



# BIBLE

STUDENT BOOK

▶ **12th Grade | Unit 3**

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# BIBLE 1203

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# Choosing a Ministry

## Introduction

Frank Parsons is recognized as the father of the modern vocational guidance movement. He described three clear and complete procedures for general career guidance. His system is the one we've followed in these first three LIFEPACs. The choice of a ministry and a career begins with a recognition of one's skills (self-understanding). The second step is an awareness of available jobs (ministries and careers). This final step is the matching of skills with actual positions.



As a project for these first three LIFEPACs, obtain a small-ring loose-leaf notebook to be your "career notebook." Stock it with ruled notebook paper. Keep all the material you write and collect in it. Twenty-three assignments in the first three LIFEPACs are to be written and numbered in the notebook.

## Objectives

**Read these objectives.** The objectives tell you what you will be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFEPAC®. When you have finished this LIFEPAC, you should be able to:

1. Identify your opportunities for ministry.
2. Describe how to apply for a position and obtain employment.
3. Give information concerning divine guidance in choosing a ministry and a career.
4. Decide on your career goals and plan a strategy for achieving them.

Survey the LIFEPAK. Ask yourself some questions about this study and write your questions here.

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# 1. GATHERING INFORMATION

Travel agents are popular because they dispense free information on how to get where you are going. Accurate information is necessary for both travel and choosing your career. A choice based upon false data may lead to disappointment, damage to the

persons and work involved. Information sources must be reliable, up-to-date, and complete. In order to gather reliable information: learn *where* to look and learn *what* to look for in a ministry.

## Section Objectives

**Review these objectives.** When you have completed this section, you should be able to:

1. Describe where to look for opportunities of ministry.
2. Tell what to look for in a ministerial position.



**Read Luke 11:9–10 and 12:31**

## WHERE TO LOOK

Phil Meyers graduated from Bible college last year. When he started college, Phil was inspired by the head of the department to make missions his major. From Professor Reynolds he learned much about the mission fields of the world. Phil listened to missionaries from many countries and made appointments for conferences with them, especially those from South America. For school assignments, Phil researched most of the South American countries and one summer, he enrolled in jungle-camp training where he observed missionary life first hand. The following year, he accompanied a summer internship group to Bolivia, working alongside missionaries in the field. By the time he graduated, Phil was a walking encyclopedia on the mission efforts in Bolivia.

Because he received so much information from such great sources, Phil was able to make an intelligent choice for his ministry. He will begin his career knowing what to expect, what his associates expect of him and avoid many of the disappointments plaguing those who begin with less knowledge. Information searches must begin with indirect (books and classes) sources of information and progress toward direct sources (field data).

**Indirect sources.** Research information about ministries is found from both people and publications.

People supplying information about ministries include placement personnel who keep voluminous files on hand. They receive notices of job openings and post them on bulletin boards, print them in newsletters or list them on web sites. You can find these personnel in schools, denominational offices, and career centers. Representatives of church denominations, mission agencies, and other Christian organizations generate info about ministry opportunities within their own specific groups. Pastors, teachers, and youth leaders can direct young people into openings at Christian camps, internships, and other ministries.

Employment publications report job availability in two ways: (1) general information, and (2) specific job listings. In the second LIFEPAK of this series (BIBLE 1202, Section 2), you learned about various ministries in a general way. There are many other publications and books that also give general information about ministries. You can often find these publications in your church or (some) public libraries. Many times, a denominational headquarters or central publishing house will produce publications on ministries available, as will Christian bookstores on a more local basis. The Internet is another great resource for general information since publications and books become outdated quickly.

The Occupational Information Network (O\*NET) has been developed under the sponsorship of the United States Department of Labor. O\*NET Online contains information on ministers and other related ministry occupations including the nature of the work, training qualifications, job outlook, earnings, and other needed abilities. Many periodical magazines and journals are published for people only interested in specific types of ministry. These can be traced through a library's periodical index.

