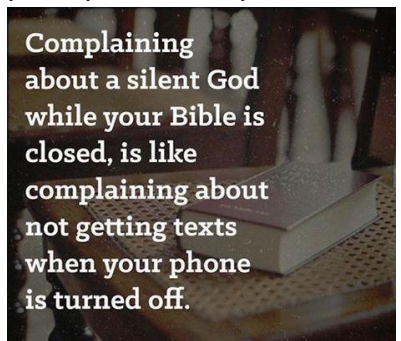


Taking the Test

When motivated I was a pretty good student. Sitting down to take a test can be an anxious time, but if I am prepared, the test goes well. I'm ready to write my answer even before I finish reading the question. On the other hand, if I am not prepared, I fret over each question, wishing I had studied more.

I recently saw a Facebook motivational quote with an analogy about God's role when people face a difficult life decision. It says, "The teacher is silent when students are taking a test." Teachers do their work in advance including staying after school with students to help them grasp the material. The time of a test is when students show what they have learned – it is not the time for continued dialogue with the teacher. If you prepare in advance you are ready to face the questions on the test.

So, how do you prepare for the issues you might face in life? I suggest that you prayerfully determine your values in advance. What is your position on lying, cheating, loyalty, sexual values, bringing up children in the faith, respect for parents, balance of home and work responsibilities and setting priorities? To be successful you have to determine in advance how you will face temptations when they strike. If you embrace how God wants you to respond then you will not need to react on the fly. On the other hand, if you think you need to be flexible in your values you are setting yourself up for excuses to veer from God's plan. Don't take the chance to do whatever feels right at the time. You would be setting yourself up to fail.



Also, when taking life's test, don't sneak a peek at anyone else's answer. People who are not of the faith get most of these issues wrong.

How do you determine what God wants you to do? Read His Word. I recently read a second Facebook quote that says, "Complaining about a silent God while your Bible is closed, is like complaining about not getting texts when your phone is turned off." God is very clear on right and wrong. He puts it in writing in His textbook. Deciding your position in advance, before the crisis hits, also provides you peace of mind. You don't need to worry about how you will handle these situations.

Open your Bible and your heart to His direction for your life. Let His Word be the foundation of your life, so you will be strong in the face of temptation. Then you will be ready for whatever questions appear on the life-tests you will face. The Master Teacher will have taught you all you need to know well in advance. You will ace the test, no matter how difficult it may be. For those who haven't embraced God's teachings in advance it will be a much different story when they sit down to take the test. You can avoid facing the consequences of poor choices made in the midst of a crisis. In fact, you will know God's answers before you finish reading the questions. That is peace of mind.

Scripture: *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight (Proverbs 3:5-6).*

Question: Have you determined in advance how you will react to the decisions that life places in front of you?

Prayer: Heavenly Father. You give us clear directions for what is right and wrong. We pray that we will resolve to know and seek your answers to life's questions before we are confronted with them in a crisis. Amen.