

WISDOM FOR THIS TIME OF LIFE

There are different stages or seasons of life, each with its own characteristics, decisions and tensions. We will look at some of the critical aspects of this stage, and consider how to negotiate it with wisdom. *Proverbs 3:13 – 18*

STAGES OF LIFE (from Stages of A Man's Life by David English)

Defining Decisions 17-22

Entering the Adult World 23-28 (choosing a direction which affirms those decisions)

Minor Life Transition 29-32 (facing the fear of wasting your life and moving forward)

Priority Decision 33-39 (embracing covenant relationships as foundation for life decisions)

Mid-Life Transition 48-54 (moving from doing to being).

Legacy 55-70 (preparing the next generation)

Sage 71+ (continuing to live a life of purpose and finishing well)

“ENTERING THE ADULT WORLD”: CHARACTERISTICS OF THIS STAGE OF LIFE

1. Critical Decisions

“Life is about juggling crystal balls and rubber balls ... and success is knowing which is which.”

-Roy Roberts, former VP of General Motors. Some decisions are the “crystal balls.”

- Who do you belong to?
- What kind of person do you want to be?
- Who will you be committed to?
- Who will influence you?
- What do you want your life to be about?
- How will you use what has been given to you?

Decisions about work must be based on fundamental decisions - not contradict them.

- Life is more than work - we are not what we do.
- Satisfaction comes from fulfilling those basic values and commitments
- Satisfaction come from use of gifts, skills and abilities
- Who we work with is often as important as the work we do.
- Job changes can be healthy and give opportunities to discover what we love, what we are good at.
- Character and skills are valuable in every stage and every walk of life.
- Ask what job is appropriate to take on given the stage of life you're in. How might your priorities change over time and how does this shift affect your work?
- Don't fall into the sacred/secular error !

2. Tensions

- Exploration vs. stability
- Adolescence vs . adulthood
- The expectations and perspectives of others vs. my own dream for my life
- • My own dreams vs. the limitations of reality
- Perseverance vs. the easy way
- Fear of making the wrong decision vs. freedom to try things

3. Spiritual Transitions

A Path to Walk

“Lord Jesus, today, think with my mind, love with my heart, see with my eyes, listen with my ears, speak with my mouth, use my hands and my feet, for your honor and glory. Today, fill me afresh with Your Spirit.”

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

What dreams do you have for the kind of person you want to be? What are dreams you have for what kinds of things you want to do? Do these dreams include purpose bigger than yourself? Are there things that if you don't achieve you will feel that you have failed in life? Where do those things come from?

What peer relationships do you have that will extend to the next stage of life? What are the qualities you look for in friendship? How can you cultivate lasting peer relationships?

What kind of mentors do you want to have? How can you find them?

What are some of the potential pitfalls of this next stage of life? What steps can you take to avoid them?

What kind of job is appropriate to take on given the stage of life you're in? How might your priorities change over time and how does this shift affect your work?

What are the tensions I experience as I consider my decisions? Where are they coming from and how might they affect my decisions?

J. I Packer writes: *"The question boils down to this: what is it that I can do well and happily, and among the things I can do well and happily, which will be the best for the honor of God, the extension of His kingdom, the benefit of my neighbor, and through all these, my own job satisfaction?"* (Guide Us, Guard Us, 186.) What kinds of work can I do "well and happily"? Of those, what do I think will contribute most to the glory of God and the benefit of my neighbor? What are the commitments I have to fulfill that will influence my choices?