

iChoose

by Marsha Boyd-Mitchell

**For you created my inmost being;
you knit me together
in my mother's womb.
I praise you because I am fearfully
and wonderfully made;
your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.
My frame was not hidden from you
when I was made in the secret place,
when I was woven together
in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes saw my unformed body;
all the days ordained for me
were written in your book
before one of them came to be.
How precious to me are
your thoughts, God!
How vast is the sum of them!**
Psalm 139:13-17, NIV

A couple of months ago, I had the privilege of hosting a college tour for high school students who were making decisions about next steps. They were given insight into campus life, program options, and scholarship prospects. There are so many opportunities in Canada, with trade schools and universities throughout the Atlantic region

and the country. Some programs offer work terms, some are highly connected to employment demands in the community, and others are more renaissance in nature, with the privilege of study for the sake of study in topics such as art, literature, and history. The students that I was speaking with were working to match their gifts and abilities in school thus far to the programs of further education that may seem right for them.

As I write this, I am in Hong Kong attending educational fairs and meeting with families of students whose young people are making choices in regard to going overseas for middle school or high school for study in English. These families are listening to agents, meeting with heads of schools, reading promotional material, and trying to make the best choice for their child. As the principal of a Christian school, I always find it a privilege to be representing a Christian institution because I know the students will receive something much more meaningful than just an English-language course of study: they will be given the opportunity to consider Christ.

is a gift. It is a gift of so many days, months, and years, and thankfully we don't know the amount. All we know is that we need to make choices about how we spend our time and about how we will develop, whether the development has to do with careers, family life, or physical life. I use the analogy of receiving several birthday cards in the mail, with money in each one. A kid will take that stack of bills and ask, "What am I going to do with it?" What are we going to spend our time "becoming" in this life? What are the pathways to our purpose, a purpose which has been designed by a loving Creator?

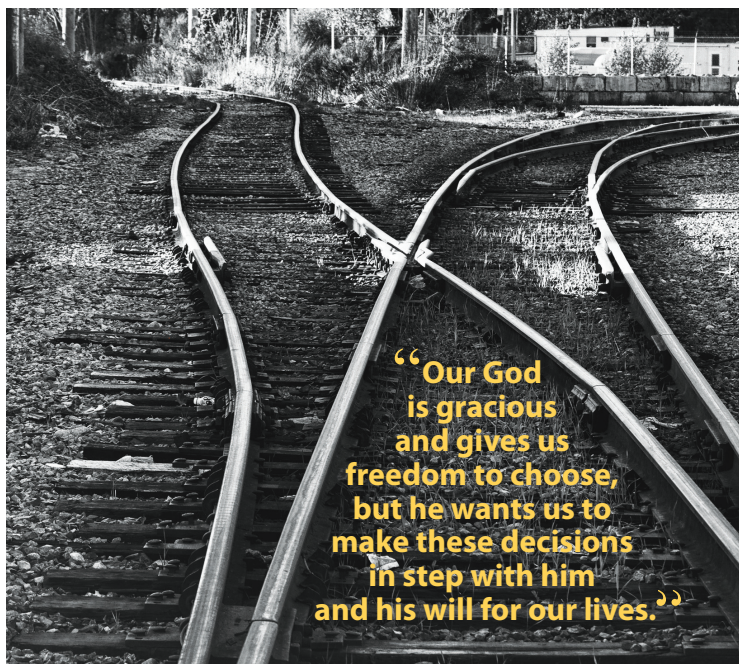
In *The Cure for the Common Life*, Max Lucado says, "God gives an assignment, he also gives the skill. Study your skills, then, to reveal your assignment." As a Christian, it is a great comfort to know that God has formed us and given us a range of strengths and weaknesses, placed in us at birth. As you coach the young people in your sphere of influence, they do not need to fear being called into something without prior formation from the Master. Time in prayer in regard to the choices at hand is key to making the right choice. Our God is gracious and gives us freedom to choose, but he wants us to make these decisions in step with him and his will for our lives.

As an old minister once said, "A Christian should live their life just making the next right choice." I think our young people need to capture this when making the big choices and the little ones. When we submit our individual wills to the will of Almighty God, something beautiful is made of the mosaic of our choices. Our lives illuminate the glory of God.

One thing I am learning is that different cultures consider approaches to education and employment differently. However, I would like to suggest that there is a way to contemplate next steps in life from a biblical culture that transcends our individual earthly cultures.

When I am at events talking to students on behalf of Christian Action Federation of NB, I often mention that life

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Unsplash Aditya Chinchure