

CAREERS

A YOUNG ADULT'S ENCOUNTER WITH ELLEN WHITE

. . . ON CAREERS

Ellen White counseled that every well-educated woman should know how to harness a horse. How could a Victorian woman, who lived at the turn of the twentieth century, help me choose a career at the turn of the twenty-first century? Computer programmer, radiology technician, helicopter pilot, substance abuse counselor—many of my job options didn't even exist in her lifetime!

Even though Ellen White was not familiar with twenty-first-century technology, she helped me understand the cosmic significance of life. My life matters to God. He wants me to be with Him in heaven. He needs me to choose to do His work on earth.

Based on the advice and counsel of Ellen White, I determined that my mission—career, if you please—was to be a minister of the gospel in everything I did. When people asked me what my college major was, I'd reply, "I'm a ministry student! More than studying about God, I want to learn how to work with, and for, Him!"

So far God has employed me as a dormitory resident assistant, colporteur, youth pastor, and registered nurse. I have continually asked myself, "How can I do this job to make an eternal difference for me or someone else?" Only God knows what work I will do in the future; but through Ellen White I have this career assurance: "Not more surely is the place prepared for us in the heavenly man-

sions than is the special place designated on earth where we are to work for God.”¹⁰²

—Julie, age 24

YOUNG ADULT’S ENCOUNTER WITH ELLEN WHITE . . . ON CAREERS

In elementary school my ambition was to be a player on a professional basketball, football, or baseball team. As time went on, I realized that that goal was a dream and not reality.

When, as a teenager, I began to realize how much God loves me as an individual, I wanted to know Him as a personal friend. I tried to read spiritual books, but found them boring. A couple years later I again picked up Steps to Christ. And this time it came alive. God began speaking directly to my heart, and I wanted to share how much Jesus means to me.

I believe that God used Ellen White to inspire me to grow in a love relationship with Christ and to commit my career to Him. I realized that working to save people for Jesus’ kingdom means that God could help me to trust Him and love Him more deeply.

Right now I am a student gospel literature evangelist, but I want to be a witness, no matter what line of work I ultimately choose. Only doing something to help others will truly make me happy. I don’t want to get caught up in the rat race, because the love of money will lead me to hell.

Reading about Jesus in The Desire of Ages has helped me decide to dedicate my life to ministry and evangelism.

I read a Help Wanted sign into Luke 10:2: “The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest” (NKJV). God is urgently calling young people to work for Him today! I choose to go and gather precious persons for God’s harvest.

—Tim, age 21

SCRIPTURE

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil (Proverbs 3:5-7).

For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope (Jeremiah 29:11).

But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well (Matthew 6:33).

For what will it profit them if they gain the whole world but forfeit their life? (Matthew 16:26).

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age (Matthew 28:19, 20).

And this good news of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the world, as a testimony to all the nations; and then the end will come (Matthew 24:14).

Dear youth, what is the aim and purpose of your life? Are you ambitious for education that will give you prestige and honor? Do you have dreams you can't even express—that you will one day stand upon the summit of intellectual greatness? Do you hope to one day sit as a legislator and help enact laws for the nation? There is nothing wrong in these aspirations. Each of you can reach your goals. Don't be content with mediocrity. Aim high, and exert yourself to reach your goal.¹⁰³

Success in any line demands a definite aim. If you want to achieve true success in life, set goals worthy of your efforts. The highest purpose for your life is to give the gospel to the world in this generation. That purpose opens opportunities for everyone whose heart Jesus has touched.

God's purpose for you is wider, deeper, higher than your limited vision has ever imagined! God often picks reliable persons from unlikely places to witness for Him in the world's highest places. Many a young person of today, growing up like Daniel in his Judean home, studying God's Word and His works, and learning lessons of responsibility, will yet stand in legislative assemblies, in courtrooms, and before royalty, as a witness for the King of kings.¹⁰⁴

True education does not ignore the value of scientific knowledge or literary attainments; but above information it values power; above power, goodness; above intellectual achievements, character. The world does not so much need persons of great intellect as of great character. The world needs young men and young women whose talents are controlled by consistent principles.¹⁰⁵

