in a classroom. They have to be received directly from God. And oftentimes, the very things many Bible Colleges teach, such as religious pride, sectarianism and denominational division, and more, tend to lay down a faulty foundation in the minds of young ministers that is just the opposite of love. "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth" (1 Co. 8:1).

The greatest Teacher on earth is God the Holy Ghost. Think about it. The first century church had no Systematic Theologies, no Bible Colleges, and not even a New Testament, but they were strong in their God and did exploits in His name. They didn't have these things, but what they did have was the Holy Ghost, and He was all they needed.

"But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him" (1 Jo. 2:27).

If you are a born again child of God then you have the anointing of the Holy Spirit within you, and He is not only with you, but abides in you. The Apostle clearly says that you don't need any man to teach you because the Holy Spirit will teach you "all things" (every thing needful for life and practice as a Christian). On top of this, what He teaches is always truth, it is never a lie, and never wrong, and the more He teaches you, you will continually and increasingly abide in Christ. "And the more you abide in Christ, the greater the fruit you will bear in your life for His name's sake and glorify the name of the Lord.

Let's be honest. Many of us have slighted the Holy Ghost and treated Him neglectfully. We look upon Him as merely an invisible and influential force, but not as a Living Person Who can personally teach us and instruct us intimately in the things of God. We oftentimes don't think of personally communing with Him, as in the presence of God, and hearing from Him, letting Him lead us through the Scriptures and apply them to our heart, and letting Him mold our inner man into the likeness of Christ. Too often we look to other things, worldly methods, gimmicks and shortcut tricks from the world, and to man for our learning. It's much easier to let another man do all the homework and research and then tell us what he finds than it is to submit ourselves continually under the rod of the Chief Shepherd. Many a soul has grown lazy in study, rather than fervent in spirit, and there is very little "rightly dividing the word of truth" anymore because we won't even attempt to divide and sort the word to begin with, let alone apply it. If God were as lazy in teaching us as we are in learning from Him, I must admit, we would scarce learn anything from God. It takes discipline to be a disciple, and to learn from Him.

This is not to say that there are no teachers in the Church. Teachers are a ministerial gift and an essential part of the five-fold ministry (see Eph. 4:11-12). It is right for us to sit under and learn from godly, Spirit-anointed teachers of God's Word. However, we are not to look to them, we are to look to Jesus. We are not to put our trust in them, for they are mere men, but our trust should be in Jesus. We are not to blindly accept everything a particular teacher tells us, but we are to examine it with the Word of God. "Nor are you to be called 'teacher,' for you have one Teacher, the Christ" (Mat. 23:9-10, NIV). The anointing of the Holy Spirit is to be our Teacher at all times, and we are to submit to the men who teach us as they themselves submit to the Holy Spirit and are taught by Him.

This leaves us with a big problem in many Bible Colleges. In a vast majority of these places, the teachers are largely unconverted. Though their doctrine may look good on paper, their hearts look bad in the sight of God. They have never tasted the true grace of God, and have never been born again. Just ask them what their testimony is. Very few have a testimony of realizing their sinful ways, coming under conviction, repenting, and surrendering their lives to the Lordship of Christ, and being saved from sin and made new creations in Christ. They can tell you what the new birth looks like on paper, but they can't explain to you how that took place in their lives, because it hasn't. Multitudes fit this number.

Now, what we have in the institutions is a largely unregenerate staff of hired teachers, who are void of the Spirit of God. They can't be taught by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, because they don't have the Holy Spirit. It is a tragic thing for

hungry, eager students who want to serve God in ministry to sit under the fallen instruction of unregenerate teachers and to learn from men that haven't learned from God. Many of these teachers are not teachers in the eyes of God—they are false converts, tares among the wheat, and teachers of an institution, workers of the Prince of darkness transforming themselves into angels of light, who shall most assuredly receive the greater judgment (see Jam. 3:1).

Again, the most important essentials for ministering in God's service cannot be taught by any earthly institution. The Apostles didn't teach with persuasive words of man's wisdom and knowledge, but of demonstration of the Spirit and power. When Jesus was about to ascend to the right hand of the Father to begin His great Intercessory ministry on our behalf, and leave the founding and establishing of the Church to the Apostles, He didn't tell them to, "Go ye, start a Bible College, and study in it for four years, and if thou really wantest to be great, study for eight years, and tarry there until ye are re-endued with knowledge from many textbooks and apostate professors".—God forbid! He told them to tarry in the city of Jerusalem (where all the lost souls are that they are to reach first) until they are clothed with power from on high! They needed the power of God to win the lost! Scarcely, and I mean very scarcely, if ever, do you hear of or see a young man come out of a Bible College institution with the power of the Holy Ghost upon him in such a way. Yet this is the most important essential for ministry according to Jesus!

An Exhortation to those who want to serve God in ministry

We have briefly looked at four points at why anyone who is thinking about attending a Bible College institution should definitely think twice. While there are many other reasons and points we could go into, these should suffice, as I am not intending to write a book, just a short article and exhortation.

Dear soul, if you have been thinking, considering, and praying about going to such an institution then let me speak to you now and offer some advice. First of all, if God has specifically spoke to you and definitely wants you to go then by all means, go! Obey God! He works in mysterious ways and if He is sending you, He has a purpose for you there.—But I would say you better be sure, because making a wrong decision at this point could literally alter the course of your whole life. Let me illustrate.

