Choosing a Bible College

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It seems like it was yesterday that my wife and I began our ministry at FaithWay. June 27, 1980 was the day that we moved to Ontario. We recently celebrated our twenty fifth anniversary at FaithWay. Our church family surprised my wife and I and honoured us in such a wonderful way. We were truly humbled.

As we have reflected upon the many blessings of all of these years, we certainly see our college ministry as a big part of what God is doing. We officially opened the doors to FaithWay Baptist College of Canada in 1983. God has proven Himself powerful on our behalf. Just a few weeks ago we graduated our twentieth class of seniors. The thrill of my heart is to see so many faithful graduates serving the Lord in many different types of ministries. Their influence for Christ is now being felt in so many places around the world.

There are now several good Bible college ministries across North America. Many of these are associated with strong fundamental Baptist churches. I personally believe that this is God's plan. Many of the schools will aggressively seek prospective students through a vast array of advertising, letter writing, gifts, phone calls and so forth. I am not being critical of this approach; however, we have not used aggressive means to influence young people in our direction. Many young people often face a dilemma in choosing a college. I believe that the will of God should settle all issues. I often tell young people that there are no alternatives. Young men and women ought to be educated at the institution that God would have them attend. A simple formula that I promote is as follows.

PRAYER

We are aware that the Word of God is replete with instruction concerning the prayer life of a Christian. The relationship that we have with our Heavenly Father is one of "*praying without ceasing*" and living in constant communication. Of course, we get very specific with the Lord when we pray. This includes every facet of our life.

Every Christian should be continually asking God for direction. How much more should those serious about being trained for full time ministry be earnest in

prayer. The Word of God teaches us that God will answer specifically. We will find if we seek and God will open if we knock. Our Lord certainly wants us to know and do His will. Those seeking a place to further their education need to know that God has answered their prayer by leading them to the right institution.

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

Since the precious Word of God is "*a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path*" we ought to let the Bible guide us into our place of preparation for full time ministry. The Word of God speaks to us in every area of life. Decisions ought to be made based upon specific precepts and principles. One should never violate the Word of God.

It is upon this foundation that God will individually direct His children. The Holy Spirit illuminates our hearts through the inspired Word. God will lead a young person through His Word if that individual will seek the mind of God. As a young person is reading and studying with this in mind, they are also prepared for the teaching and preaching of the Word of God from others. This is how the Lord directs. He doesn't lead by emotion, feelings, pressure, or the decisions of other peers. God leads through His Word!

PARENTAL DIRECTION

A teenager should not neglect their God given authority in this important matter. The insight that God gives parents is invaluable and should be respected and sought. If there has been a good relationship between parent and child, this makes the preparation for college training so much more enjoyable.

I will admit that I have helped many students through difficult decisions when parents were either non-Christian or living away from the Lord. Even in these circumstances, parents should be honoured and included in the decision making process.

PASTORAL COUNSEL

The advice of your pastor should always be included when you are making major decisions in your life. As a gift from God, he is helping perfect you for the work of the ministry. A young person should seriously take the counsel of their pastor in this process of selecting a Bible college.

I know that there are other areas that could be dealt with, but these are the primary ones that must be settled in following a biblical pattern.

The prayer of the administration and faculty of FaithWay Baptist College of Canada is that our students would know that God led them here.