When it comes to finding specific openings, an excellent resource for information is the Internet. There are several online Christian career centers that allow you to post a résumé or search for job postings by employers. [ChristianCareerCenter.com](http://ChristianCareerCenter.com), [MinistryEmployment.com](http://MinistryEmployment.com), [ChristiaNet.com](http://ChristiaNet.com), and [ChurchStaffing.com](http://ChurchStaffing.com), are a few places to get you started. One of the largest online job search websites for Christian employment is [ChristianJobs.com](http://ChristianJobs.com). Although there might be a small fee for some of these, they list numerous openings and attempt to match skills and

qualifications to specific positions. Finally, lists of available positions are often maintained by many churches, seminaries, colleges, and denominational headquarters.



| There is a wide variety of ministries.



**Research the careers/ministries which appeal to you the most. Type an essay of no less than 125 words on your findings, explaining why you are interested in them and their availability.**

**Direct sources.** A good method to obtain information about ministries is through firsthand field experiences. This is done through consultation, observation, and participation, in that order.

Consulting with people in specific ministries reveals their own experiences in that job. If such persons are not readily available, they may be encountered during travel. Churches and Christian schools often make speakers from other areas available to students. You can contact these persons on your own by telephone, email or traditional mail.

Observation of persons in their ministries shows you what performance is required for those positions. If it cannot be observed publicly, request permission

and make an appointment to sit in on the job for a specific period of time. The best way is to spend a typical day with the person as they discharge their duties. Combining consultation with observation yields a clearer picture of all the occupation entails.

Participation permits you to experience a ministry which you are seriously considering for yourself. You may be a teacher for a day, number of weeks, entire summer or school year. You will need to make arrangements with the people in charge in order to participate in their ministry. If possible, have an experienced pastor or teacher supervise your work. Churches and mission agencies often welcome trainees, interns, and short-term workers.

**Complete these activities.**

- 1.1** Two guidelines that will help you gather reliable information about available ministries are  
a. \_\_\_\_\_ to look for a ministry and b. \_\_\_\_\_ look for in a ministry.
- 1.2** One's search for information about available ministries begins with a. \_\_\_\_\_  
sources of research information and progresses toward b. \_\_\_\_\_  
sources of field data.
- 1.3** Research information about ministries can come from both a. \_\_\_\_\_  
and b. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 1.4** Files of career information are usually kept by a. \_\_\_\_\_ personnel  
located in b. \_\_\_\_\_, c. \_\_\_\_\_, and d. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 1.5** Three means of gathering information directly (in progressive order) are  
a. \_\_\_\_\_, b. \_\_\_\_\_, and c. \_\_\_\_\_.

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Arnie Wagner's father now teaches at a Christian high school. Until six years ago he taught in a public school. Once Christ changed Mr. Wagner's life, his career changed, too. He came to the realization that a Christian school would offer him a clearer spiritual environment and an opportunity to serve the Lord more directly.

Arnie remembers how earnestly his father sought to choose the right school in which to teach. He learned all he could about the schools with openings. Comparing the most likely situations, he determined which one he would best fit. He did not accept the highest paying job, but rather the most promising and challenging position. He felt this job would be the most rewarding and be the best place for his family to live.

Because he knew what to look for, Mr. Wagner was able to make a more responsible and intelligent decision. His position has been lasting, satisfying, and effective because he chose a proper place and position to serve the Lord. As your search for a career and ministry narrows, make in-depth studies of your top priority selections. Your investigation should yield seven sets of information.

**Personal qualifications.** Personal qualifications include mental ability, physical health, sociability,

character, spiritual status, spiritual gifts, special skills, age, and gender.

**Occupational requirements.** Occupational qualifications guide preparation. These often include certain amounts of schooling, training, legal restrictions (e.g., licensing to perform marriages), special examinations (e.g., ordination), and membership in certain organizations (unions or denominations).

**Employment opportunities.** Employment opportunities determine whether or not a position is tenable. How long will you be employed at this position? Are there opportunities for advancement? When this position is terminated, what will be your prospects for finding a similar position? Will this one prepare you for a better position? Will your identification with this position make it easier to find another position? Such questions may seem "unspiritual," but are practical and wise.

**Financial compensation.** Financial compensation often determines the amount of time you are able to devote to a position. Christians in career ministries must often take time from their ministries to make ends meet. For some, this necessitates a second job to earn additional income. For others it requires taking on more responsibility themselves to save the expense of hiring someone else's services.