When I was a new Christian, I was hungry for God and desired to serve Him, as all Christians are. I began to look into Bible Schools, because I was conscious of the call of God upon my life to preach the Gospel and wanted to be trained and equipped properly to do so. Though I was a high school dropout due to living a life of sin before my conversion, I had proceeded to do everything necessary to attend a particular Bible School. I obtained my GED, studied for, took and passed my ACT test, enrolled in the School, got accepted, and applied for loans. But God had a different plan and He put a stop to it. Instead, He led me to dig deeply into His Word Himself. He began to lead me out to the streets to preach His Word to the lost at the bus stops, rescue missions, among the homeless communities, national events across the country, and more. I must confess that He has taught me more in the years since by hands-on ministry of going and obeying Jesus than I could have ever learned by sitting in a classroom. By the grace of God, I have seen a number of sinners truly turn from their wicked ways and receive new life in God. The Lord gave me a wife and I got married as well. None of this would have happened if I went to the Bible School I wanted to attend. My life would be totally different, I'm sure. One such decision has the potential to alter the course of your whole life. Don't make such a decision rashly, unless you are sure the Lord has spoken to you.

My advice to you is this: If you are a child of God, and desire to serve God in the work of the ministry, and want to be equipped for service, don't waste bundles of money by squandering it away in an institution and years of your life sitting in a classroom. Seek God's face! Get alone with God and call upon His name! Go into solitary confinement, alone with just you and the Holy Ghost. Take yourself a Bible, a concordance, and a notepad, and lock yourself away in a room, or get yourself a tent and plot it down in the middle of the woods or the wilderness somewhere, with nothing but water (or plain bread too if you cannot fast), and pray and seek His face in desperation for a week straight or until He fills you with the Holy Ghost! Then, when He has filled you and clothed you with power from on high, take the \$10,000-20,000 dollars that you were going to give to a lukewarm institution, and take that money, and get yourself a one-way plane ticket to an un-reached nation where the people are lost and have never heard of Jesus. Then, when you're there, use that money to get you a cheap place, purchase several thousand Gospel tracts in the native tongue, and Bibles if they're available, take up the language to learn it, and go out in the foolishness of Christ and Him crucified, preaching the blessed Word of God until you see the Lord move with power and sweep the elect of that nation into the Kingdom! Believe me, it will be much more rewarding, especially in eternity, where "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever" (Dan. 12:3).

Let the Bible become your closest companion, and the Spirit of God your personal Tutor. Drop out from the institutions of man and enroll at once in the School of the Spirit, where we are strong when we are weak, where we are wise in the eyes of God when foolish in the eyes of the world, where the greatest in His eyes are the least in the world's eyes, and where diplomas profit nothing for the Kingdom's sake, but true godliness is great gain. The time is short, the end of the age is upon us, and the harvest is ripe. —But the laborers are still few, and the lost around the world perish without a preacher to tell them the first principles of the Word of God or the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. These lost souls don't need a scholar to teach them advanced theological theories, they just need a witness to the saving power of God, who has seen the risen Christ through the eyes of faith, to testify of who He is and what He can do for them, to save them. Where are the wandering Abraham's, the stuttering Moses's, the over-zealous David's, the ignorant, unlearned fishermen from Galilee who will reach this lost world for Jesus? What a shame it would be if they wasted time soaking in an institution if the Lord would have them to be sowing in the field of the lost world, or reaping for joy the wages of eternal life!

"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Co. 11:3).

Re: Think twice before going to Bible College/University!!! - posted by Mangan (), on: 2008/3/4 5:56

Thank you brother! Right on target! Tozer, Leonard Ravenhill as I understood it, didn't have a formal University degree. Ravenhill used to make jokes about that. "You can have ---- degrees and still freeze to death".

These men were not educated in the academic sense of being educated but indeed very much educated (by means of their own reading) by the Holy Spirit and well read as few...

You do not have to read theology at the University to educate yourself or to be equipt for the ministry.

However sometimes God nevertheless calls us to enter the "lions den of theology" - because that is his will for you. If so God will also protect your faith - as you are reading the biblical science or psychology of religion (which from my perspective has been the hardest courses concerning the faith: like poison to the soul).

Sincerely Magnus :-D

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2008/3/4 8:33

Thank you for writings this dear brother, there is much to "gleam" from this article, I trust it will prove profitable to many.

Re: Think twice before going to Bible College/University!!!, on: 2008/3/4 11:55

Excellent article and I just wanted to add the book about one that lone boy who just wanted to serve God and proves your point abundantly: (<http://www.amazon.com/Bruchko-Bruce-Olson/dp/0884191338>) Bruchko.

God bless,

Re: Think twice before going to Bible College/University!!!, on: 2008/3/4 16:32

Thank you Josef.

Years ago I may not have agreed with you because I gleaned from retired missionaries who were in their 70's at that time, almost 30 years ago, when things were Much different.

I can say that the only benefit besides 'themselves', was the hermeneutics and Greek - but that can be done at home now with a computer - and believe it or not - I think we can glean even more on this website than in any college.

I've learned more here on interacting with other believers than they ever teach at college - besides - the Library here is just as big. And the friends made are lasting.

I truly feel and speak this from my heart. I've learned things here that I could have never learned (and didn't) in Bible college - even had I continued as high as one could go. Interacting as we do here and hearing from so many sides, and not just the college's/or Prof's bias, is a privilege on forums.

And we have the entire internet besides for any questions/research.

And my other feeling is - time is short and your suggestions are **marvelous**.

And programs like e-sword and Spiros Zodhiates does the Greek/Hebrew grammar for you, IF you need it.

And of course, John 16:13 - of course. Bless Jesus!

Edit: And - Amen on Bruchko Lisa!! :-)

Re: Thinking Twice - posted by ADisciple (), on: 2008/3/4 17:48

Hi Josef, I appreciated your article.

Here's a bit from the testimony of Philip Mauro, one of the great Bible teachers of the past century.

He was a very scholarly and intelligent man, with a reputation as a very capable and astute patent lawyer. And was very successful in what he did.

But with all that he was very unhappy, and at age 45 was drawn to the Lord.

