

that, he will arrange for them to be ordained. However, I gently ask, might we start by agreeing that God has spoken to them and asked them to explore being ordained, so that we can listen and pray together as we seek to understand what is best for them and the church. We explore the reality that our hearing is not always perfect, the deep need to trust that God is utterly able to bring to fulfilment the things he is calling us to, and that proper discernment with others is all part of that Godly process. There is a place of humble trust that accompanies encounter which is essential to our discipleship if it is truly to be authentic. This is what we see in 1 Corinthians 12, I think, as we have already seen.

**Different Wisdom**

The third gift I want to bring you is quite different. I mentioned that I am writing the main draft of this whilst holed up with COVID-19, during which time my extraordinary daughter Pippa was on a summer placement in a mission hospital in Madagascar. Earlier today as we were texting, the following conversation took place (I reproduce it verbatim less the occasional personal bit, and with permission).

Pippa T  
How's writing going?  
10:15

Working on what I think is the final chapter, but wondering now if I need another one?  
10:16

Might be a section in the final chapter though  
10:16

Pippa T  
Ahh okay  
10:18

Pippa T  
What's your extra bit you might need a chapter for?  
10:19

How you go about discerning vocation  
10:19

Pippa T  
Pray  
10:19

Pippa T  
Conversation  
10:21

Pippa T  
Oh wait you're answering not asking a question  
10:23

Pippa T  
Hahah sorry  
10:23

Not at all – keep them coming...  
10:25

Pippa T  
Observing yourself  
10:25

Pippa T  
Both what you enjoy  
10:26

Pippa T  
And what you are good at  
10:26

Pippa T  
And what causes you to grow  
10:26

(I am pasting these directly into the text... although might edit later)

10:27

Pippa T

And looking at different vocations together e.g. being an air hostess probably doesn't fit in with a calling to get alongside and mentor young people

10:27

Pippa T

Or an astronaut

10:28

Pippa T

What energises you

10:28

Pippa T

The ways you can give and feed and encourage each other

10:28

Pippa T

Read God's word obvs

10:30

Pippa T

Discerning what you enjoy, good at, grows you etc are all determined in conversation with Godly friends/leaders /those around you, and prayer, and reflection alone, and being stuck in God's word

10:30

Pippa T

Something about knowing boundaries and temptations and what's healthy for you

10:33

You could be writing this book you know

10:37

Pippa T

For someone who grew up in a spiritualist culture, being a yoga instructor may be unwise

10:41

Pippa T

But being a yoga instructor isn't unGodly in and of itself

10:41

I don't need to say more as the conversation speaks for itself, partly because there is some great content, but partly because we get to talk and in talking, with Christ at the centre, wisdom is so often found.

### Questions

The final gift I can think to offer you is a series of questions upon which you might like to reflect if you are wrestling with your own vocation. Again, these are not exhaustive, authoritative, or final. They may, though, be useful.

Some questions around your own observations:

- 1) When do you feel closest to God and most alive?
- 2) Which characters or stories in the Bible leap out most clearly to you? How might you set aside a little time to 'live more intentionally' with these characters or events to help you notice what you notice and pray it through?
- 3) What thoughts refuse to leave you when you are praying or worshipping?
- 4) Do you have recurring dreams, thoughts, words, or pictures which seem significant as you pray?
- 5) Who do you most admire in life? Could you take some time, and perhaps some space in your journal if you keep one, to explore what it is that you admire and where within that admiration there might be something of God's call? (It is worth noting that Ahab's example