

Don't Ask the Wrong Question

Many people have asked me recently why I dropped medical school. In light of the current "gauntlet" of finals and resulting conversations with students about school, studying, and career, I thought it appropriate to write about what specifically God did within my heart during this tough process.

What I have been given (after continual failure) is a new way of making choices regarding career decisions that I feel ALL young adults would be wise to apply.

What Question Was I Asking?

It's what I believe to be the most overrated, overused, misused, abused and misleading question that is on every college student and young adult's mind (I may be biased). It's usually the first thing that someone asks you in college (following your name) when meeting you.

Yet, many live and die never answering it. It is a question that many before our time never asked, but no college student today has to be trained to ask it to themselves or anyone else. Most seniors want to cry the moment they are asked it, they loathe it, and yet no one asks it more than they do to themselves. So what is the question?

What do you (I) want to do?

Yes! That's it! What do I want to do with my life? (insert the sounds of babies crying, nails scratching blackboards and bombs exploding)

This is not a bad question. We are not wrong or evil for ever asking what we should do with our energy and lives. It is a natural question and should be asked. And these reflections and realizations regarding this question have been mostly

revealed in my own struggles with idolatry and a lack of trust in God's provision and love.

This is a question that I obsessed over for several years. While I thought there were few in the same perceived struggle, I began to realize I am only one of a majority. I focused on this question for years and when I answered it, I never liked my answers because they conflicted with what I thought my motives should be. And I was right ... my motives were way off.

What Kind of Man Do I Want to Be?

Rather than focusing on what I want to do, I realized I should be spending way more time making decisions based upon who I want to be. The moment I began to frame my whole decision process upon who I want to be, my decisions found totally different results. I am naturally going to pursue what I want to do, but I need to be reminded to focus on the kind of man I want to be—like Jesus Christ.

A new perspective was needed. I am not what I do. I do what I am. My works do not produce identity. Instead, God's work produced identity within me. It is not by works, but by workmanship (see Eph. 2:8-10) that I have received identity. And it is from this identity I have received that I must act and do.

So if my doing comes from my being ... I should probably focus a lot more on making decisions how my identity (new in Christ) says I should make them, rather than trying to make an identity from a job.

How This Played Out

My attempts to pursue and stick with medicine were deeply rooted in my attempts to be viewed as important in the world. By gaining money, fame, power, and prestige, I had unknowingly been trying to find self-justification. I could live in comparison to other people and make myself feel better about my sinful and desperate condition, rather than relying totally

upon the gospel.

When I asked what I wanted to do—medicine lined up perfectly! I wanted to have lots of money, power, prestige and be a man who loved the Lord and represented Him well (see I John 2:16-18). The problem is that we know a man cannot serve two masters (see Matt. 6), and when you *only* ask what you wish to do, every human being will naturally want to pick things that are not in mutual allegiance. I unknowingly was serving money, power, etc. rather than the Lord *alone*.

Once faced with a decision, I now ask “If I choose option A over B—will I be moving toward being the kind of man God has designed for me to be?” In this case, I realized that for me, to continue pursuing medicine was to take a step towards being a man who sacrificed his family, relationships, and soul on the alter of money, importance and prestige.

Why? Because that was what I would have been (personally) choosing to serve with that given decision to stay. I had fears rooted in never being important, smart, powerful, etc. Therefore, I dropped medical school. I will not be a man who worships his ego, prestige, money and importance, because that *is not* the man God made me to be.

I had been sacrificing my true design and skills to pursue what my society claims to be important and successful. I was an iPad trying to be a Frisbee. It worked ... but not to my true design.

What Now?

What if we as a Christian body quit asking and encouraging one another to be focusing and deciding solely by what we want to do, but instead, focus on who we are supposed to be with every given decision? What if my aim and purpose was no longer to encourage and help students simply find what they want to do with their hands, but also challenge their hearts to both know and become who they should be and subsequently do out of their

being?

Try and tell me who you are without telling me what you do. Who do you want to be? What kind of man do you want to be? Please join me in prayer and reading the words and seeking the will of God to determine who we are in Him. Then make our life's decisions based upon that identity.

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