

# *Here I Am Lord, Send Me. But Wait... I Have Some Questions.*

***"I'm seriously thinking about vocational Christian work, but how can I be sure of God's will?"***

This is probably the most common question believers ask. Any sincere, Spirit-filled Christian who wants to know the will of God concerning his life can know it, but this is typically a process, not a dramatic revelation.

Multitudes of well-meaning Christians are wasting their lives, powerless because they are waiting for some unusual sign, signal or flash of light from God before they act.

There is a lot of mythology surrounding the issue of knowing God's will and "being called." Many Christians think that a call from God will be an emotional experience when they hear God boom: "Do this! Go here!" In the words of Dr. Howard Hendricks, "The will of God is not nearly as focused on location or vocation as it is on character."

Being called primarily means being obedient to the ongoing direction of the Lord's leading in your life. God is calling every Christian to submit his whole life to Him and thereby bring glory to His name. "Whether then you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31).

The call to be a vocational Christian worker is no different from the call to be a doctor, a homemaker or a ditch-digger. Any vocation to which God directs you can glorify Him.

For further information on how to know the will of God for your life, write for a free copy of the Paul Brown Letter. After years of counseling students and adults in career decisions, Dr. Bill Bright wrote this helpful article. You may request your copy from: Campus Crusade for Christ International, Staff Opportunities (2500), 100 Lake Hart Dr., Orlando, FL 32832; 1-407-826-2538.

***"What if I plan to get a secular job and use my position to develop a ministry?"***

If God is clearly directing you to a career in a secular field, then you will need commitment to your employer and his firm. He is not paying you to evangelize on the job, but rather to make a profit for the stockholders of his company. You are to work heartily, as unto the Lord, whatever you do.

Sure, as a Christian you are called to be His ambassador every minute of every day, but you need to be sensitive to your employer's expectations. Your opportunities to witness and disciple will be significantly more limited than what you've been experiencing as a student. It is exciting to have a ministry in a secular context; however, keep in mind that it is very difficult to balance your commitment of time, talent, creativity and energy in your professional goals and in your ministry.

Kick back for a moment and think: What kind of ministry do you want to have? What will it look like? Will you be an usher passing the offering plate in the 9:00 service? Will you be a member of the Christian education committee? Perhaps you are thinking of something more.

You probably see an attractive, creative outreach to your colleagues and clients. Perhaps you envision a discipleship group of people who have come to Christ through your ministry, and they are being built and trained to have their own ministries. You expect that soon a Christian influence will prevail throughout your entire company.

Let's ask the hard question: How many people do you know who are having this type of ministry? The scarcity of men and women having potent ministries of evangelism and discipleship in the work place should give us some indication of the difficulty of the task. Now, it is certainly not impossible. Yet it is often more difficult than what students anticipate. Therefore, they get ambushed by naive expectations and insufficient preparation.

A survey of young professionals seeking to minister in the market place revealed four predominant barriers to an effective ministry: 1) Pressure from employer not to "dispense religion" in the context of his business. 2) Pressure from the boss to "produce" leaves little time for ministry during the work day. 3) Commuting time included, 50- to 60-hour work weeks are the norm. That leaves little time or energy for ministry after work. 4) Little to no environment, encouragement or accountability is available to foster a ministry. Brian Birdsall, a Denver attorney, said:

My client is paying the firm \$100 per hour for legal advice. He has a right to the best legal work I can produce. My boss knows I am a Christian, but he is

definitely not paying me to share my faith in the office, even if the client's need is basically spiritual.

The difference between having a ministry on campus and in the business world is the difference between day and night. I have to perform in the work place. I have to be prepared every day. There is much less time for me to minister. And, those I want to reach have little time or inclination to talk about spiritual issues.

North Carolina physical therapist Lynn Rendleman added:

If I shared Christ with a patient, I would be censured by my boss. He would say, "You have a good education and training. Use It! Don't use this God-business." ... When you get out of school and start your first job, you feel tremendous pressure just to do your work correctly. There's no time to develop the creative evangelistic approaches necessary to be effective in a business context.

Even though I have a Bible study with some of the staff at the hospital, few of them have a vision to make a spiritual impact. I often feel weighted down by the mediocrity of the Christians around me.

***"How can I prepare myself for an effective ministry within the context of a secular career?"***

Many Christians fail to develop disciple-building opportunities "on the job," because they simply are not equipped to work through the complexities of a ministry in the marketplace.

If God calls you to develop a lifelong ministry within a business environment, then you need to equip yourself just as a physician, attorney or CPA invests several years of additional education and experience in preparation for a lifelong career.

Two years of vocational Christian ministry will give you the basic training you'll need to be a well-equipped ambassador for Christ--wherever God leads you. Think of it as a graduate school in life effectiveness. As a Campus Crusade

for Christ staff member, you'll have unlimited opportunities to develop and sharpen skills that will be important for the rest of your life--skills in the areas of personal ministry, leadership, communication and relationships. Realistic preparation for a lifetime of ministry in a secular position may include taking two or three years of "graduate work" to strengthen your walk with the Lord and develop personal ministry skills.

***"Wouldn't a secular job be more secure financially and therefore better stewardship of my money?"***

Financial security is probably not the major factor in your decision. If it is a specific issue, however, consider that there really is no financial security in any position. Tens of thousands of men and women have spent years of their lives working for major corporations only one day to turn around and have no job.

Yes, God calls us to good stewardship and responsible planning for our futures, but there is no security apart from the Lord. When you started college, some of the best-paying jobs in America were in the oil and high-tech industries. Today many of those companies have gone out of business or have been swallowed by mergers or takeovers. One out of every four jobs in the oil industry has disappeared in the last four years. Men with graduate degrees in petroleum engineering are pumping gas at Houston service stations rather than exploring for new wells.

A commentator on the January 6, 1987, edition of "Today's Business" said flatly: "Let's face it, there's no such thing as job security anywhere in America today." You are more secure in a fiery furnace in the will of God than anywhere outside the will of God.

Financial security can only be found through obedience to Him and His direction for your life. The bottom line is our obedience to His call. It is only in Him and through faith in His promises that we find lasting security. Our lives are in His hands--therefore, we are ultimately His responsibility.

*In response to commonly asked questions, Roger Randall has written a series of articles about full-time vocational ministry. Roger, who has served on the staff of Campus Crusade for Christ for 25 years has counseled thousands of university students and young professionals regarding their career decisions.*

**If you have further questions or would like information about staff opportunities with Campus Crusade for Christ International, please write or call:**  
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