Here's what he says.

"I should have supposed that, in order to convince me of the truth of the Bible and Christianity, it would be necessary to employ the best efforts of a faculty of the profoundest theologians versed in all the arguments of sceptical philosophy, and able to furnish plausible replies to them. But God in His wisdom sent me to learn the way of everlasting life from a company of exceedingly plain, humble people, of little education, to whom I regarded myself as immeasurably superior in all the higher branches of knowledge. It is true that these people knew very little of what is taught in the colleges and seminaries; but they did have that knowledge which is the highest and most excellent of all... 'the KNOWLEDGE of Christ Jesus my Lord'..."

That's so good. It leaves you with a very searching question. Just what kind of knowledge is my own pursuit? Is it the true "higher knowledge" of Christ Jesus my Lord? (For which Paul himself, as learned as he was, counted all else dung?)

As you mentioned in your article, when the religious establishment heard the words of Peter and John and saw their boldness, and "perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they took knowledge of them..."

And what did they discover? "...that they had been with Jesus."

Oh, so that's it. Now we see the root of the problem.

Thanks again.

AD

Re: Think twice before going to Bible College/University!!!, on: 2008/3/4 19:06

I remember when I contemplated going to Bible College. I was radical in those days and always thought that my college was the holy Ghost and I still do. I am glad that I didn't go, I simply would have been too much of a burden to the teachers because I would be rebutting everything.

But not all are like this, some are sent by the holy Spirit to these places for a purpose. We must not discount Bible Colleges if the LORD is directing us that way. Not all are Elijah's that dwell by the Brook Kidron.

Re: - posted by warriorofgod, on: 2008/3/4 19:30

Please respond to my rebuttal:

How are we supposed to teach in ministry if have no degree that makes us somewhat credible?

Re: - posted by PassingThru, on: 2008/3/4 20:36

Quote:

-----How are we supposed to teach in ministry if have no degree that makes us somewhat credible?

Mark 11:30 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? answer me. :-)

PassingThru

Re:, on: 2008/3/4 22:32

Quote:

-----How are we supposed to teach in ministry if have no degree that makes us somewhat credible?

The same way Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Samuel, Nathan, David, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Habakuk, Malachi, Ezekiel, John Baptist, Jesus, Peter, John, etc. etc. ALL taught in ministry without a degree to make them credible.

Quote:

-----Mat 21:27 And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

We need not the authority of a piece of paper to commend our ministries, brethren:

Quote:

-----2Co 3:1-2 Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men

The proof and commendation of what we do for Christ's sake on earth should be in our fruits, not in our letters of commendation. Besides, the authority we need to shake the gates of Hell and harald the glorious gospel of God with power is not from men, but from God:

Quote:

-----Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and **authority** over all devils

Men can't give other men authority over devils. That comes straight from God. I'm afraid the demons of hell would say about most of those graduating from Bible Intitutions, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you?"

This is not to say if God tells you to go to a Bible College not to go. "Whatever He says unto you, do it" said Jesus' own earthly Mother, and I say the same.

P.S> By the way, who is Bruchko?

Re: - posted by tjsservant (), on: 2008/3/4 22:39

Quote:
-----I'm afraid the demons of hell would say about most of those graduating from Bible Institutions, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you?"

Sad, but I'm afraid it is true.

The power of the Gospel is from God. It will do its work. We must do ours by preaching it.

Re:, on: 2008/3/4 23:20

Bruchko is what the tribe called him and is the name of the Book about his - Bruce Olson's - time with them. Amazing book. You'd love it.

<http://www.bruceolson.com/english/english.htm>

Re: Think twice before going to Bible College/University!!! - posted by repentcanada, on: 2008/3/5 3:24

If I may share: I was awoken this morning at 117am and could not go back to sleep (I have to get up at 400am). My time online these days is virtually nothing, so when I come online I just quickly glance at the SI forums then move on. I have been praying lately as to whether or not I should go back to Bible college studies or secular college (correspondence), I find it utterly amazing I woke up and when I came online noticed this article immediately. Wow.

God bless you brother Urban

Re: - posted by vasilef (), on: 2008/3/5 4:20

Quote:

warriorofgod wrote:
Please respond to my rebuttal:

How are we supposed to teach in ministry if we have no degree that makes us somewhat credible?

Let me share a quote from brother Zac Poonen's testimony:

"If the Lord has determined to anoint you and to give you a ministry, no man can hinder God's purpose for your life. He Himself will open the right door for you - at the right time. You won't have to push your way through anywhere and you won't have to go around asking people to give you a ministry! And you will never have to complain that someone else hindered you from having a ministry. The Lord Jesus is the One Who has the key to every door of ministry (Rev.3:7,8) and He can open them for us just like the automatic doors that open by themselves as soon as we come near them. "

Re: - posted by warriorofgod, on: 2008/3/5 7:45

Josef-urban,

I understand the argument that you are posing but some of those people on that list still went to school. Like Moses who learned all the ways of the Egyptians, which were very educated. And Samuel which was educated from his youth to be a prophet. What about the prophetic schools of the old testament? There were prophets that abounded in those days that went to these school to learn the ways of God.

"ALL taught in ministry without a degree to make them credible."

This is like saying all of them didn't have a Fubu jacket to keep themselves warm. Degrees were irrelevant to them because they did not deal with our culture today. God has chosen LEARNED prophets and UNLEARNED.

As I have said before, we do not need a degree to be anointed of God nor do we need one to validate our ministry BUT it is a necessary evil if we desire to grow and know the things of the Lord for the sake of ministry in our modern era of Christendom.

Have we also forgotten about Charles Spurgeon, Whitfield, Edwards, Wesley, Calvin, Luther, Piper, Paul Washer, MacArthur, and many others with a degree?

