Where I am at Present [1]

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I have not been very active on this website for a while now. I am still here, however, so here is an update about where I am in life at the moment, and what my prospects are.

At the beginning of the year I started to work. I thus left my leisurely student days behind, while not actually having finished my studies. With reasonable expectations, this was going to be a challenging year for me.

In January or February, however, I was offered a fantastic opportunity to travel to Europe. I could hardly pass this up, but it turned by "challenging" year into one which was chaotic. At various times I simply wanted to give up, as I was not coping well with everything that was on my plate. God was good to see me through all the trials, however. He also protected me on my journey and brought me back safely, refreshed, relaxed, inspired and invigorated.

Work continues to challenge me and obviously leaves me with much, much less free time than I am use to. But as I approach my bianniversary at the company I feel that I have settled there fairly well, feeling comfortable with the work and processes, and having made friends there as well. I continue to learn and be challenged, which keeps me on my feet.

Leaving my church family in Stellenbosch was very hard [2] and I still miss the fellowship which I had there. I attended a Baptist church in the area for a while, before I moved into the flat where I am living now. It was a very community-centred church, which is great, but I felt that I had to keep a certain distance, as it would have been emotionally unhealthy to open up too much, only to have to leave later. And why did I leave the church when I moved? The simple reason is that it is too far. Some have argued that it is not so far and, certainly, for a once or twice a week I could maybe have made the drive. But it would make building friendships within the church difficult, as most of the congregation live near to the church. So meeting up with someone from the church "outside of church" or attending an event which is not a church service or a Bible study1 would result in a lot of commuting, which is exactly what I am trying to avoid. Perhaps this is not the wisest way to reason, but I was looking forward to attending a specific church closer to where I was going to move to (which is also closer to work). I have now started attending that church, but am not quite fitting in yet as I had hoped that I would. I continue to patiently attend the church services and the Bible study.

I still need to finish my academic studies. After a while of despair, there I light at the end of the tunnel again. I feel like I am being held captive by the responsibility to finish; it keeping me away from many other things which I would like to pursue now. I therefore deeply2 resent it for that reason. But I continue trusting that God will see me through it and that He will grant me great opportunities once I am finally done.

At the moment I have several things which I am interested in and which I want to investigate. These have all sprung from various needs, so I am going to have to make time for it. Last night I took the first tentative steps to making a deeper study of Calvinism and Arminianism. It is my understanding that the terse explanations of these two theologies are insufficient for making a clear judgement about them. As such, many people (and in my environment I am completely surrounded by Calvinists) hold incorrect views of the "opposing" theology. I want to learn more, so that I can make an informed judgement for myself. At present I favour Molinism, which means that I am leaning towards Arminianism, much to the shock of some people.

I have also recently been challenged by a friend on various aspects of the Christian faith. I now have to make careful studies on a wide range of topics to be able to properly answer his objections. This is a very daunting task, but I am thankful that I am not in this alone, as the Spirit is ultimately at work. I have already been blessed with many good resources and many people to whom I can turn for help.

For the first time in my life I have also starting thinking ahead. Previously it was easy: finish school, get a few degrees at school and then enter the work force (the typical middle class recipe!). But I have now entered a period of my life where the next 40 years (Deo volente) of my life is unplanned. This can be a daunting prospect. But it also need not be one, as people can merely life from one year to the next, not really planning for anything significant. Thankfully, at present, I do not feel that I am either daunted or directionless: I believe God is slowly revealing a great plan for me. It is still early days, however, and I am still praying about it. I also need to seek advice from people. As such, I do not feel like I should be divulging any details. But if my understanding is vaguely correct, then I am in for some difficult times ahead. But I look forward to be pleasing God by fulfilling His purpose for my life, as well as reaching the finish line (2 Timothy 4:7).

- 1. The Bible study groups at that church are referred to as "Life Groups". This indicates how strong the community within the group is. People share their joys and setbacks in these groups and engage at a deep level. I felt bad for not being able to properly reciprocate, but I had made it clear to certain individuals at the beginning that I was only going to be there for a short (but, at that time, indeterminate) while.
- 2. I cannot underestimate how deeply.

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