

## College and Career Choices

About fifty young people from our church will be in college this fall; over forty of them will be attending Bible colleges. Here are some thoughts for those who are considering Bible college and ministry:

First and foremost, ask yourself if that man or ministry from whom you plan to learn has ever trained anyone to do what you would like to do. Just because you can play the piano does not mean you can train others to do the same. If someone has never done something before, what makes him think he could do it now? We have all had bad teachers who taught us nothing. If you want to be in the ministry, find out if the school or person in leadership has produced anyone who went into the ministry. In recent years, I have sent some students to Commonwealth Baptist College in Kentucky, to Golden State Baptist College in Santa Clara, CA, and to Pacific Baptist College in Long Beach, CA. Parents and I sent students to these colleges not just because our beliefs are the same, but also because graduates of these colleges are pastoring, serving as missionaries, and serving in other full-time ministry positions.

The choice of which college to attend not only involves doctrine, but also includes the consideration that these colleges have succeeded in training others in the past. Success is not to receive a diploma but to do what one was trained to do. Some people from the above-mentioned colleges are serving on the mission field, preaching in pulpits, and serving full-time in Christian schools — AND those colleges believe the same doctrines that we do — THAT DOES MATTER. Some very well-known colleges are sending people out into the ministry, but in the training process, have torn down the convictions, standards, and beliefs the students' pastors and parents have instilled in those young people; I call that treason! Missionaries who are far from the USA and do not know details are sending their children to supposed fundamental colleges that simply do not believe the same as the parents of the student. Parents must know what is being taught to their children.

Young people, do not expect to be properly trained in a place where no one has been properly trained in years past. If no one is able to validate

the leader's ability to train people, you take a big risk in trusting him with your future. Half of my staff members were saved, baptized, and trained right here at FBC. Many a pastor would love to have young men come and "be trained" by him when instead he is looking for help because he simply has never been able to lead or to train his own. You are needed by that pastor, but do not go there to be trained; go get training elsewhere, then help him. He is obviously not able to train others, and that does not mean he is not a good man; he is just not good at training others.

Let me risk hurting some people's feelings:

I do not know anyone successful in the ministry who was trained in a correspondence college or one of the many new online colleges. There may be some, just none of whom I am aware. These are not bad, in fact I am involved in teaching some online classes. But men are usually trained by men, whether in a classroom or "hands on" (at least all the successful pastors I know were). I think extra training, such as online colleges, has its place, but not for young men who need to be trained in character, in discipline, and in shaping their values. The past proves that successful training needs to be done by men who have trained others as well.

Paul told Timothy:

2 Timothy 2:2 "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."

Not everyone is able to train others. Inability to teach is not shameful, but it is a shame to go to someone for training who cannot train.

Regarding secular college training:

If you want an engineering degree, go get one. But it might be wise to get that degree from a college through which other students not only received their degrees but also jobs. Also consider the morality and life philosophy of graduates from/of that college. Are all grads liberal or anti-God? What are you learning? Do students get a diploma and a

good job in the secular world, but never serve in a church again? If so, then that is a dangerous school, and careful thought should be taken to protect yourself, for you are to serve God, no matter who provides your paycheck.

The school is not what we should be choosing. The product should be the basis of our choice of training for our child's future.

Dozens of young people from our church are serving in the ministry, but in most cases, they were also trained in a college. Therefore, I am pro-college; I am pro-dorm life; I am pro-long hours working nights and trying to stay awake in class. Because of this, I would be hesitant to say I could train young people for the ministry. Maybe I could, maybe I could not, but I can point to at least the three colleges mentioned above and say, "These places have done it and are doing it now." If you were trained like our church trains young people, you will graduate from these colleges still believing what you have been taught all your life.

Let me assure you, some of the well-known Baptist colleges that are most popular today are definitely NOT training young people to uphold the standards and beliefs of their parents and home church. You who are on the mission field, do not allow outward appearances to deceive you; do your homework. We only have one shot at training our children.

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