I realize the list of men are many when it comes to those God has chosen to serve him without a degree but to negate that is when it comes to ministry is to take away a tool that God has provided men for the work of the ministry.

Re:, on: 2008/3/5 9:28

Quote:
-----BUT it is a necessary evil if we desire to grow and know the things of the Lord for the sake of ministry in our modern era of Christendom.

This is absolutely false, I am perplexed and saddened to see someone write this. It takes absolutely nothing but the authority of Jesus Christ and the power of His Holy Spirit to walk into a back alley of the inner city at night and cast demons out of gang members and prostitutes, or to feed the homeless and proclaim the good news of the Kingdom of God to them, or to sell your belongings and hop on a plane to go minister in the third world, or even to belong to a local fellowship here in Babylon and use your gifts and talents to minister to the body of Christ.

It is only a needed evil if we desire to take part in the clergy-laity, Sunday morning-Wednesday evening, religious institution of our day and exalt ourselves over the lay people (like the pope) by learning the deep things of a denomination's theology so we can later become employed by them...

Now, as it has been written a few times here, if someone is positively called to go to seminary or Bible college then obey and go.

In Christ - Jim

Re: - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2008/3/5 12:02

Quote:
-----Please respond to my rebuttal:

How are we supposed to teach in ministry if we have no degree that makes us somewhat credible?

I think the only reason people want to see a degree from another minister is because they don't know the minister. If church life was the way it was supposed to be, you wouldn't really have that problem. People in the body should know one

another. One major problem is that congregations look for a pastor outside of the congregation- which 90% of the time it's someone they don't know. They hope that the degrees show they know God. It's much easier to look at a piece of paper than to spend quality (and quantity of) time with a person and find out if they really know God.

So am I saying that you can't hear or trust someone you haven't spent time with? No, but you should know someone who can refer them to you who you trust and who has spent time with them. This is what Paul did.

Col 4:10 Aristarchus my fellowprisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him;)

If the Church truly functioned as a body, I don't think we would even have discussions like this- there would be no need would there?

It seems to me that in "Bible days" God functioned by calling men from inside the "congregation" rather than looking outside.

Act 13:1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

Act 13:2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

Act 13:3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent away.

Act 15:22 Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; , Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren:

Act 15:25 It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

Act 15:26 Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I think the church was built on faith, trust, and knowing one another rather than educational credentials.

Re: - posted by warriorofgod, on: 2008/3/5 16:28

Jim,

What of these men... Charles Spurgeon, Whitfield, Edwards, Wesley, Calvin, Luther, Piper, Paul Washer, MacArthur, and many others? Are these men failures? Are these men simply religious or are they ministers of the gospel? Your words are very harsh but they do not hold up the test of history. I understand the men you speak of but that does not take away the men who are apart of those "religious institutions of our day." Even the men that were apart of those institutions that were of old you should be thankful for since you would not have most of the doctrines you stand on today if it were not for the Holy Spirit using their education.

Re:, on: 2008/3/5 17:01

My words stand perfectly in-line with the last 1800 years or so of institutional church history. As far as the men you mentioned, what about them? Nobody is condemning them? Who suggested they are failures?

I speak in general truths (historically and scripturally corroborated general truths) , not to condemn anyone. Take my words for what they are, I am not implying anything more than what I have said.

In Christ - Jim

Re: - posted by warriorofgod, on: 2008/3/5 17:17

im sorry.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2008/3/5 18:11

Listen in to the 2 minute mark:

<http://www.preachingtruth.com/watch/5eb7a6ec44c54d29ed40/The-Satan-Controlled-Tongue---Zac-Poonen---Part-5>

Re: - posted by jgraves11 (), on: 2008/3/5 19:07

Quote:

-----It is only a needed evil if we desire to take part in the clergy-laity, sunday morning-wednesday evening, religious institution of our day and exalt ourselves over the lay people (like the pope) by learning the deep things of a denominations theology so we can later become employed by them...

I understand that you dont need an education to share Christ, I agree with you on that. My question is, from you quote you seem to be condemning the local church. We are called to gather together and worship, we are also called to equip the saints of God. Also even if you go to a seminary where you may not agree with everything they teach you, do you not think it beneficial to be around other men who have been called to the ministry, the whole Iron sharpens Iron thing. It disturbs me that so many who say to not go or think twice about going end up saying that the church is a waste of time. If young men of God only needed the Bible to be equipped why did Paul write the pastoral letters, shouldnt these young men (Timothy, Titus) have just figured this out on their own? Once again I agree with you to a certain extent I am only fearful that somewhere along the way we will lose balance and put so much emphasis on personal experience that we lose the corporate worship that we are called to as well. Anyway I am not trying to condemn anyone just wanted to hopefully add to the discussion

Re:, on: 2008/3/5 19:22

brother,

Quote:

-----or even to belong to a local fellowship here in babylon and use your gifts and talents to minister to the body of Christ.

I am in no way condemning the local church, just the vast majority of institutional American Christianity that looks and acts more like a corporate pyramid or Rome then the body of Christ we see in the New Testament. May we all use our gifts and talents in whatever way the Lord enables us, and not allow the chains of american church traditions to hold us back from our high calling in Christ Jesus. The majority of Bible colleges pump out men who will go on to oppress and mislead the very elect if that were possible.

I believe the 85-90% false conversion rate in our evangelical churches back up this claim. This is a hard truth to argue against.

