

General Topics :: In Need of Direction

In Need of Direction - posted by maxwhitney (), on: 2017/1/27 11:17

I found this website months ago through looking for sermons by A.W. Tozer. I was enjoying his sermons and as well as others and one day noticed the heading for discussion forum. I have read through many of the postings and I wanted to let you all know what an encouragement they have been to me.

For over a year now I have felt like God has something more for me and my life. I have earnestly been seeking His face and longing to know His will and what He would have me to do with this one life He has given me. I believe that as 1 Peter 2:21 states that Christ left an example for me that I should follow in His steps. In this day and age, how are we to follow in the steps of Jesus? For myself, I can get into a routine just like my unbelieving neighbors around me of work, eat, sleep, repeat... however, I have a hard time believing that if Jesus were here in the flesh today that His priorities would be the same as all of His neighbors. Surely my priorities and the priorities of my unbelieving neighbors should be totally opposite. I'm to be laying up treasures in heaven after all while they are laying up treasures on earth.

I believe the first step is in having a close, intimate relationship with God. As I put Him first in every area of my life every day and am walking in His Spirit I can have a rest and peace that many in the world know nothing about.

I heard a sermon once on the parable of the talents. The talents were likened unto opportunities with each of us having opportunities throughout our lives and what will matter is how we have used those opportunities.

How do the rest of you all know that you are in the center of God's will and plan for your life? Surely we all want to invest our talents wisely in a way that would honor God.

Does it really matter where I live, work, etc. as long as I maintain my relationship with God and am open to His leading? Is this what Jesus would do today?

Thank you for any thoughts you might have on this, Max

Re: In Need of Direction - posted by Lysa (), on: 2017/1/27 11:29

Quote:

-----by Max

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Thank you for any thoughts you might have on this, Max

Hi Max!!

After 35 years walking with the Lord, looking back on my life one of the things I've learned is walking in love towards the men that are without. My life is so boring!! LOL I don't think I do anything special except I get up, spend time in His presence and reading His word (some days I do, some days I don't).

We each have our own sphere of influence that we live and walk in. One of the defining times in my life was when I prayed and asked God for a ministry. I had listened to a sermon that said each one of us has a ministry.... ask God!! LOL I was stunned but I obeyed and asked. Within the year, God led me to my local jail to minister to the women. I praise God for that sermon that led me to ask.

Simply put... Trudging on in our daily life and being faithful to Him is what it is about!

God bless you,
Lisa

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/1/27 12:28

The Two Boxes

"As Jesus and his disciples approached Jerusalem, they came to the towns of Bethphage and Bethany on the Mount of Olives. Jesus sent two of them on ahead. "Go into that village over there," he told them. "As soon as you enter it, you will see a young donkey tied there that no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks, 'What are you doing?' just say, 'The Lord needs it and will return it soon.'" (Mark 11:1-3, NLT)

I've been thinking lately about the tension that many Christians experience due to the way they compartmentalize their lives into two boxes: the "faith" box and the "everything else" box. Into the Faith Box we toss church-going, bible reading, praying, worshiping, etc. Into the Everything Else Box we toss, well, everything else.

Why does this create tension? Because those who are truly sincere about their faith in Jesus Christ know in their heart of hearts that there shouldn't be two boxes at all. Lurking in the back of our minds is the admonition of the Apostle: "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31). But if we are truthful about the matter, we have to admit that much of what we do every day has nothing to do with the glory of God. Or, perhaps better stated, we have no CONSCIOUS SENSE that what we are doing glorifies God at all.

Why is that?

Because we can't see how "Everything Else" can fit into our Faith Box. Let's face it— things like cutting the grass, taking a shower, feeding the pet, and going to the bathroom don't seem very "spiritual." Then, of course, we have the bigger things— like our jobs, paying the bills, hobbies, relating to our families and friends and those other things that take up the great bulk of our lives. And since we don't have a sense of how the great bulk of our lives brings glory to God, we get frustrated and discouraged. We get the sense that we are wasting our lives; that most of what we are doing everyday is doing nothing to advance the Kingdom of God. And when we ARE playing in our Faith Box, we tend to feel guilty that we are not in this box much more often than we are. This tightrope walk between the two boxes is a joy-killer and a peace-robber.

