

Trust the Process

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Why is it that we must decide our future? Many parents will ask their kids what they want to be when they are older. Kids will answer their parents saying things like astronaut, firefighter, princess, police, or fairy. They are just children, their brains aren't fully developed. They also haven't thought it over completely. Many young people are attracted to most jobs because each one has something appealing in them like how the sirens work on a truck or how the princess looks so pretty. When people are young they wonder what their future is going to be like. I thought that I was to be a vet because I enjoyed working with animals, but God showed me my real future through CEF, dance, and Taekwondo.

I was a really shy person in my younger years of being a kid. When I would get asked what I wanted to be when I grow up, I would often hesitate. I didn't know what I wanted to be when I grew up. I would usually say what the other kids said because I wanted to fit in. In the spring of 2020, my family moved to Alaska from Arizona. It was there that my mom and dad signed my siblings and me up for Taekwondo. Taekwondo is a martial art from Korea, mainly influenced by Chinese and Japanese martial arts. Shortly after my parents signed my siblings and me up for Taekwondo, I started dance classes, too.

Both dance and Taekwondo require a great deal of discipline and perseverance. White Belt is the first step in the journey to becoming a Black Belt. It is in White Belt that you begin to learn how to use staves, as well as your hands and feet, as weapons. As I was going through White, I was looking ahead at the belt levels and I decided to make it all the way to Black Belt. To advance to the next belt you have to take a test. My twelve

year old self was challenged, but I had made a goal; therefore, I must achieve my goal. When I made it through Yellow and tested into Orange, I began to see that I could achieve things even when I didn't believe it myself. During this time I was making progress in dance. Making progress in dance was a huge deal to me, because dance requires endurance, skill, dedication, and effort. The endurance is for the pain you have to go through, the skill for remembering, counting and the techniques you have to learn. You have to put in the effort to move forward and dedication is important in order to improve in your skill, which is the same for Taekwondo.

In the middle of my Orange Belt training my family and I traveled down to Arizona, California, and Idaho for my dad's job and to get our other belongings that we had left down there when we moved to Alaska. In Idaho, my parents' friends had just bought a house and were starting to build their little farm that had goats and chickens. I helped take care of them. I enjoyed caring for them. I fed them, played with the goats, and pet them. I fell in love with animals even more. I thought I had finally found my calling, to be a vet. When we made it back to Alaska, I started to do research on different animals.

I resumed my training as an Orange belt. A few months after we got back, I tested into Green, the Intermediate level. I had passed my siblings and was ahead of them, but I was with Malachi. Malachi is another student in the class, and is now a close friend. We flew through Green in one month. Got to Purple and learned new *ssahng jeol bong* (the Korean word for nunchucks) skills. I struggled and I thought about quitting, but then I remembered that I had set a goal. Even though I had a difficult time, I decided to keep

going. I tested into Blue with Malachi. During all this time I still wanted to be a vet. I kept researching different animals and developing my knowledge about being a vet.

When I got to Blue I started to feel a tug in my heart. I thought it was nothing and ignored it, but I would soon learn this feeling would change my life. All along my training in Blue I kept feeling this tug, not realizing it was God trying to tell me something. God calling out to me kept getting louder and louder as my testing into Brown Low came closer and closer. The test into Brown Low was extremely difficult, because you are testing to see if you are willing and worthy enough to be an Advanced Level Belt.

I made it to Brown Low and started to learn Korean. When I started to learn Korean, the feeling in my heart was very clear. I prayed and listened to God. God answered me: my calling was not to become a vet like I originally thought, but to learn and study languages of the Asian cultures. I told my parents what happened and they told me that not many people my age are lucky enough to know what God is asking of their life. My dad, who was also my youth pastor, encouraged me to share what God showed me with other people. After God had answered me, I started to dig deeper into Korean. I started to learn how to have a conversation and not just the little phrases that I learned in Taekwondo. I keep asking myself why the Asian cultures. I still have no idea why God has chosen the Asian cultures for me. I'm still trying to figure that out. I have started learning different Asian languages (Chinese and Japanese, in addition to Korean) and many aspects of their heritage and culture. I dug deeper into what food they eat, different traditional lifestyles, and the martial arts.

All along my journey in Alaska, God has been with me teaching me and helping me understand my purpose in life. Public speaking is something I don't enjoy, because it makes me uncomfortable. " 'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways' declares the Lord. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.' " Isaiah 55:8-9. He would soon use a ministry called Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF) to build me in this area. Being part of CEF has helped me become aware of my ability to communicate His truth to people and grown me in my comfort of speaking in front of people. CEF teaches youth to lead a VBS type event for younger students; each part of these events are run 100% by the youth, where we have to lead the Bible stories and help lead the children to Christ.

Jumping forward to today: I have made it to Black Belt Recommended. This is the last belt, and one of the most difficult steps in achieving my goal: Black Belt. My goal as a Recommended Belt is to find my voice. The Recommended program is helping me in my communication skills. I am required to assist in the Color Belt classes. In assisting, I have to learn to communicate with new students and those who do not possess the skills and knowledge a Recommended student possesses.

When I was in Idaho, I had thought that I realized what I was supposed to do when I grew up. That was just me deciding, not God telling me. You may have your own ideas of what God wants. "Many plans are in a man's heart, but the counsel of the Lord will stand," Proverbs 19:21. You may have a plan in your heart thinking it is God, but it's just your own plans. With God's plan you will have a future and a hope (Jerimiah 29:11).

When telling the difference to see if it is God or just you, you have to look at your heart. Is it in the right place? The Holy Spirit is the helper. He is there to help you understand scriptures that are confusing to you.

“As each one of you has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God,” I Peter 4:10. My special gift from God is dancing. God might also be using dance in my future as well. I did two years at a dance studio, but right before my third year I decided to take a break and focus on Taekwondo and being Recommended. When I was in dance I would often choreograph dances and teach them to my little sister Jessica. We would learn the dances and perform them for our family. Many people believe that I would be a great dance teacher.

I would love to be a dance teacher, but God might use my dancing for something else. He might have me use dance to portray the Bible stories and what God has to say to people. He might want me to go off to some village or country and use dance to share the gospel with other people. He may want me to open a dance studio and share the gospel that way. Or He may want me to travel the world putting on performances that share about the wonders of the Bible. I will wait and allow Him to decide. All I have to do is wait and prepare my heart, my body, and my skills for what is coming next in His plans.

As I began to dig deeper into God’s word on what it says about going out and teaching, He helped open my eyes to a whole new way of looking at things. God oftentimes puts us in uncomfortable situations to grow us in areas we are weak. He has started helping me to gain confidence in speaking and communicating with people. He is using Taekwondo and has used CEF to equip me in this area. You have to be willing to

listen to God. Simply being put in a situation by God does not guarantee you will grow. You have to be willing to be uncomfortable in the areas He is trying to grow you. I have to trust Him to give me the confidence and courage in the opportunities before me that I am scared of or uncomfortable with.

Are you ready to find your calling? You must trust that God has everything in His control and that He has a plan for you. You must also trust yourself. If you don't trust yourself, you will keep yourself from achieving your goals in life. You have to make the right decisions in your life and determination to achieve what it is that you want. Having determination will lead to success. I am determined to complete what God is asking of me. At first I wasn't willing to trust God and listen to Him. When I did, my eyes were opened to a new life that I will be living. Are you willing? Do you trust yourself? Do you trust God? Are you ready to make the right decision? Trust God, trust yourself and you will find happiness and a purpose in life.