In Christ - Jim

Re: - posted by LoveHim, on: 2008/3/5 19:44

Quote:

-----Listen in to the 2 minute mark:

<http://www.preachingtruth.com/watch/5eb7a6ec44c54d29ed40/The-Satan-Controlled-Tongue---Zac-Poonen---Part-5>

thanks for the link. he who has ears, let him hear.

also the 5 part sermon of standing apart is very good as well.

thanks,

phil

Re:, on: 2008/3/5 22:29

Quote:

-----Listen in to the 2 minute mark:

<http://www.preachingtruth.com/watch/5eb7a6ec44c54d29ed40/The-Satan-Controlled-Tongue---Zac-Poonen---Part-5>

Amen. Thanks for sharing! (PS. Skip forward and START listening at the 2 min. mark)

Re: - posted by ccchhhrrriiisss (), on: 2008/3/5 22:36

Hello...

A former pastor once told me that Bible College is just a very expensive Bible study and prayer meeting. A person no more needs a degree to be a minister of the Gospel than an artist needs a degree to paint.

While some wonderful men of God have "earned" a degree, a license and an ordination -- some really great men of God did not. Who? How about Peter, James and John? How about John Bunyan? In fact, Bunyan went to prison for refusing to receive a "free" and open-ended license.

I suppose that it might be pertinent to question our motive for Bible school. Are we going to win the approval or respect of a denomination, a local Church, or the government? Or do we simply desire to learn much more about the things of God (including the languages, history and customs of the Bible)?

I studied through a correspondence Bible college. Why? It wasn't to receive a degree, a license or an ordination. I simply enjoyed the information found in the textbooks. I never finished the courses, but I did enjoy the study. I didn't agree with all of the theology, but I enjoyed the fact that the courses allowed me to search the Word of God for answers. But the tuition was quite expensive. I'm glad that I didn't keep on paying the tuition, although I enjoyed the books.

:-)

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2008/3/5 23:06

Quote:

-----A person no more needs a degree to be a minister of the Gospel than an artist needs a degree to paint.

Hi Chris,

This may not be the best comparison, unless you are thinking of ministry as a hobby or a past-time. ;-) (A serious artist might not need a printed degree...but they do need years of disciplined instruction.)

Blessings,

MC

Re: - posted by warriorofgod, on: 2008/3/6 1:55

Quote:

(A serious artist might not need a printed degree...but they do need years of disciplined instruction.)

As do all who wish to be prosperous in the knowledge of our lord Jesus Christ, with or without college.

Re: Think twice before going to Bible College/University!!! - posted by burningfur, on: 2008/3/6 2:46

Though Josef is correct in what he is saying and I agree with him 100%, I want to ask your opinion of my situation.

I'm the eldest of three children. I recently finished my generals at a community college and now am going to get my degree in Biblical Studies. Though, I know that I could begin ministry as a youth pastor somewhere, I feel that I must finish my education for a few reasons.

First, I take the honor your parents commandment seriously. It would be a great dishonor to them personally if I were to drop out. Both dropped out of college and have had to work hard all their lives to make a living without a degree.

Second, as the eldest child in the family, my brother and sister both look up to me. I believe that if I were to drop out, I would be a bad influence on them. They're both in college as teenagers.

When praying about this, I've not heard God calling me elsewhere to youth ministry, no doors have yet opened for that. I've been a street evangelist for three and a half years.

Re:, on: 2008/3/6 4:22

Hi burningfur,

I believe a situation like yours is quite unique, at least in terms of how you view things. I don't believe anyone can give you the *right* answer, because that's between you and God. Ultimately, you have to do what God leads you to do, and do whatever you must to keep a clear conscience before God. A pure heart and a clean conscience are priceless, absolutely precious, and whatever you do, keep them unspotted.

Re: - posted by jgraves11 (), on: 2008/3/6 8:36

Quote:

-----I am in no way condemning the local church, just the vast majority of institutional American Christianity that looks and acts more like a corporate pyramid or Rome than the body of Christ we see in the New Testament. May we all use our gifts and talents in whatever way the Lord enables us, and not allow the chains of American church traditions to hold us back from our high calling in Christ Jesus. The majority of Bible colleges pump out men who will go on to oppress and mislead the very elect if that were possible.

Ok, I was just making sure. I agree with you that the actual church is not all that visible today and that has a lot to do with the "establishment" in our denominations. So on that we agree. But I also want to point out that if a man is truly called to lead the people of God then going to bible college/seminary can only help him. What I mean is if he will not allow them to put them in their cookie cutter (which is what it seems a lot of seminaries try to do), he will come away knowing what he believes and why he believes it. The problem is as much as the people going to seminary as the seminary itself. Most of the guys there are there in hopes someone will give them all of the answers. And if you are willing to listen it seems someone is also willing to give you an "authoritative" view. I know this from experience, I have an associate's in divinity. Which only took two years but I saw guys who would swallow everything the professor said. On the other hand seminary gives you the tools you need to develop good study habits and understand more about why things are the way they are. I agree that it is not for everyone, but there needs to be some sort of Paul/Timothy relationship in the life of a young pastor. I personally am from a home church that the pastor is not really that much of a pastor. So in order to get any kind of help I had to go to a seminary. In conclusion I guess I agree with you on thinking twice before going. I am just h

oping that this may help someone who is trying to decide whether or not to go. There are other benefits as well such as meeting others of like mind that will help you in your ministry.

Re: - posted by repentcanada, on: 2008/3/8 20:56

Sermon Index, I took ONE hour to read brother Josef's article. If you haven't read it thoroughly I urge you to do so - very encouraging.

NOW, here are several thoughts a brother emailed me concerning the article from his point of view:

I think its wrong for one Christian to tell another Christian whats in their heart, what their motive is.

I am required to judge you according to scripture due to your actions, to exhort you or rebuke you. But i am not called to judge your heart.

Let's say i heard all this stuff about North Carolina and i told you point blank "Ricky the only reason you want to go is cause you dont trust God and you want worldly recognition". Thats judging your intents, motives and heart. That's wrong!!!

In this thing they were judging Bible college teachers hearts saying "The teaching staffs are hired, and often work or money, not for the love of eternal souls."

