

Tell us about yourself

I'm Darius or to some friends & family who affectionately know me as Bubu. I'm 30 this year and have been happily married to Janice for 4 years. I used to work in the finance sector, started out working at JPMorgan Chase and then later moved on to a Private Equity firm and now I'm an apprentice with St. Lucia Evangelical Church.

Why did you choose to spend this year doing Ministry training with SLE church?

Janice decided to further her studies at the start of 2019 and we started that year living apart. But by mid 2019, I had become convinced that the God-honouring thing to do was to give up my career in Singapore to be in Brisbane with my wife.

However, at the start of the new year things unravelled further. I was removed from a full-time contract and put on a monthly renewable agreement. I lost the job security I once enjoyed and had no clue where my finance career was going in the foreseeable future. Being paid 60% less, yet with no change in job scope, made me feel devalued, like I was 40% of the man I was. I could no longer proudly say I was working in private equity and rely on my accolades to boast.

I may have made the big move to Brisbane, but the main purpose of my life was still tangled up in attaining financial security and creating a name for myself. The lack of favourable job prospects, no financial security, and no admirable career to boast about or defend left me feeling very aimless and purposeless. "

"At the start of 2020 I joined the International Student Ministry at SLE Church (IYF) serving students as a leader. Since then it's been a long year of having my value system challenged by God's truth.

It started with uncovering what true blessing is in God's view through Psalms and Matthew. Thereafter my view of suffering and struggle for the gospel was radically shaped by Paul's words in 2 Corinthians. And most recently, my conviction to follow Jesus single-mindedly as His disciple has been challenged greatly reading Luke.

It slowly started to become clear - my purpose in life is to live for Jesus's kingdom priorities, and love others by encouraging them to know and hold on to Jesus, regardless of where I work, what I work as or if I work at all. As the year wore on, I experienced great joy digging into God's word with others, encouraging them to live by it. I learned to love others by being concerned first and foremost for their spiritual lives. Over the course of the year, my passion to point others to Jesus started to flame.

Was there a key turning point that made you go from learning to giving up secular work to enter full time ministry training?

The turning point came when I attended the International YF ministry's annual farewell for students leaving for home. Many described their life changing moments discovering Jesus and the gospel through the ministry at SLE Church.

I sat in the pews at church thinking – “When I die, what will people say about the years I spent on Earth? Surely living for Jesus as king and encouraging others to do so would be the most worthwhile pursuit in this life”.

That started me thinking about undertaking further ministry training. My growing conviction prompted me to consider how I should be spending my time, energy, and efforts. I started thinking whether I’d be a good fit for full time ministry work and what would be the best way to go about exploring this.

So I did what everyone does when thinking through a big decision: I prayed about it, spoke to other godly brothers and sisters, and concluded that receiving full time training through a ministry apprenticeship would give a clear idea of what gospel work entails, the ins and outs of ministry life and the changes to lifestyle one must make.

This will be a long-term discovery and I hope to come out of it with a clear idea if working for God’s kingdom on a full-time basis is something I am suited for and can do for the rest of my life.

What do you think ministry training will involve?

The apprenticeship will involve teaching the bible, training others in ministry, training in leadership, topical & bible study, training in how to think theologically, working on my prayer and godliness, meeting others, and building relationships, evangelism & mission. This adds up to similar hours as a full-time paid worker working in a secular context.

I genuinely feel like this is no different from what every other Christian does. The only difference is that I am doing it on a full-time basis working in a church context, ministering to members of the church and beyond.

What does the future hold for you?

I’m not certain at this point. I may go back to the finance sector or I may not. What I can say for certain is that through Ministry Training I will be stretched to mature in character, conviction and competence as a disciple of Christ. That will be invaluable whatever the future holds.

How can others best support you?

Please pray alongside me.

I am a sinner in need of God's help and am by no means free of the struggles of self-worth, fear, and insecurities about my future. I wrestle with comparing with my peers who look successful in the world, I am afraid of what others will say of this “foolish and risky” endeavour and I feel insecure that I cannot rely on my work experience or ability to secure financial “freedom”. While these struggles are not assuaged, I hope that time in full time ministry apprenticeship will provide the opportunity to continue to struggle through these issues, and at the end of it, be able to say with more certainty they are fading in significance next to the value and power of the gospel of Jesus Christ as I mature in Him. "

Secondly, I need financial support to live and carry out the work. This will go toward paying rent, transport, food, and other living expenses. Part of my ministry training involves fundraising for gospel needs to advance the gospel of Christ and this will in part be an exercise in learning how to do just that. On a side note, catchups over coffee and food count as support as well.

If you would like to find out how to support me or just have a chat, please contact SLE Church by visiting their website @ sle.church or get in touch with me at dariustng14@gmail.com or contact me by whatever other means. I would love to catch up.