

**General Topics :: Looking for guidance****Looking for guidance - posted by stephenpeter, on: 2005/11/10 17:41**

I am 17 and currently in my second year of A-levels, and am having to decide what to do at university, whether to apply, etc. I have sent in my UCAS form (application system in the UK) applying for medicine, but more and more I have it on my heart to spend some time away from everything, and then to preach and serve God in whatever way He would wish. My interest in science is waning as I see more of God, and the burden of the lost and those who are sleeping within the church weighs more and more heavily on my heart.

First and foremost, I want to be in obedience in what I do next. Therefore, I don't want to suddenly decide "oh, I think I'll go and train as a pastor" without being called. My family, church and college are all advising me to go down the academic road, but I really feel almost like there is no time to waste. I have prayed and will continue to, and I know God will take me where He wants me to be. I have no real desire to be famous, rich or comfortable, I really want to be obedient - whatever the cost.

I might be asking the wrong questions here, but I really need some guidance and wisdom of what to do.

Thank you all very much, your brother in Christ,

Stephen

Re: Looking for guidance - posted by GaryE (), on: 2005/11/10 23:42

Dear Stephen,

It seems to me that unless the Lord tells you not to do something you are free to do it. He will not let you go a direction that is wrong without letting you know it is wrong. Sometimes we have to go forward in faith without hearing a direct word to do something.

He also won't let one of his stay idle when it is time to move without prompting that person to move. On the other hand, we are sometimes told to stay still and wait until he prompts us to move forward.

I think you should make a decision and whatever that decision is, do it unto the Lord.

In Christ,
GaryE

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/11/11 3:38

Quote:
-----My family, church and college are all advising me to go down the academic road, but I really feel almost like there is no time to waste.
e.

The king's business requireth haste... but not hurry! ;-) If the combined testimony of your church, family and friends is in one direction, I would need a very strong conviction to go against it.

I think Gary's counsel above, is right on the button.

Re: Looking for guidance, on: 2005/11/12 16:38

Dear Stephen,

My father was a missionary doctor (somewhat to his surprise), as he found himself 'qualified' to run a mission hospital, after preparing to emigrate to Africa in the 1950s. As it happens my mother was brought up with the Bible and knew it much better than he, often pointing him to thoughts he could exploit while leading morning prayers, every day at 6am, for Christian members of the hospital staff there, and taking turns at leading 'church' in the hospital, in rotation with others who could. He was dedicated and conscientious and became known locally as 'the doctor who makes you better'. He was on call 13 nights in 14, and had two weeks local holiday a year. He never complained about getting up in the night, because the nursing staff only called him when they knew they had to.

If you go to University here (to do medicine) you will be able to evangelise on campus with the UCCF (Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship (I think it stands for)) programme. You will get invaluable experience at the Christian Union, if not also the opportunity to take part in formal training for various different leadership activities, all overseen by qualified Christian workers. Without doubt, you will see people come to the Lord in their first few weeks of University or, by the end of first year, and you'll get experience answering questions, praying with, sharing the Bible with, many many others who will only come into contact with Christians while they are in this country.

Especially if you are open to the Lord to be called to work abroad, the years you spend at Uni could be the last whole years you spend in the UK... Some people never really retire, they just keep moving on to a new field of service, until age or health stops them. There is a Dutch doctor in Africa who retired at the normal age from a standard career in medicine, who *then* realised there was a need he could meet in another country, and has spent the last 15 years serving the Lord in that (80, now).

I think I'm trying to say that if you want to preach, you can preach anyway. The question is more whether that is the *only* thing God wants you to do with your education.

You may not know that there is also a fast track into medicine for people with other previous qualifications; and, there is talk (in the UK) of introducing training for a US style Medical Assistant (don't know if this is what they will be called) who trains as a diagnostician, but, has limited power to order treatment.

This is the only bit of advice I'm going to offer - before you decide **not** to do any sort of University training at all, make sure you have researched your options thoroughly; **know** what you are turning away from, and make the decision to turn a way, very much with the Lord and in His presence.

Of course, there would be opposition from people you know, if you don't do what *they* think is best. I'd say that's less of a longterm problem than leaving yourself a chink which the enemy can exploit year after year, which you will leave for him, if what you choose to do is embarked upon with any doubt whatever.

There are many ways the Lord makes His will known, and He will, if you wait until you know it from Him. In the meantime, as the others have said, press on in faith with what you do know is right in general terms.

My experience of the Lord's guidance is that He either gives peace for the way forward, or, He takes peace away if you start heading in the wrong direction.

The only person who can decide with which He is guiding you, is you.

People here will be praying for you. :-)

Re: Looking for guidance - posted by dohzman (), on: 2005/11/12 21:16

I'll tell you something a very close christian Brother used to tell me in my early years. Hear from God for yourself. I know that Proverbs says that in the multitude of counsillors is safety. However, when it comes to you and the life are going to have to present before the THRONE of God on the day of judgement, you'll want to have been fully persuaded that you dug down deep, hit solid rock and built your decisions from there.

I would make knowing what the Lord wanted me to do your first priority, a matter of life and death. I would give no sleep to my eyes and no food to my belly, I would spend hours on end crying out to God for wisdom and direction, I would search His Holy Word as if it was my last and only hope for a sure answer and life itself, and after you've given a season of intense and diligent seeking, if you still have no answer, I'd wait on God who is ever so faithful! Love never fails.

Re: Looking for guidance - posted by groh_frog, on: 2005/11/13 0:10

It sounds like you're taking a look, and working to make a right decision in this. Don't rush it. And especially with something like being a pastor, don't take that lightly. We have too many who are educated in the Word of God, yet still lack a zeal for God, and because of that, their churches lack a life for God.

Remember that you're a servant of the Lord in whatever you do. There's always a witness opportunity, always some work to be done. Dedicating yourself full-time to the Lord can be a great thing, too, but "to whom much is given, much is expected", and "not many of you should presume to be teachers..." It's not a decision to take lightly. But if you're up to what it takes, we could use all of the sold-out pastors and missionaries we could get.

Grace and Peace...

Re: Looking for Guidance, on: 2005/11/13 4:17

Quote:

-----Hear from God for yourself.

That's what I was trying to say. Thanks, bro Daryl.

Re: - posted by stephenpeter, on: 2005/11/13 8:08

Thank you all so much for your responses, and for taking my concerns seriously. It sounds almost silly, but it really had become a thing that worried me almost constantly. But from all of your responses I feel so much more free to serve God in the here and now, and able to "not worry about what tomorrow may bring", knowing that wherever God puts me I will be able to worship and serve Him in some way or another. In a message I received, someone identified the pride in thinking that God is going to give me some kind of new song to sing, when it is really a matter of joining in with the song He has been orchestrating since the beginning. I feel so free! The words at the bottom of someone else's posts "Lord, make me little and unknown, prized by Thee and Thee alone" (or something like that) have really stuck with me as one of the most beautiful lines I have read. To serve God without worry or awareness of self! How wonderful would that be!

It is wonderful that God speaks to us, and we don't have to try and take all decisions of life on our own backs. I feel convicted of my doubt in God's ability to guide, and now am putting my trust in Him in these things.

I can't say how thankful I am for all of your support on this forum, not just in this but in all the other questions I've asked and received help in as well. I have experienced something of Christ's love through you all, thank you for taking the time to help me, and for all of your prayers. You are true brothers and sisters in the faith.

Your brother in Christ,

Stephen