Career Planning and Life Decisions

Intro:
- time of year when young folks graduate from college or high school, commencement speeches, makes us think about our careers and the future

- lesson geared toward young folks: Career Planning and Life Decisions – 5 suggestions

Decide what you want most in life – career planning and life decisions, what is your top priority
- illus.: finally realized a few years ago I can’t do everything I want to life
  - can’t reach all possible goals, not even spiritual
  - have to pick and choose, and be content

- common goals:
  - get rich / not worry about money / get out of debt
  - get married
  - retire early
  - be famous
  - invent something important

- Christian’s goals:
  - Col. 1:6, 10 constantly bearing fruit and increasing, walk worthy manner, pleasing God in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work
    - this is most important, nothing else in life matters if we’re not serving God as we should
  - Tit. 2:14 zealous for good deeds
    - the reason Jesus redeemed us

- our behavior reflects our attitude – things we do reflects what we think
  - Matt. 6:31-33 worldly things (money) not important, spiritual things are important
    - our focus is on the spiritual, and we’re content with whatever physical things God gives us
  - Ja. 4:14-15 everything else is “if the Lord wills”
    - happy and content with whatever the Lord will may be

- behavior / attitude:
  - our work in God’s kingdom is the most important thing in our life
    - study God’s word to grow and mature, teaching others, assembling with the saints, personal work
  - participate as a member of the congregation outside of regular assemblies, not just “go to church”
  - make time for spiritual things 1st and secular things 2nd
  - if a friend asked, “what’s most important to you,” we would say, “God, and doing His work”

- as Christians, we want to please God and serve Him more than anything else
  - we seek His kingdom above everything else, and we’re satisfied with the physical blessings He gives us
  - this attitude is seen in everything we say and do – career planning, life decisions
Decide what kind of home life you want – career planning and life decisions
- God gives us the liberty to decide:
  - single / married
  - children / how many

- we are accountable for fulfilling our God-given duty in the home
  - Eph. 5:22-23a wives be subject to husbands
  - Eph. 5:25, 28-29a husbands love wives as Christ loved the church, gave Himself
  - Eph. 6:1-4 children obey / parents raise in the training and admonition of the Lord

- if we aren’t willing to fulfill the obligations of a family role, don’t enter into the relationship
  - illus.: connection between absentee fathers and child abuse (http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/usermanuals/foundation/foundatione.cfm)
    - rate of child abuse in single parent households is almost double
    - compared to their peers living with both parents, children in single parent homes had:
      - 77% greater risk of being physically abused
      - 87% greater risk of being harmed by physical neglect
      - 165% greater risk of experiencing notable physical neglect
      - 74% greater risk of suffering from emotional neglect
      - 80% greater risk of suffering serious injury as a result of abuse
      - 120% greater risk of experiencing some type of maltreatment overall
- making decision regarding family is a grave responsibility and shouldn’t be taken lightly
  - don’t get married if you aren’t 100% committed – judgment
  - don’t have children if you aren’t not 100% committed – judgment

- we should make career decisions and life decisions that put us in a position to fulfill your obligations
  - illus.: David Bonner, last time preacher here
    - told us about his career decision, dentistry, where he could have time to do other things – family, preaching (meetings all over USA)
  - illus.: many Christians have changed jobs so they are in a position to serve the Lord better
    - Beth and Allan both
    - have a better schedule so can raise family and be at all church services – Mark NeSmith
    - take a job paying less money for better work environment and better schedule
- best to know what you want, and only take jobs and agree to school projects that are in line with achieving your most important goals – spiritual
  - communicate schedule requirements before taking job or agreeing to school projects
Set your financial priorities – career planning and life decisions
- Mk. 8:34-38 Jesus, what does it profit . . . . – put God 1st regarding finances
- Mk. 8:33 set your mind on the interests of God
- put God 1st regarding financial plans

- illus.: rich young ruler’s error – made his spiritual priorities secondary
  - Matt. 19:16-22 story, rich young ruler, what lacked, sell possessions and give to poor, have treasure in heaven, follow Jesus, grieved, owned much property
    - put financial before spiritual
  - Matt. 19:23-24 hard for rich man to enter kingdom of heaven, easier for a camel to go through eye of needle
    - affluent people likely to put money before God
  - Matt. 19:25-26 reaction of apostles and Jesus’ reaction

- illus.: Zaccheus
  - Lk. 19:1-7 story of Zaccheus, short, climbed sycamore tree to see Jesus who saw him and said, “Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house.”
  - Lk. 19:8-10 Zaccheus’ financial commitment toward God, Jesus’ response
    - used finances to do God’s work

- illus.: widow who gave all she had to live on
  - Lk. 21:1-4 widow, true story
    - used money toward spiritual things before physical things, gave all she had

- Are you like the rich young ruler, or like Zaccheus and the widow who put God before money?

- test#1: How much money do you want to make? – set financial priorities
  - provide necessities of life, and whatever else God gives you is an extra blessing
  - live a comfortable middle class or upper class lifestyle
  - retire early / have plenty of money when retire so you can enjoy life

- test #2: What are you willing to sacrifice to make that much, and what are you not willing to sacrifice?
  - family time
    - not know kids while they’re growing up
    - not be there to raise them, someone else has to do it
  - assembly of the saints
    - miss assemblies to work
  - work in the kingdom
    - not be there except for Sunday and Wednesday
    - not be responsible for doing things
    - not do personal work or evangelism

- test #3: What are your highest financial priorities? – set financial priorities
  - providing personal needs and needs of family
  - saving / retirement
  - contributing on the 1st day of the week
  - sharing with people in need, especially Christians
  - personal work
Decide where you want to be the moment after you die – career planning and life decisions, live appropriately
- Ja. 4:14-15a life, vapor, life passes quickly
  - illus.: video, vapor, boiling water – vapor lasts about a second
    - child born in USA today expected to live about 80 years
    - a vapor is about \(1/2.5\) billionth of the child’s life
    - i.e., child would live a little longer than \(2.5\) billion vapors, if each vapor was a second
  - illus.: life on earth is so short:
    - it will seem like a blink of an eye after a thousand years in eternity
    - it may not be remember after quadrillions of years in heaven
  - decide where you want to be when you die, because you will be there very soon

- Ps. 90:12 number your days, to have a heart of wisdom – wise in use of time upon earth – redeem the time
  - decide where you want to be when you die, because you will be there very soon
  - illus.: rich man and Lazarus – story
    - rich man probably regretted his career path and life decisions once he was in torment (Hades)
  - are living in such a way to go where you want to be when you die
    - are you making decisions that help you get there

Decide what you want your life to have been like when you get to the judgment – career planning and life decisions, live appropriately
- we will have to give an answer for the decisions we’ve made, and what we’ve done
  - Ec. 12:14 God will bring every act to judgment, whether it is good or evil
  - Matt. 12:36 every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment
  - 2 Cor. 5:10 we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad

- What do you want you're life to be have been like, when you stand before Jesus in judgment, and give an account for what you’ve done?
  - live so you have no regrets

Summary / Inv.
- career planning and life decisions – review PP
  - Do you need to make any changes for you die?
  - inv.