

The Graduate's Choice ~ Your biggest decision Post Graduation

(Suitable for use within a group over approximately one hour, or for an individual's personal Bible reading)

Thinking about life after graduation

1. Make a list of what you anticipate will be the three most important choices you will make in your years as a healthcare professional post graduation.
2. Spend a few moments to consider why you have identified these particular decisions as holding such high significance in your future.

What does God have to say?

Read Luke 16:1-8.

These words of Jesus are recorded by Luke for us in his orderly account of the claims and actions of Jesus of Nazareth. This teaching of Jesus is followed by a description of a rich man who was not shrewd in the use of his life and his wealth (Luke 16:19-31), and who suffered the resulting detrimental, eternal consequences of his decisions.

Undoing a Point of Confusion

Confusion often exists when people consider this parable of Jesus. Confusion centres on the commendation given by the Master (the figure who represents God/Jesus) to a manager who is dishonest. The important realisation/distinction that we must make here is that the Master *is not* commending this man's dishonesty *but is* commending his shrewdness:

Luke 16:8, 'The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted *shrewdly* [emphasis mine].'

It is important to note - there was no 'social security' or unemployment benefits in the society Jesus was speaking to. Once the manager lost his job, he would be without any income. It seems it was also a significant possibility that the manager's unemployment would result in his home being removed from his ownership (verse 4).

A definition of shrewd: Showing astute powers of judgement; cleverness.

Putting it into practice

1. Looking back over the parable, how has the manager been shrewd to warrant praise from the Master (to warrant praise from God/Jesus)?
2. For us as health care students, what actions/attitudes would we display in our context to receive the commendation of being shrewd from Jesus? Think of 5 concrete examples.

Through the parable of the shrewd manager Jesus highlights the need to live with the future in mind. That is, Jesus wants us to carry out the thousands of working hours which lie ahead of us, with the reality of eternity in mind. Jesus is concerned for *your* long term welfare, and doesn't want you to waste time on earth that is both precious and fleeting! Jesus urges you to understand that the most important choice you *CAN* make post graduation, is to decide to serve out your career in light not only of the next 40 years – but in light of the next 400, 4000, 4000,000.....years.

Having completed the parable, Jesus provides a suggestion in which His followers can be shrewd (Luke 16:9-13).

Luke 16:9-13 reads,

⁹ I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.

¹⁰ “Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. ¹¹ So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? ¹² And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else’s property, who will give you property of your own?

¹³ “No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.”

3. Do you think Jesus words in Luke 16:9-13 are a reasonable application of being shrewd in the way that God/Jesus commends (in Luke 16:1-8)? How do these words make you think/feel? Are they in any way relevant to your future practice in health care?
4. Are you willing to ask God to enable you to have the courage and ability to work in health care with eternity in mind?
Will you take action to spur on and be spurred on by other Christians in your future work place to see working lives lived with eternity in mind (including your own working life)?

Bible Bites

(Suitable to be completed over approximately 20-25 minutes by a group or an individual)

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¹⁶ Jesus told his disciples: "There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. ² So he called him in and asked him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.' ³ "The manager said to himself, 'What shall I do now? My master is taking away my job. I'm not strong enough to dig, and I'm ashamed to beg— ⁴ I know what I'll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.' ⁵ "So he called in each one of his master's debtors. He asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?'

⁶ " "Eight hundred gallons of olive oil,' he replied. "The manager told him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it four hundred.' ⁷ "Then he asked the second, 'And how much do you owe?' " "A thousand bushels of wheat,' he replied.

"He told him, 'Take your bill and make it eight hundred.'

⁸ "The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light.'

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1. Are you willing to ask God to enable you to have the courage and ability to work in health care with eternity in mind? Will you take action to spur on and be spurred on by other Christians in your work place towards this mindset?