

Your Christian Faith and Going to College: Critical Decisions

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My experience in college (very rough at first)

Central Scripture texts to keep in mind:

**Parents: Deut 6:6-7 (context=tremendous change about to occur in Israel's life;
i.e. entry into the Promised Land)**

Students: Matt 6:33 (context=worrying about the things of the world)

The Dangers

Study results:

34% of students at secular State universities who identified themselves as "born again Christians" when they entered as freshmen no longer held to their faith when they graduated.

28% of students who did still identify themselves as Christians indicated on the survey that they had not been in church during the last year.

(from *College Bound: What Christian Parents Need to Know About Helping Their Kids Choose a College*)

Choosing a College:

- 1. Start with prayer and seek God's will throughout the process.**
- 2. Get informed about the different kinds of universities available to you.**

Large State Universities (UT, A&M, etc); Mid-sized State Universities (Stephen F. Austin, etc); Mid-sized Private (primarily secular) Universities (SMU, TCU); Mid-sized Private Christian Universities (Baylor); Small Christian Liberal Arts Universities (Ouachita Baptist University, John Brown University, Wheaton, etc); Community Colleges; On-line Colleges

3. Set your criteria:

Major

Quality and character of support systems for your spiritual discipleship

Extracurricular interests

Faculty/Student ratio and reputation of faculty

Reputation of the school and the quality of instruction

Cost

Distance from home

Personal attention/mentoring

Ethos of campus and living environment

4. Go visit several campuses

5. Decide as a family

- 6. Keep your spiritual growth as a priority and don't be naïve about the challenges and dangers. Your freshman year is critical!!!**

Get plugged into a Christian campus group

Seek out Christian friends

Get involved in Church

Be intentional; don't just drift

Balance your spiritual life, your academic study and your social life (fun)

Keep your intellectual life grounded in your faith in Christ

**The Advantages of a small Christian Liberal Arts University like
Ouachita Baptist University**

The integration of faith and learning in the school's mission and in the faculty.

The strong Christian character of most of the students.

The high quality of education (Ouachita has been ranked #1 baccalaureate college in the entire southern region by U.S. News & World Report for three straight years).

Very low student/faculty ratios and a stress on teaching quality (no grad students as teachers; small classes; personal attention given to students, etc.)

Only about 4 ½ hours drive from Dallas

Beautiful campus on the bluff overlooking the Ouachita River

Evangelical in faith and theology