In addition to salary, notice the fringe benefits: travel expenses, housing allowance, insurance premiums, pension payments, and vacation allotments. A schedule for annual raises should include cost of living as well as salary increases. How adequately will the income meet your family's needs?

**Job responsibilities.** Job responsibilities should be clearly stated and understood before accepting any position. A written job description or agreement should clarify what will be expected of you and should list the specific duties to be performed. Your job description should state who your supervisors will be and how you will give an accounting to them. It should also identify the staff members under your supervision and include your working hours, days off, and annual vacation time. A mutual understanding of these responsibilities will avoid future problems.

**Working conditions.** Working conditions may seem insignificant at first, but distractions and irritations

intensify over time. Notice the general atmosphere surrounding the job. What is the prevailing mood? Does the organization have a good or poor reputation? What are the objectives of the organization? Do they coincide with yours? Ascertain the morale of the employees. Does the staff enjoy a harmonious relationship? Are the facilities adequate? Physical and emotional hazards often accompany Christian ministries. Are you willing to risk any foreseen danger or ridicule? Count the cost.

**Intangible rewards.** The intangible rewards of a ministry are more important to a Christian than are its material ones. Job satisfaction and personal fulfillment come as by-products of a position for which you are well suited. The gratitude of your associates and clients arise from a ministry that you perform well. Your ministry should give both you and your family opportunities for spiritual growth. In the final analysis, where can you do the most good?

**Match these items.**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>1.6 _____ working conditions</p> <p>1.7 _____ occupational requirements</p> <p>1.8 _____ employment opportunities</p> <p>1.9 _____ personal qualifications</p> <p>1.10 _____ job responsibilities</p> | <p>a. specific duties to be performed</p> <p>b. available equipment and facilities</p> <p>c. length of employment</p> <p>d. job satisfaction</p> <p>e. degree of training</p> <p>f. mental ability</p> |
|--|--|

**Answer true or false.**

- 1.11 \_\_\_\_\_ The intangible rewards of a ministry are more important to a Christian than are its material returns.
- 1.12 \_\_\_\_\_ Such concerns as length of employment and opportunity for advancement may seem "unspiritual," but are practical and wise.
- 1.13 \_\_\_\_\_ The objectives of an organization affect the working conditions of an employee.



Select one of the top priorities from the list of ministries that you rated in Assignment 11 (Bible 1202). In your career notebook, record all the information you can obtain about it, using the sources and steps suggested in this section (Assignment 12).



**Review the material in this section in preparation for the Self Test.** The Self Test will check your mastery of this particular section. The items missed on this Self Test will indicate specific areas where restudy is needed for mastery.

## SELF TEST 1

**Write true or false** (each answer, 2 points).

- 1.01** \_\_\_\_\_ Lack of understanding about a career or ministry can lead to disappointment.
- 1.02** \_\_\_\_\_ People involved in specific jobs may be considered direct sources.
- 1.03** \_\_\_\_\_ Little information is gained on short-term ministries.
- 1.04** \_\_\_\_\_ It is possible to combine both a career and a ministry.
- 1.05** \_\_\_\_\_ Financial compensation should not be a factor in seeking a career or a ministry.

**Complete the following lists** (each answer, 3 points).

- 1.06** List the two indirect sources of gaining ministry and career information.
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ b. \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.07** List the three direct sources of gaining ministry and career information.
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.08** List the six things to look for in a career or ministry.
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ d. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. \_\_\_\_\_ f. \_\_\_\_\_

**Choose the correct answer** (each answer, 2 points).

- 1.09** All of the following items are indirect sources of career-ministry information except \_\_\_\_\_ .
- a. placement personnel                      b. mission agencies  
c. a returned missionary                      d. O\*NET Online
- 1.010** Categories of publications on ministries are \_\_\_\_\_ .
- a. general information                      b. specific job listings  
c. both a and b                                  d. neither a nor b
- 1.011** These rewards are intangible, but are very important rewards: \_\_\_\_\_ .
- a. job satisfaction                              b. spiritual growth  
c. eternal rewards                              d. a, b, and c  
e. b and c    f. a and b



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