This dilemma, which we perceive to be real, is entirely unnecessary. It is founded on a profound misunderstanding, and this idea of a separate Faith Box and Everything Else Box is foreign to the New Testament. Jesus is the perfect example of someone who did not walk this bifurcated life. "I ALWAYS do those things that please Him" (John 8:29, my emphasis). But wait— wasn't Jesus a man? Did he not have normal bodily functions and have the same concerns that were common to men of his day? Indeed he did. But he was keenly aware of the fact that all things CAN be done for God's glory. And he walked in this reality.

But how can WE do so?

First, we have to understand that God knows all about our bodies, and our day to day activities that are necessary but that to us seem unimportant as far as God's glory is concerned (i.e. they don't go in the Faith Box). As Christians, we carry Christ with us, just as the humble donkey carried Jesus in the passage quoted above. We simply need to practice being CONSCIOUSLY AWARE that we are carrying Christ with us. He has need of us, just as he had need of that donkey. This, in itself, will go a long way in helping us to realize how our secular activities can bring glory to God. "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27).

However, this will take practice and some getting used to. As we know, these types of thoughts do not come naturally. We have to make an effort to think this way, and pray that God will remind us daily. Old habits die hard. We have to have the faith to believe that if we offer all of our acts to God, that He will indeed accept this offering. We should be offering "breath prayers" throughout the day- telling God that whatever you may be doing is for His glory. And, with time, we should find that we no longer have need of a separate Faith Box and Everything Else Box because we will realize that everything really is for Him, after all.

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2017/1/27 12:39

Good word, brother Todd. Some really important lessons there.

Re: In Need of Direction - posted by savannah, on: 2017/1/27 13:40

Hi Max,

You wrote,

"Does it really matter where I live, work, etc. as long as I maintain my relationship with God and am open to His leading? Is this what Jesus would do today?"

I just listened to the message in this link. I am hopeful that it will be helpful.

<http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/the-alternative/>
Your Intersection and Your Destiny
January 27, 2017

These other messages may be helpful as well:

Your Experience and Your Destiny
January 26, 2017

Your Uniqueness and Your Destiny
January 25, 2017

Overview of Destiny
January 24, 2017

And this series was very good on the subject of direction:

Detours -

Whether through uncontrollable circumstances or the pain of personal relationships, everyone has experienced unforeseen changes in life. This study helps believers navigate detours that may take you through trials, injustice, and even betrayal. You will be comforted and encouraged when you learn to rest in God's redemptive plan and the hope found in God's sovereign will.

It's available by the same speaker.

Re: - posted by TakeUptheCross, on: 2017/1/27 14:07

Yes! Very well said. I am only not so sure if the habit "dies slowly". For me it was a revelation from God.

I too before separated my life like this... and honestly it is very unhealthy. I think I cannot express it better than what is already said. Just while I was at work, I thought... what is Christianity if it really cannot work in our society? Does the Lord really mean that all people should somehow separate themselves from secular work in order to serve God? BUT... Christianity is no utopia! As brother Todd cited: it is rather "Christ in you, the hope of glory"!

One of the things that amazes me about Christianity is that it works everywhere! In freedom and in prison (see our faithful brethren in China, North Korea or in Muslim countries), in poverty and wealth, in times of war and in times of peace... Christ said: "Because I live, you shall live also!" and

"I am with you always even unto the end of the world!"

So for me that means... "I am with you ALWAYS" ... no matter whether the circumstances are good or bad, no matter what

ether I am going to job or go shopping or cooking,...as long as we abide in Him!

"Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God!"

I want just to share also that Dr. A. Tozer has a wonderful written a wonderful book called "The Pursuit of God" and the last chapter is "The Sacrament of Living" - he speaks exactly about what we are now discussing.

http://www.ntslibrary.com/PDF%20Books/Tozer_Pursuit_of_God.pdf

Abide in Him!

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/1/27 14:55

The Pursuit of God is a devastating book (in a good way!) that should be read and re-read often.