How on earth do they know that? All im saying is state the facts and leave the judgments on peoples hearts out of it.

AND THESE THOUGHTS:

checked out the context's of these passages, i'd like to offer a reply but feel free to cross-examine.

Pro 23:22 Listen to your father who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old.

Pro 23:23 Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding.

Pro 23:24 The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice; he who fathers a wise son will be glad in him.

"Sell it" in its context seems to be referring to letting it go. A paraphrase may be "Get truth and hold on to it". Not to mention if you took it as a literal cash exchange you should question why Solomon assumes we need to purchase Wisdom, Instruction & Understanding. Surely those things are free.

I checked some commentaries to backup that this is the orthodox interpretation

Adam Clarke: When once acquired, let no consideration deprive thee of it. Cleave to and guard it, even at the risk of thy life.

Geneva Study Bible: Spare no cost for truths sake, neither depart from it for any gain.

Matthew Poole: do not forget it nor forsake it for any worldly advantages, as ungodly men frequently do.

Matthew Henry: We must not sell it. Do not part with it for pleasures, honours, riches, any things in this world. Do not neglect the study of it, nor throw off the profession of it, nor revolt from under the dominion of it, for the getting or saving of any secular interest whatsoever

Next up...

Mat 10:1 And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction.

Mat 10:2 The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James t

he son of Zebedee, and John his brother;

Mat 10:3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;

Mat 10:4 Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

Mat 10:5 These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans,

Mat 10:6 but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Mat 10:7 And proclaim as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'

Mat 10:8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay.

Mat 10:9 Acquire no gold nor silver nor copper for your belts,

Mat 10:10 no bag for your journey, nor two tunics nor sandals nor a staff, for the laborer deserves his food.

Mat 10:11 And whatever town or village you enter, find out who is worthy in it and stay there until you depart.

Within that it also tells us not to take any backpacks, walking canes, shoes or caps. This was a specific mission that Jesus sent specific people on. It's not to be the norm rule.

To prove this, Jesus himself told them that mission was over within scripture

Luk 22:35 And he said to them, "When I sent you out with no moneybag or knapsack or sandals, did you lack anything?" They said, "Nothing."

Luk 22:36 He said to them, "But now let the one who has a moneybag take it, and likewise a knapsack. And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one.

The last two verses are heart sins and can't be used against a system. They're individual hypocrisy.

Re: - posted by repentcanada, on: 2008/3/8 21:03

AS WELL:

They're not anti-biblical (Bible Colleges) either. The Bible does not give specific instruction to how we're to receive training in the Word. Paul does tell Timothy to teach the Word to faithful men, so they can teach to faithful men. A Bible college is just a group of faithful men together (if it's a good one).

If it's against scripture it's out, however our methodology is free range as long as we do it from faith, not offending conscience (Romans).

Re:, on: 2008/3/8 22:29

Quote:

-----I think it's wrong for one Christian to tell another Christian what's in their heart, what their motive is.

I am required to judge you according to scripture due to your actions, to exhort you or rebuke you. But I am not called to judge your heart.

Let's say I heard all this stuff about North Carolina and I told you point blank "Ricky the only reason you want to go is cause you don't trust God and you want worldly recognition". That's judging your intents, motives and heart. That's wrong!!!

In this thing they were judging Bible college teachers' hearts saying "The teaching staffs are hired, and often work for money, not for the love of eternal souls."

How on earth do they know that? All I'm saying is state the facts and leave the judgments on people's hearts out of it.

I agree in terms about judging people's hearts. And the article doesn't judge anybody's heart. In the beginning, I clearly said that there are *some* Bible institutions that do teach the Bible, don't peddle the word of God for personal profit, and are faithfully serving God by raising up laborers, or at least laboring to do so. Therefore, any Bible institute that's doing that doesn't need to fear any criticism from this article.

Furthermore, I said in the beginning, that there ARE some faithful brethren scattered throughout these places, as the Lord's faithful remnant, who are truly laboring out of a desire to glorify God and teach His word in truth. I said that I'm not coming against any true brethren that are in these places, but would rather encourage them to stand strong and not compr

omise.

So if that's the case, then I'm not coming against those things, as I clearly said. However, I made it clear what it is I'm coming against.

And those who I am classifying, that I am being accused of judging because of, I made no judgement on any individual's heart. It is clear from the Word, when you see so much leaven, so much skepticism, so much twisting scripture eloquently, so much philosophic reasoning, so much traditions of men, then there is NO DOUBT that the errors I mentioned in the article WILL be found in such a place. Training for ministry should be a personal thing, a mentorship, preferably with a good local church, or between an individual and God, but it is wrong to make it an institution that peddles the word for profit and quenches the zeal of young zealots. The whole system is unbiblical, and in many ways, tends to contradict the Bible.

Further, there is NO DOUBT that much of the teaching staff at Bible Colleges are hired and work for money and not out of love for souls. Greed is manifested in their lifestyles. Stop paying them, and they stop teaching. If they weren't doing it just for money, why do they only teach when they're paid to do it? Oftentimes, it is the true brethren who are teaching in these places, or the true Christians who are being taught, that are being persecuted and those are the ones who have a lot of unconverted tares, goats, bad fish coming against them.

But like I said, there's some exceptions. And those who are the exceptions shouldn't be up-in-arms that I'm coming against them, because I clearly said that I'm not.

And it's not wrong to speak in generalizations. Statistics prove these things. They show that about one third of evangelical pastors in America admit pornography and lust is a current struggle and they sometimes give in to it. Other statistics prove that most pastors in America are unconverted, they've never tasted of the new birth, and this is proved by their lifestyles of sin, compromise, false doctrine, etc. and I say that without any fear of contradiction. The tree is known by its fruits.

