



Asking the Last “Why?”

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College students face three daunting decisions during the young adult years. The answers to these questions will determine the trajectory of their lives, yet they have to answer with little experience at their disposal. The questions are:

- What field of study should I pursue?
- Whom should I marry? (Some may feel exempted from this question, but they still have to ask whether they should marry.)
- What type of vocation should I pursue?

One exercise that brings guidance to these questions is asking the last “Why?” Take the field of study, for instance:

- “Why should Jane get a degree in chemistry?”
- “Because it is her ‘passion,’ and it will give her a sense of fulfillment.”
- “But why should she follow her passion or be fulfilled?”
- “Because God made her that way.”
- “Why did God make her that way?”

Cultural answers to the “why?” question typically focus on ourselves. Yet the Bible demands that we go beyond these reasons. I would suggest that God made Jane the way she is so that she could use her interest and abilities in chemistry to advance the Kingdom throughout the earth. This is a distinctly missionary purpose and must always be the ultimate purpose for any and all human endeavor. God is a missionary God, and we are to be missionary people, no matter what we study, whom we marry, or what we do.

No matter what field of study we choose, its ultimate purpose is to gain knowledge and skills that will help us advance the Kingdom. We outfit ourselves for Kingdom purposes. The same is true for whom we marry

we don’t marry merely to acquire companionship or raise a family. The ultimate purpose for a marriage is that as a team, a man and woman can more fully use their gifts for the advance of the Kingdom (and raise up Kingdom kids in the process!). This may be why there is no marriage in heaven—the purpose of marriage is fulfilled on earth. And the same is true for the line of work we enter. Whatever we do, we do it with this ultimate purpose in mind: to spread the Kingdom throughout the earth.

So ask yourself, “How does this degree, this prospective spouse, or this job fit into God’s Kingdom purpose?” By

making God’s Kingdom purpose part of the equation, we integrate the Kingdom into these important decisions. The Kingdom is at the center, not the periphery. The Kingdom is for everyone, not just the full-time Christian workers.

And exactly how does Jane use her chemistry degree to advance the Kingdom? The possibilities are endless. The point of the “why?” question is not to provide detailed answers, but to send all of us in the proper direction. Within biblical guidelines, what we study, whom we marry and what we do aren’t as important as being on a Kingdom trajectory. Are you? †

U.S. CENTER FOR WORLD MISSION *Educational Partnerships*

1. Trinity University has partnered with the USCWM to offer credit for the undergraduate INSIGHT program. To find out more on how you and your organization can host an INSIGHT site, contact melissa.hoffman@uscwm.org.
2. Partnering with Knowledge Elements, the USCWM has developed a degree completion format for the World Christian Foundations curriculum. Schools interested in knowing more about this innovative program should contact Larry McCullough at larry@knowledgeelements.com.
3. Northwestern College offers bachelor’s credit for INSIGHT in partnership with Bethlehem Baptist Church. Northwestern also offers a bachelor’s degree using World Christian Foundations. Check out www.nwc.edu/display/7173.

All these curricula offer insights from Ralph Winter’s missiology and prepare potential cross-cultural workers to analyze problems and seek solutions that are biblically and culturally appropriate.