What, then, is essential education for this time? True education embraces physical, mental, and moral training that develops all your abilities to their highest potential so you can serve God and work to benefit humanity. To seek for fame and recognition will separate you from the Spirit of God, depriving you of that grace which would make your work for Christ effective.¹⁰⁶

Students who exalt the sciences above the God of science will be ignorant, even though they think they are brilliant. If you cannot afford time to pray, cannot take time to communicate with God and reflect on the Source of wisdom, your learning will be wasted.¹⁰⁷

God's career choice for us is determined by our capabilities. Not everyone has the same ability. Regardless of your academic potential, each of you should aim just as high as uniting yourself with divine power allows you to reach.¹⁰⁸

Love and loyalty to Jesus are the spring of all real service. When your heart is touched by Christ's love, you will want to work for Him. Look for ways to serve the poor, the vic-

timized, and the oppressed. Like any other work, skill comes as you actually become involved in ministry and service to the disadvantaged. Without actual involvement and exposure to their needs, even well-meaning efforts can have disastrous results. After all, you learn to swim in the water, not on land!

The church is organized for service, and in a life of service for Jesus connection with the church is one of the first steps. Loyalty to Christ demands responsibly carrying out church duties. This is an important part of your education, and in a church that reflects Jesus' life it will lead directly to helping a world in pain.

There are many ways youth can find opportunities for service to others. Organize yourselves into small groups and look for ways to serve the community. Working together will give you a sense of unity, acceptance, and encouragement. Parents and teachers can be your mentors, and you will benefit from the wisdom of their experience.

Learn about others' needs! That knowledge kindles empathy, which is the basis for effective ministry. As you try to learn about the tremendous needs of persons in developing countries, you will become less self-centered and more sympathetic to the desperate plight of millions. Find out all you can about persons such as the apostle Paul, Martin Luther, Moffat, Livingston, and Carey, as well as today's frontier missionaries.

God alone knows the depths of the world's misery and despair, and He knows how to bring relief. Everywhere He sees hurting persons, crushed with sin and sorrow and pain. But He also sees their potential; He sees the height that they could reach. Although human beings have abused their opportunities, wasted their talents, and lost their Godlike dignity, the Creator will be honored in their rescue.¹⁰⁹

Thousands of young persons will be called to this rescue

ministry. The whole world is opening to the gospel. From every direction sin-stricken hearts cry for a knowledge of the God of love. Millions have never heard of God or of His love. It is their right to receive this knowledge. They have equal rights to the Savior's mercy. We must answer their cry. At this crisis, the question asked of Queen Esther comes to every home, every school, every student who has enjoyed the light of the gospel: "Who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14, NKJV).

There is no line of work that could benefit you more than helping the underprivileged. In this ministry, you are God's helping hand. Through you, angels can carry out their mission. Angels can speak through your voice and work through your hands. As you cooperate with these heavenly beings you receive the benefit of their education and experience. What university course could equal this?

With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen and soon-coming Savior might be carried to the whole world! How soon might the end come—the end of suffering and sorrow and sin! How soon, in place of our lives here, marred by sin and pain, we could inherit heaven, where the voice of weeping will never again be heard.¹¹⁰

All the perplexities of our life's experience we will then understand. What appeared to be only confusion, disappointment, and frustration will be seen as God's beautiful plan to give us victory at last. There we will again meet our friends. The love and caring that God planted in our hearts will have true and sweet fulfillment. Visiting with God, enjoying life with the angels and with God's friends from all history, experiencing the special bonds of unity—these are among the joys of heaven.

In our life here, earthly, sin-restricted as it is, the greatest joy and highest education are in service. And in the future

reality, uninhibited by the limitations of sinful humanity, we will find our greatest joy and highest education in service—witnessing and learning rich mysteries: Christ in you, the hope of glory.¹¹¹

(For additional reading on this subject we recommend *True Education; Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students; Colporteur Ministry; Fundamentals of Christian Education; and Christian Service.*)

THINK ABOUT IT

1. What is the relationship between choice of career and choice of a ministry for God?
2. Is it wrong to be ambitious? Why, or why not?
3. What personal values are associated with “true education”?
4. How can one “cooperate with God and heavenly angels” for the good of others?
5. What is “true service” for others?