

Your Faith, Your Future

Samford University Career Development Center

Career development is a lifelong process that includes many steps and stages. To make wise decisions, it is important to be able to evaluate your skills, interests and values and know how to make choices based on what options best suit you. At times, this can seem like an intimidating process. How can you choose the best major for you? How can you plan for a satisfying and meaningful career?

Your faith can guide your major and career decisions. Prayer can help you discern God's purpose for your life, understand your spiritual gifts more clearly, expand your understanding of meaningful work, and make decisions with more confidence. So, whether you are called to the ministry or to the non-profit sector, to the missions field or the executive board room, whether you are a teacher, lawyer, doctor or mechanic, you can express your God given abilities and contribute to the benefit of mankind.

The following rhetorical questions and corresponding Scripture verses from the King James Version of the Holy Bible may serve to inspire and encourage your prayerful study.

Identity and Purpose

Who are you? What is your identity as a child of God? For what purpose were you created?

"God created man in His own image...male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God saw everything that he had made and behold, it was very good." - Genesis 1: 27, 28 and 31

Consider what Jeremiah revealed about God's knowledge of and plans for us:

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." —Jeremiah 29:11

Christ Jesus was clear what the ultimate purpose of life is:

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." —Luke 10:27

What does Paul tell us about who we are and the purpose to which we are called?

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose." —Romans 8:28

Discovering and Using Spiritual Gifts and Talents

Evaluate your special skills and abilities. Which ones bring you joy and satisfaction? Which gifts do others recognize, appreciate, and benefit from?

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." - I Corinthians 12: 4

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." —James 1:17

Developing an Understanding of Meaningful Work

What are your values? How do you want to contribute in your work, community, family? Think about ways in which the careers you are exploring express the concept of meaningful work.

"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." - II Corinthians 9:8

"Then said they unto him, what shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." —John 6:28–29

Discerning and Implementing Individual Callings

How can you begin to interpret and understand your calling?

“Be still and know that I am God.” – Psalms 32:8

“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”—Proverbs 3:5–6

Is a calling a one-time event? Or is it a constant, conscious striving to honor God and serve mankind through all the stages of our lives: as students, at our part-time job, in our first full time job and beyond?

“I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go.”—Psalms 32:8

“But they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.”- Psalms 34:10

What are some of the “roadblocks” you may be facing in rightly interpreting God's calling for your life?

Fear, doubt, negative thinking? How can you begin to identify and eradicate those obstacles?

“In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust: let me never be put to confusion.”—Psalms 71:1

“Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee: yea, I will help thee: yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”—Isaiah 41:10

“For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.”—I Corinthians 14:33

As you continue to explore your career choices from a theological perspective we in the Career Development Center pray “That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.”—Colossians 1:10