



327. To Br. Gleb 6/82

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1. What do you want to do in life?

To be a fervent priest, not living for yourself but for others, not allowing yourself to become a lukewarm hireling, being faithful to all you received in childhood, not just giving sacraments to a parish, but actively spreading the true word of Orthodoxy to them and others, being one in mind with us and all others who have this same goal.

2. How can or should you prepare myself [stet] for this?

By going through a systematic course of theological study (not just on your own), which should also include literature and art (including some negative manifestations to see what is “in the air” and attracting people); and becoming acquainted with worldly life (both secular and church) in a practical way, not entirely on your own until you are 21 or so (that is, accepting guidance on how much you should expose yourself, and being under guidance while you are doing so).

3. What are the main obstacles to this?

a. In myself. Self-trust, wanting to guide yourself without wholehearted trust in your spiritual father; combined with a very passionate nature which has not yet gone astray because it hasn't faced any great temptations. These two characteristics together mean an almost certain disaster ahead, or at best, an abnormal development, missing out on the opportunities that really lie before you to be a fruitful pastor.

b. In the world outside. The sensual tone of modern life, which will pull on your passionate nature; the temptation to be like everyone else—cold, withdrawn into yourself, not giving yourself to others, not caring enough for Christ's truth and suffering souls. In church life: the temptation to be outwardly correct, but inwardly indifferent and lukewarm.

4. How should I fight these obstacles?

Through real trust in your spiritual fathers—working your future out together with them, honestly facing your own nature and problems and their advice; and through having the guts to subject yourself to a real discipline of preparing for priesthood, and not playing games with yourself.