Knowing what goes on in these places, it's not wrong to say that a little leaven leavens the WHOLE LUMP.

Quote:

-----checked out the context's of these passages, i'd like to offer a reply but feel free to cross-examine.

Pro 23:22 Listen to your father who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old.

Pro 23:23 Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding.

Pro 23:24 The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice; he who fathers a wise son will be glad in him.

Now anybody can criticise the context all day long, but does such a one DARE to argue against the point being made? Dare anyone try to say that it is OK to peddle the word of God for profit? Dare anyone say it's OK to charge for prophesies, to charge for teachings, etc?

And the Matthew scripture. It is manifestly CLEAR that whatever we receive from the Lord, we are to offer it FREELY without charging mammon for it.

Quote:

-----The last two verses are heart sins and can't be used against a system. They're individual hypocrisy.

I've been associated with institutions of men long enough to know that much of it is utter hypocrisy. I don't need to judge anybody's heart to say that most churches across America (at least more than 50%) have unconverted pastors, judging not based on their hearts, but based upon their conduct with the Word of God. And I can safely say that Bible colleges are the major places where many of these unconverted pastors are being indoctrinated with their lies.

Re:, on: 2008/3/8 22:32

Quote:
-----If its against scripture its out, however our methodology is free range as long as we do it from faith, not offending conscience (Romans).

I definately agree. It just boils down to "is it against Scripture or is it according to Scripture?"

Re: Think twice before going to Bible College/University!!! - posted by crsschk (), on: 2008/3/9 10:20

Quote:
-----When I was a new Christian, I was hungry for God and desired to serve Him, as all Christians are. I began to look into Bible Schools, because I was conscious of the call of God upon my life to preach the Gospel and wanted to be trained and equipped properly to do so. Though I was a high school dropout due to living a life of sin before my conversion, I had proceeded to do everything necessary to attend a particular Bible School. I obtained my GED, studied for, took and passed my ACT test, enrolled in the School, got accepted, and applied for loans. But God had a different plan and He put a stop to it. Instead, He led me to dig deeply into His Word Himself. He began to lead me out to the streets to preach His Word to the lost at the bus stops, rescue missions, among the homeless communities, national events across the country, and more. I must confess that He has taught me more in the years since by hands-on ministry of going and obeying Jesus than I could have ever learned by sitting in a classroom. By the grace of God, I have seen a number of sinners truly turn from their wicked ways and receive new life in God. The Lord gave me a wife and I got married as well. None of this would have happened if I went to the Bible School I wanted to attend. My life would be totally different, I'm sure. One such decision has the potential to alter the course of your whole life. Don't make such a decision rashly, unless you are sure the Lord has spoken to you.

The problem with this is you have no way of knowing whether or not it is true that "*none of this would have happened if ..* .. These may be your observations, but this treatise would carry more weight if you had actually gone through it and were speaking from experience rather than conjecture.

Bring that up due to the fact that very, very early on here had made some similar observations and was rightly and thankfully rebuked for it. It might be tedious to go through it all, keeping in mind that this is some 5 years removed and a great deal has changed since then;

(https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?viewmode=flat&order0&topic_id=319&forum=35&post_id&refreshGo) Higher Education

Another, older, posting as well;

(https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?viewmode=flat&order0&topic_id=1891&forum=40&post_id&refreshGo) Bible Schools??

You mentioned frequently enough that you are not coming against this, that and the other but brother again, having not gone through it yourself it seems quite advantageous to suggest or predicate outcomes even in generalizations.

There is a different sort of school that many are put through in this life and that is the school of suffering and learning where the true meaning of patience is by being in adverse situations. It can be as much as a regular working job at a place of employment or for a stay at home mom. It could mean silently, quietly working behind the scenes as it were daily making the rounds of a delivery driver or sweating out a living as laborer on a construction site. Strange as it might sound, have done all of these things including something of the stay at home business for a season. Hardly would I know the pull and drag and experience of a mother but that is not really the point either. The point is, one could do both, dig in deep to the word of God and better yet have the word of God sown into their marrow of being all while attending a university, bible college, etc., even one that may have much to one's own chagrin. Some might need the very discipline of discipline and learning to think for their own self through something like this. Others for the sake of coming out the other side and expressing just what they have learned ... I must say that this is preferable, if one is going to make such warnings effectual.

Food for thought brother.

Re: Think twice before going to Bible College/University!!! - posted by Friedrich (), on: 2008/3/9 12:46

The ministry of "Bible College" vs. The ministry of "Discipleship"!!

I pray that the title of this post may, by the power of God, direct our thoughts to him. Just what is God's heart and will in the area of preparation for ministry?

19 So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him. 20 And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again: for what have I done to thee? 21 And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him. (1 Kings 19:19-21)

Oh to be called this way! God grant me an Elijah who will "cast his mantle upon" me. I am willing Lord, send me! I will wait until you call me Lord.

Has anyone cast their mantle upon you? Has God given you mentorship? Has He given you the humiliation of being abused for His true discipleship? If so, have you "ministered unto" this one whom God has given you? Oh to have that privilege!

It would do us much more good to tear down our perceptions of what is "good" in working towards serving God and get with it in being "perfect"!!

Most go through the status-quo routine; they go through the system because it's impressive, and it's expected. Are you willing to undergo the ministry of suffering? To go down through the tomb in order to come back up again that God might receive glory? Most are unwilling; most miss the mark in His work of perfection.

9 And it came to pass when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. 10 And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so. (2 Kings 2:9-10)

Amen.

Friedrick

Re:, on: 2008/3/9 12:50

Quote:
-----The point is, one could do both, dig in deep to the word of God and better yet have the word of God sown into their marrow of being all while attending a university, bible college, etc., even one that may have much to ones own chagrin.