Re: In Need of Direction, on: 2017/1/27 19:26

Hi Max,

I always consider our talents to be love and joy and peace and forgiveness and mercy and so on. These we have received in abundance from the Lord and how we use these is how we will be measured I believe. Lets say you have been forgiven much, then it is very possible you will be called upon in your life to forgive much. The lady that wept at Jesus feet loved much because she had been forgiven much.

So in your neighborhood and in your family and at work you have interactions perhaps on a daily basis. How do these interactions go? Are they infused with life. Do your co-workers who dwell in darkness see a great light in you? Are you a city set on a hill for all your family to see? Do you know and do you go out of your way to interact with your neighbors? For that majority of us, this will be our ministry and every day can be an adventure as we simply walk out the love of God. Divine appointments and so on come along when we get ourselves out and interact with others.

So in that sense, no, it does not really matter where you live or where work and so on, what matters is that you shine your light among fallen men.

I have met so many folks who struggle over "the will of God for their life." For so many, this become a "paralysis of analysis." I believe one should lead the life that they have unless specifically hearing from the Lord.....bro Frank

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/1/27 19:56

Frank wrote: "I have met so many folks who struggle over "the will of God for their life." For so many, this become a "paralysis of analysis." I believe one should lead the life that they have unless specifically hearing from the Lord."

I used to really fret over this. I always thought I was missing the "big thing" that God wanted me to do. I begged and pleaded with Him to show me and He never did- however He did reveal to me, mostly through other people, that He has used me where I stand.

I am still holding out to hear that big thing He wants me to do, but if not I am content where He has me.

Re: In Need of Direction - posted by ChadC (), on: 2017/1/28 10:31

Some outstanding wisdom already conveyed in some of these replies.

Thank you for your admonition Brother Todd.

I believe that at times we look for a concrete answer from scripture or from others that is meant to be something received from the Lord directly.

One of my favorite incites into discipleship and what the Lord desires in our relationship with him is in John 21 where Jesus is having breakfast with His disciples following his resurrection. Among the many things said, there is this little gem:

Peter: "But Lord, what about this man?" (speaking of John)

Jesus: "I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me."

In effect Jesus was telling Peter not to worry about what the Lord had planned for John, Peter needed to follow Jesus.

I would encourage you (and myself) along the same lines. Stay on the stepping stone the Lord has placed you on until you see His next one clearly. If you are concerned you are not where He wants you, take it seriously to Him and look expectantly for His reply (which might come from anywhere... but He will let you know!).

His written Word is a light to our feet and a lamp to our path, but it takes the Holy Spirit's direct and personal application to reach God's destinations and good works He had planned for you from the beginning (Ephesians 2:10).

I am in that same place of "should I stay or should I go" inquiry myself.

I'll lift you up before the Lord after this reply Brother!

Brother Chad

Re: In Need of Direction - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2017/1/28 17:34

"Surely we all want to invest our talents wisely in a way that would honor God."

Many new converts wrestle with this issue. They think they should 'be in a ministry' now that they have come to the LORD. They look around and see people active in this ministry and that and think this is what walking with the LORD entails.

The reality is that being faithful, working, providing for your family, doing business God's way is among the most powerful I witness to an unbelieving world there can be. What good does the Gospel do when it is not demonstrated where the rubber meets the road? This is where the true test of faith occurs. It is as someone has said, "Live and when necessary, pr each."

Life will challenge you with crises where you will be tempted to lie, cheat, steal, lust, envy, kill, lash out at people....others will see it, observe it and your reaction. Your reaction will inform them how Christ has or has not changed you. It will also teach you where your weaknesses are that need cleansing.

Just rest in the LORD and be faithful where you are so when opportunities come you can be prepared to help someone in need.

God bless.

Sandra

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2017/1/28 23:40

Lovely word sister Sandra

Re: In Need of Direction - posted by maxwhitney (), on: 2017/2/2 11:32

I just wanted to pop back in and say a great big thank you to all of you that took the time to post here. I found lots of encouragement and direction and greatly appreciate the thoughts left by each one. God bless!