While agreeing completely with brother Josefs post, I think there is an added factor as well, the wicked day we live in. For instance, if we believe as the majority of speakers on this site do (Wilkerson, Ravenhill, Washer, etc...) that 85-90+% of the modern, western, evangelical church members are not born again, we must ask the question... HOW?

The answer is that satan has a stronghold on western bible colleges and seminaries. I believe there is a VERY strong argument for this on the statistics alone (if we believe the false conversion statistics). The reason so many false converts can sit in pews every Sunday comfortably is because there "pastor" is not preaching the true Gospel, or at least not in power. Where did the vast majority of these "pastors" come from?

Western Bible colleges and seminaries.

I believe these are simple factual truths. Anyone considering going to such a place should be sure they are being led to do so by the Spirit of God alone. Let us not be like the Jews of Jeremiahs day and be ignorant of the severe danger we

face in this wicked day we live in.

In Christ - Jim

Re:, on: 2008/3/9 12:53

PS-

Here is an article from Christianity Today to go along with my post.

(<http://www.christianitytoday.com/yc/2003/001/18.88.html>) <http://www.christianitytoday.com/yc/2003/001/18.88.html>

Head knowledge - heart knowledge - posted by crsschk (), on: 2008/3/9 17:18

Quote:
-----The answer is that satan has a stronghold on western bible colleges and seminaries. I believe there is a VERY strong argument for this on the statistics alone (if we believe the false conversion statistics). The reason so many false converts can sit in pews every Sunday comfortably is because there "pastor" is not preaching the true Gospel, or at least not in power. Where did the vast majority of these "pastors" come from?

Would agree Jim, left off earlier feeling I failed to note some other matters. Certainly this is true and didn't exactly intend to create anything other than some considerations. Just as you mentioned, there is no doubt this is true and much of what Joseph mentioned just as well. Something else that came to mind is yet another contrast; That there just as many preaching that ought to hang it up for awhile and go to a seminary or bible college just to learn Church history, hermeneutics, what have you. There are enough false constructs around to give this some merit as well. Ravenhill made that comment about "it takes 20 years to make a preacher", the first time I heard it, didn't really think it was much more than an off hand comment, but it has grown on me more and more over the years ... see what he means much more now.

Of course I am completely biased in one respect ... a biblical, *spiritual* education is what this age is so much in need of and could well understand the difficulty even from Ron's mention in the other link, that there can be such a rush to get through things that there is little time to absorb one truth before you are forced on to the next one in such a setting. But I am not afraid to state that I feel that if someone with the mandate to be a preacher spent a couple of years just immersed in this mere site, absorbing all the material available here and that which points elsewhere, that they would make a mighty fine preacher of God's word.

All this does point back to a very large question though ... being called to this, how many really have been called to preach and how many as mentioned are doing it for a whole variety of other reasons ...

Re: Why not make a difference! - posted by roadsign (), on: 2008/3/9 17:52

It cannot be disputed that countless Bible training institutions have been slipping from their godly foundations. However, merely chatting about it does absolutely nothing except tire our fingers. That's no better than staying in the dark. And it is useless to write letters to all the Bible schools and seminaries in North America—especially if you aren't even involved in them!

But there is something we can all do, yes all of us! We can be a light in the darkness!

Here's a way. Check out bibletraining.com. This site is awesome! In this school you find some of the finest evangelical teachers in America—indeed in the world! And anyone can receive their teaching—free of charge! This school is the vision of God-reliant humble saints who care that the God's people all around the world can have available to them a good education and be equipped to serve God. Oh, sure, BibleTraining doesn't hand out diplomas. But, in exchange, you get solid Biblical training—and God can use you!

Here's the site: (<http://www.biblicaltraining.org/index.php>) Biblical Training

There are three beneficial things that you can do: you can help support education for Christian leaders in third world country for only \$200 a person. BiblicalTraining sends them an MP3 player and materials, and the lectures are free to download.

oad. The other thing you can do is take advantage of some of the lectures here – and humbly learn yourself. Even if you don't wish to take core subjects, try listening to Dr. Ronald Nash – his world view courses, ethics, etc. The material is current to our times – and most enlightening – especially for all of us who assume that we have a pretty good handle on God's truths. (That's always a dangerous assumption!)

Lastly, you can financially support this work.

The more we let the light shine in our world, the more we advance against the darkness!

Now, that's something to think twice about, is it not!!

Diane

Re:, on: 2008/3/9 21:17

Some good thoughts Mike.

In Christ - Jim

Training - posted by crsschk (), on: 2008/3/10 9:58

Diane,

Thank you for bringing this up.

Quote:
----- ... especially for all of us who assume that we have a pretty good handle on God's truths. (That's always a dangerous assumption!)

More than we know ...

Re: Training - posted by sonofadam777 (), on: 2008/6/2 12:36

please keep me in prayer, I hear a call into full time ministry, and met with my pastor who suggested the next step for me is Biblical Training, so I am pursuing cautiously taking Bible Classes through <http://www.globaluniversity.edu/>, an A/G training school. Doug

Re: Think twice before going to Bible College/University!!! - posted by Limey153 (), on: 2008/6/2 14:05

Personally I think alot simply comes down to the Bible College itself (is it a good one) and a persons heart. However this discussion did make me think of dear Duncan Campbell. He once recalled how as a young man he was very keen to learn the scriptures better and went to great lengths to enrol in a Bible College in England. After a time in Bible College he began to realise that he himself was doubting key portions of scripture, most notably The Creation in Genesis. As this fact dawned upon him, he realised that he was becoming influenced by the bad teachings of his peers for prior to Bible College it never occurred to him to ever doubt anything written in scripture. Praise God, Duncan Campbell immediately left the Bible College and as we know went on to be greatly used by God.